

Foreign Policy and Affective Framing of the 2017 Rohingya Genocide

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Abstract

This thesis explores factors that could have precipitated variations between Indonesian and Malaysian foreign policy towards the persecution of Rohingya Muslims and the Myanmar government following the 2017 Rohingya crisis. Indonesia and Malaysia are Muslim-populous nations. Both preferred to look the other way for decades while the Rohingya, a persecuted ethnic Muslim minority of Myanmar's Rakhine State, underwent persecution. The thesis examines the role of the media in Indonesia and Malaysia to gain a clearer understanding of how the 2017 Rohingya crisis was affectively framed in a way that ended up connecting public opinion to foreign policy. This current work argues that affective media framing in each country influenced public opinion, which then had an effect on the country's foreign policy.

Keywords

Indonesia, Malaysia, Rohingya, ethnic, Muslim, ASEAN, affect, media, frames, Myanmar, nationalist, Burma, Indonesian, Malay, Buddhist, emotion, identity, Suu Kyi, Buddhist, Rakhine, foreign, policy, Islamic, public.

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Introduction

A foreign policy puzzle

Indonesian and Malaysian foreign policy towards Myanmar over its persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar had not changed for decades. Foreign policy shifts in Indonesian and Malaysian positions occurred towards the Rohingya only after August 2017. This was in the aftermath of an enormous clearance operation by the Myanmar military against the Rohingya (Bernama 2017; CNN Indonesia 2017a; International Crisis Group 2017b). It is not necessarily obvious why these shifts in Indonesian and Malaysian foreign policy occurred following the 2017 crisis. In previous Rohingya massacres, going back to 2012 (Ibrahim 2016, 81-86) when Myanmar was just beginning to transition towards democracy – or what had then been perceived as one – from a military regime, Indonesia and Malaysia took a non-interventionist stance with consistency. Like other nation states prior to 2017, Indonesia and Malaysia dealt with the immediate ‘here-and-now’ humanitarian crisis arising from said attacks, waited for the media clamor to die out and took no further obvious public action until the next bout of ethnic violence occurred. The cycle often repeated itself. No foreign policy action that was openly critical of Myanmar for persecuting Rohingya Muslims on a sustained basis was in the picture until after 2017.

For some reason, it ceased to be another numbers game, where tens or hundreds of thousands in a far-off neighboring land fled from persecution. In 2017, there was a shift in both countries’ perceptions of the issue, from a statistic on a document to a spotlight on two groups of humans:

one projected as and who were indeed, dark-skinned, emaciated, gunshot and knife wound-ridden Muslims, the other as an armed¹ coalition of Buddhist nationalists.

Public opinion and optics matter in Indonesia and Malaysia. At least 87 percent of 266 million Indonesians are Muslim, making Indonesia the world's largest Muslim country (DeSilver and Masci 2017). Southeast Asia's largest economy (The Straits Times 2017), Indonesia enjoys a robust and a free media environment that is monitored by the government, one led by a secular party which for the sake of optics, works to show that it cares for its Muslim populace even as no ideological need for this exists. Malaysia, home to 32 million Malaysians, has a tightly-controlled media which followed a government in need of Muslim votes (The Star Online 2017).

Indonesia has not been hugely hit with waves of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar the way Malaysia has after the 2017 atrocity, but the policy shifts are the same in that case. As of March 2018, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Malaysia alone registered 135,740 refugees from Myanmar, of which 69,880 were Rohingya and 33,020 were Chins, another ethnic group (UNHCR 2018). These are official figures but in reality, many illegal Rohingya refugees have found temporary work in Malaysia (The New York Times 2007). Just over a thousand Rohingya found refuge in Indonesia (UNHCR 2015). Economic or security factors linked to refugees from Myanmar are different across Indonesia and Malaysia and therefore cannot be used to account for this similarity.

Global media reports, including in Indonesia and Malaysia, refer to the previous frame as one of 'silence' adopted by state leaders attending meetings of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

¹ The word 'armed' here refers to not just military hardware but also nationalist, legitimized propaganda. This propaganda enables non-Muslim communities in Myanmar to attack Rohingya with consistency through institutionalized discrimination and physical persecution.

(ASEAN), after Rohingya massacres occur (Al Jazeera 2017a; IDN Times 2017; CNN Indonesia 2017b). This silence, namely to not communicate to the public through speeches or responses to media questions, pertained to three matters: who are the political actors directly behind the Rohingya persecution were not publicly mentioned at meetings as were the details of the immediate attack itself. Most important is the non-identification aspect. Southeast Asian leaders when issuing statements at ASEAN gatherings will not refer to this ethnic Muslim group as Rohingya. Aspects of the humanitarian crisis arising as a symptom of attacks against the Rohingya, including the amount of aid to be sent to assist the victims, are discussed. Rohingya massacres are referred to as “the humanitarian issue in Rakhine State” and the Rohingya themselves have been referred to only as the “affected communities” (ASEAN Chairman’s Statement 2017). Inside Myanmar, state elites and the military call the Rohingya ‘Bengalis’ (BBC News Indonesia 2017).

Citing non-interference, Southeast Asian state leaders have shown solidarity towards Myanmar on numerous occasions by not identifying this persecuted minority as Rohingya since the group is not legally recognized in the Myanmar constitution. This is where the puzzle comes in: Why would Indonesia’s state leader personally visit a Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh in 2018 and publicly show the Rohingya his support (Kompas 2018; Republika 2018)? President Joko Widodo’s personal visit of a camp in Bangladesh this January came weeks after Indonesia, through statements issued by Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, took a more vocal, generalized stance to support the persecuted Muslim world, whether in Myanmar’s State of Rakhine, Palestine or Kabul (Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2018). Why, in another break from the past, did former Malaysian foreign minister Anifah Aman publicly dissociate Malaysia from an ASEAN statement only in September 2017 and clearly identify the victims of the crisis as the Rohingya (Asean-Malaysia National Secretariat 2017)? Speeches made by former Malaysian prime minister Najib

Razak towards the Rohingya crisis also seemed telling: he heavily peppered them with open solidarity towards Rohingya Muslims and critically condemned the actions of Myanmar.

A question and an overlooked variable

What is it about the 2017 Rohingya crisis that precipitated shifts between Indonesian and Malaysian foreign policy towards the Rohingya? Differences between Indonesian and Malaysian foreign policy and how they varied over time constitutes the dependent variable. Minority ethnic groups that are politically weak due to intense repression cannot influence foreign policy (Saideman 2002). This is where the media could possibly have made an impact by galvanizing public support.

Media reportage of the Rohingya crisis in Indonesia and Malaysia was considered more of the same until after 2017. The reporting of the 2017 attacks occurred consistently and a spread of news stories describing the persecutions in detail was evident.

The media is an important overlooked variable when it comes to explaining variation over time in Indonesian and Malaysian foreign policy positions towards Myanmar on the Rohingya. Immediately following the 2017 attacks, media in both nations seemingly steered public opinion with aggressive reportages that started off with an ethnic cleansing frame and the persecution of Muslims, before veering towards the framing of the genocide of the Rohingya. This is important from a theoretical perspective.

Mediatization and foreign policy

The ways by which media characteristics influence society and culture at large is a process referred to as media logic (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017, 4; Strömbäck 2011). Foreign policy decisionmakers will be more likely to adopt media logic should the intensity in reporting as well

as the level of uncertainty be greater (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017, 3). The internalization of media logic by political actors is a consequence of a phenomenon known as mediatization, defined as among the most profound transformations of society that occurs over a long period of time (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017; Strömbäck 2011; Asp 1986).

Traditionally, principled deliberation would characterize foreign policy. Politics shaped by media logic however focuses on what causes a truly sensational, unique event and that it would willingly expand on differences in opinion, forming polarized conflicts between what is perceived as two simplified alternatives (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017, 4). When foreign policy adopts media logic and as polarization, personalization and intensification occurs, this is when the process known as mediatization could make an impact on foreign policy, one dramatic enough to cause variation.

The argument and hypothesis

In line with this perspective, I would argue that *affective* media framing in Indonesia and Malaysia did not only galvanize collective action among the public, it influenced shifts in foreign policy to occur. A chain reaction took place: 1) violence against Rohingya to 2) affective media frames to 3) public activism to 4) foreign policy variation.

This thesis will map out the link between media frames, public opinion and foreign policy. Media frames used specifically for the thesis are those of persecution/ human rights and security/ sovereignty. Wording that corresponded with the persecution/ human rights frame include “genocide”, “cleansing”, “executions”, “rapes”, “massacres”, “stateless”, “Bengalis”, “systematic”, “arson”, “burn”, “torture”. Wording corresponding with the security/ sovereignty frames included “domestic”, “internal”, “destabilization”, “engagement” and “instability”.

Medzihorsky, Popovic and Jenne (2017) developed a comprehensive dictionary which saw specific theme words classed into four groups of framing: human rights violations, no human rights violations, non-intervention and pro-intervention. They examined the relationship between the United Nations Security Council's (UNSC) five permanent members and the language each used to argue for interventionist or non-interventionist policies (Medzihorsky et al. 2017). The UK, France and the US, which stressed human rights violations in the Syrian civil war used intervention language (like "action", "stop", "aid"), while Russia and China went for non-interventionist language (like "dialog" or "consensus").

I posit the following hypothesis:

H1: When more news stories in a country take on a persecution frame, then a government is likely to move away from a non-interventionist position and towards an interventionist one.

Frames of persecution tend to promote a more interventionist foreign policy critical of the Myanmar's government handling of the crisis, while sovereignty frames tend to lead to less activist foreign policy that stays out of Myanmar's domestic affairs. The persecution frame would more likely promote foreign policies that could generate a more critical anti-Myanmar position, spotlighting the stripping away of the fundamental rights of Muslims in Myanmar.

Newspapers, research design and chapters

Press

With the Southeast Asian press, the news remains a social construct as journalists subjectively create their stories and these stories are rooted in a particular time, culture and a set of political conditions (Wolfsfeld 2011; Lang 2016). The press in Southeast Asia are characterized by their

historical experiences and the role they played in the struggle for independence against colonial rule (Lang 2016). To date, the press remains the most credible source of information when it comes to political conditions in Southeast Asia (Lang 2016). The newspaper is an ‘extreme form’ of a book sold on a massive scale and considered as ‘one-day best-sellers’ (Anderson 1991, 35). An imagined linkage still lies in the relationship between stories depicted in the Indonesian press, for instance, and their tens of millions of readers. The horrors of a story involving a destitute, persecuted Muslim community in a neighboring Buddhist country can be imagined – and the imagined linkage felt – by Indonesian Muslim readers from print in an Indonesian newspaper. The reader may not care about who each individual Muslim struck down by Buddhists in Myanmar was, but the reader would think of the representative community.

Media framing refers to the organization of a news story in accordance to themes, facts and style to convey a storyline. More often than not, it conveys the position taken by a media organization on a specific issue. International relations-linked events that occur are imbued with meaning through framing, a process via which the media can draw images of objects in a person’s head (Li and Chitty 2009, 5). Frames refer to a set of filters. While an image projected by the media is structured through a public frame, a perceived one is structured by an individual frame (Lang 2016, 15). Paris (2002) spotlighted how those advocating for and against intervention in Kosovo in 1999 used different metaphors to frame the conflict in order to push for their own preferred agendas. Why do political leaders speak in certain ways and what is it that they are actually saying when they participate in a public debate becomes clearer when metaphors are deciphered (Paris 2002).

Research design

This thesis used news articles, opinion pieces and readers' reactions and statements published in Indonesian and Malaysian media. For Indonesia, pieces published in *Kompas*, Indonesia's longest-standing publication, Muslim-leaning *Republika* and secular paper *Media Indonesia* were used. All three are Indonesian language-publications. I am fluent in *Bahasa Indonesia*. For Malaysia, *New Straits Times (NST)*, *Malay Mail (MM)* and *Utusan Malaysia* were selected. NST and MM are the two newspaper websites read most by Muslims in Malaysia and both are in the English language, as English is widely spoken by Malaysians. *Utusan Malaysia* is in Malay. The 4IMN newspaper website rankings for Indonesia and Malaysia was used to help me select these publications. All six publications employed frames of persecution/ human rights and sovereignty/ security.

Selection

A minimum of 8 articles published between August 2017 and April 2018 were coded and analyzed for each publication. Selections were made through a process focusing on six factors: First, those that appeared immediately or soon after the 2017 attacks and contained a high prevalence of keywords like ethnic cleansing, massacres, rapes and executions. Second, stories that contained images of Rohingya refugees, wounded, burned or starving, some accompanied by detailed infographic information. Third, articles with titles that spelled out Rohingya massacres, rapes and genocide were selected to show shifts in frames. Fourth, articles focusing on public collective action because of the crisis were picked. Fifth, pieces calling for government action, intervention or those that showed state action over the crisis. Lastly, articles that reported on no mentions of Rohingya at ASEAN events as well as opinion pieces that pushed for domestic or international action. Appendices 1 to 6 – one for each publication - feature the lists of titles of articles analyzed.

Chapters

The data is analyzed via discourse analysis. Background on attacks against the Rohingya, context on the politics and economy of Myanmar and its relations with ASEAN are featured in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 focuses on concepts and the argument. Chapter 3 discusses political conditions in Indonesia preceding the Rohingya attacks and analyses of media frames. Chapter 4 provides details on political conditions in Malaysia preceding the attacks and the analyses of frames. The concluding chapter is on this thesis's findings.

Conclusion

For Southeast Asian nations, non-interference is the rule to adhere by when it comes to conflict, even at the risk of recurrent refugee spillovers. Indonesian and Malaysian foreign policy however showed variations towards the Rohingya following the 2017 attacks. It is not obvious as to why these shifts occurred. As security and economic factors linked to Myanmar refugees are different across Malaysia and Indonesia, these cannot be used to account for similarity in policy. The media is an overlooked variable that links foreign policy to public opinion. This thesis is a step towards a clearer understanding of this link. The research design utilizes Rohingya-related pieces published in six media. This work argues that *affective* media framing can influence shifts in foreign policy to occur.

Chapter 1 – Context

The Persecuted ‘Other’

A Muslim minority living in a poor state, Rakhine, in a nation of largely Barmars, the ethnic Buddhist majority, the Rohingya are arguably Myanmar’s most media spotlighted ethnic group persecuted by the country’s key political actor, the military. This thesis looks at how public opinion in Indonesia and Malaysia, when influenced by affective media framing, can have an effect on each country’s foreign policy towards the Rohingya. Context is required to look at how both nations dealt with the humanitarian conditions in Myanmar prior to 2017. Chapter I comprises three parts. First, an overview of the 2017 atrocity. Second, a discussion on the dynamics between nations within the ASEAN regional body in respect to Myanmar. The last part is on the historical persecution of the Rohingya, including attacks prior to 2017.

2017 attacks

Over 700,000 Rohingya fled their homes in Rakhine and poured over the border into Bangladesh having faced persecution beginning Aug. 25, 2017 (UN News 2017). Tens of thousands have crossed over to Malaysia and about a thousand have reached Indonesia. *Medecins Sans Frontieres* estimates that 6,700 Rohingya died between Aug. 25 and Sept. 24 last year (MSF International 2017). Media reports flowed in of the Myanmar military carrying out organized executions, firing into fleeing crowds, burning property, killing children and systematically raping Rohingya women (PBS Frontline 2018; CNN Indonesia 2017; Republika Online 2017; Detik.com 2017; Kiblat.net 2017; Muslimdaily.net 2017). The 2017 operation was launched in retaliation to a small attack by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), a small armed Rohingya insurgency, against 30 army and police posts which killed 14 Myanmar security officers (International Crisis Group 2017b).

Violence has raged in Myanmar for decades against the Rohingya, before the media could penetrate state barriers, into the lives of intensely tortured ethnic minorities to affectively frame and transmit their stories to influence public opinion and policy. Refugee outflows are perceived to be a key factor to the possible destabilization of the Southeast Asian region, particularly by Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. The three, like Myanmar, are among the 10 members of ASEAN. Spillovers of Rohingya into Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand occurred in previous years, fueling radicalization concerns. Following the August 2017 attacks, a UNSC meeting was convened on Sep. 28, 2017, where U Thaung Tun, national security advisor to Myanmar, denied that ethnic cleansing or genocide had occurred (Irrawaddy News 2017).

I. ASEAN and Myanmar

After 2017

A divide was portrayed among positions that each of the 10 ASEAN nations took on a draft text of a UN resolution linked to human rights in Myanmar after the 2017 attacks (United Nations 2017; Reuters 2017b). A UN document, numbered [A/72/439/Add.3](#), shows the names of countries that were in favor of this draft text, under section E of part II. Indonesia was in favor of the draft text on human rights conditions in Myanmar along with 134 other nations (United Nations Documents 2017 numbered [A/C.3/72/L.48](#)), including Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam, two Muslim-populous nations in Southeast Asia. Southeast Asian nations that were against the draft text comprised of Cambodia, led by Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge commander who has been in power since 1985; the communist nations Laos and Vietnam as well as the Philippines, led by authoritarian leader Rodrigo Duterte. Countries that abstained were Singapore and

Thailand. Malaysia in previous years showed its support towards Myanmar at the UN level. Like Myanmar, Malaysia voted against draft text of a resolution on human rights conditions in Myanmar in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009. Indonesia at the UN level abstained from voting in 2007, 2008 and 2009. It voted against a draft text of a resolution on humanitarian conditions in Myanmar in 2006. Indonesia in January 2007 abstained during a vote of a UNSC draft resolution. Senior Indonesian diplomat Rezlan Ishar Jenie, then the permanent representative of Indonesia to the UN, said Indonesia did realize that Myanmar's 'issue' no longer was a bilateral or a regional one but an international matter. Jenie further noted that Myanmar should respond to the need to restore peace and democracy (UNSC press release 2007).

Before 2017

In the year that the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis stormed through Southeast Asia, Myanmar's pleas to join ASEAN bore fruit. It became a full member in July 1997, despite protests lodged by the EU and the US on account of the country's abysmal human rights record. ASEAN opted for rational reasoning: Myanmar's geographic proximity and comparable security conditions were one reason but two others warranted consideration: new business opportunities beckoned, and China. Thailand proposed that the Indochinese battlefields could be transformed into marketplaces as the ideological divide that separated ASEAN and Indochina states and Myanmar had fallen (Roberts 2010). This decision within ASEAN itself did not pass without opposition.

Debate heated up within the Philippines about Myanmar's admittance into ASEAN and it had raised these concerns with the organization (Roberts 2010, 112). Malaysia, at the time led by Mahathir Mohamad – who won the May 2018 elections to become prime minister - turned out to be one of Myanmar's staunchest supporters when Myanmar vied for ASEAN membership and

secured it in 1997. The China threat loomed large in the 90s, in the shape of its burgeoning military and strategic relationship with Myanmar. ASEAN states were banking on the possibility that once Myanmar was admitted into ASEAN, China's influence on this country could, given time, decline if Myanmar learned from within the regional body to wean itself off its dependence on China (Roberts 2010, 112). To date, Myanmar has been unable to do so. That said, Muslim-dominated Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh are the external actors that have had a hand in shaping Myanmar's international relations following the 2017 crisis (Stokke et al. 2018, 13).

Historically, Malaysia has had an on-again, off again relationship with Myanmar. The dynamics of Southeast Asian state leaders and government officials - their agency specifically - and how they shape foreign policy towards the Myanmar government has been telling since Myanmar joined ASEAN. Having initially fully supported Myanmar's entry into ASEAN, Mohamad noted in 2003 that ASEAN should threaten Myanmar with expulsion from the regional grouping if the junta failed to release Aung San Suu Kyi. Suu Kyi, then the face of possible democratic reforms in Myanmar, had been placed under arrest by Myanmar's military junta (BBC 2003; The Telegraph 2002). Suu Kyi is Myanmar's current government leader.

Veteran journalist Kavi Congkittavorn, who spent decades covering Thailand and Myanmar, said that Mohamad's motives in making that threat towards Myanmar in 2003 was due to two reasons. Malaysia was angry at Myanmar for the latter's failure to support Malaysia's push for the establishment of a secretariat comprising of ASEAN+3, the three being China, South Korea and Japan (The Nation, 2003). This proposal at the time was shelved because no ASEAN consensus could be reached on the matter. Most importantly, Myanmar's military junta backed the US-led Iraq war, which Malaysia was strongly against (The Nation, 2003).

With Indonesia, agency had been shown by previous foreign ministers and their constructive approach towards Myanmar following the latter's entry into ASEAN. Having languished in a pariah status for decades, Myanmar approached Indonesia in 1987 to inquire on whether it could possibly join ASEAN, to which the Indonesian foreign ministry provided a non-committal response that it could possibly go as far as giving Myanmar the status of an observer (Roberts 2010, 111). Indonesia also dispatched the late former foreign minister Ali Alatas in 2003 to secure Suu Kyi's release but he was unsuccessful. Indonesia then attempted to invoke an ASEAN mechanism to circumvent the problem with Myanmar, but Myanmar managed to avoid this by investing in its bilateral relations and diplomatic efforts with China and Japan.

The late veteran diplomat Surin Pitsuwan, a former Thai foreign minister who later became an ASEAN secretary-general, had said that when domestic issues of an ASEAN nation resulted in adverse regional consequences, then the organization's adherence to non-intervention required modification (Roberts 2010). The intervention he referred to was a form of friendly pressure. Pitsuwan's proposal was rejected by Malaysia and Indonesia, with both instead pushing for constructively engaging Myanmar (Roberts 2010).

Selective non-intervention

Specific reasoning lies behind ASEAN's pursuit of a policy of constructive engagement with Myanmar, instead of regarding it as a security threat. In efforts to push for more trade and investment and cut down China's influence in Myanmar, the policy of constructive engagement had been fashioned to thaw icy relations formed during the Cold War era. Jones (2011) noted that the forms which ASEAN's engagement took towards Myanmar were set by requirements of ASEAN's business classes. The Myanmar and Indochinese markets were viewed as possible money-spinning destinations for investment capital that had been amassed and a crucial source of

abundant mineral resources. Methods to engage Myanmar constructively, according to Jones (2011), were cooked up by state-linked elites and military officials seeking to expand their businesses and sink capital in Myanmar. He referred to Malaysian investors like oil company Petronas which invested US\$587 million into projects across Myanmar by 2001 (Jones 2011).

Economic and political reforms were pushed by Myanmar's neighboring states within the framework of social and constructive engagement that would form the core of resolving disputes and gaining influence the "ASEAN Way". This may shed light on why horrors that occur, hidden from sight in a secretive country like Myanmar where getting information out could be a life-threatening task, are seemingly acceptable to state leaders of neighboring Southeast Asian nations that have strong countervailing economic interests, political ambitions and their own nation's conflicts and internal problems to quell.

Discourse on internal affairs

Some of the world's fastest growing economies, like the Philippines and Vietnam, are members of ASEAN. ASEAN nations have a combined population of 620 million and boasts an economy of US\$2.6 trillion (The Business Times 2017). However, to achieve the goal of integrating these economies within ASEAN seems far-fetched for many reasons, chief among them being obstacles to enhancing trust among these countries. The body includes a democracy like Indonesia to communist countries like Laos and a military junta in Thailand. Other members include Malaysia which in May 2018 democratically elected Mohamad back into power, and Myanmar, whose repressive military has been internationally condemned for slaughtering Rohingyas.

For a layperson, to directly glean information from ASEAN on whether actual discussions take place on conflict and violence within Southeast Asian nations – termed as internal affairs - among

Southeast Asian foreign ministers is difficult. Offering insight into what can transpire in such talks was ex-Indonesian foreign minister Marty Natalegawa who spoke at an ASEAN-related event held on Oct. 2, 2017, organized by the Singapore-based Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute).

A videotaped recording of the event was published on Youtube on Oct. 27, 2017 by ISEAS (ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smdXTHHXQD0>). Natalegawa's credentials include serving as Director General of ASEAN Cooperation (2002-2005) and as Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the UN (2007-2009).

Natalegawa at that event expressed disappointment at what he saw as "exasperation" on the part of ASEAN because it had remained silent on the 2017 Rohingya-related developments at the UNSC level and during a UN human rights debate (ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute 2017, official video on Youtube, minute 7.43-minute 7.53).

"Exasperation is not policy. Emotion is not policy. You may have exasperation as a person but not as a state and not as an organization" (Ex Indonesian foreign minister Marty Natalegawa speaks at ASEAN-related event on Oct. 2, 2017, organized by ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, official video on Youtube, from minute 7.50 - minute 8.02).

He further states:

"Now, on Rohingya, we have a Security Council debate last week. We have a UN human rights council debate, also last week. [Pause]. Deafening silence by ASEAN. To me, that is unacceptable. How can a matter that we had so deliberately and patiently invested in (towards-ed) the Myanmar democratization process, and now suddenly we switch off? Snatching defeat from the jaws of victory" (Ex Indonesian foreign minister Marty

Natalegawa speaks at ASEAN-related event on Oct. 2, 2017, organized by ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, official video on Youtube, minute 9.12 - minute 9.56).

Indonesia, Natalegawa said, had deliberately taken the initiative to begin talking about internal conflicts within respective nations with the rest of the ASEAN foreign ministers, following Indonesia's 1998-1999 reform process. He explained that together with him, former Indonesian foreign minister Hassan Wirajuda attempted changing dynamics and begin discourse among ASEAN foreign ministers to consider the significance of talking about conflicts. Upon providing reports of conflicts within Indonesia to foreign ministers of other nations, Natalegawa said that the response they received had been "deafening silence" (ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute 2017). Eventually, the other ASEAN nations, including Myanmar, got the message, began to adopt a similar approach and gradually opened up at those ASEAN ministerial forums.

Myanmar had many times asked to chair ASEAN. Myanmar was requested by ASEAN, including Indonesia, to defer its chairmanship of the body for the sake of concerns raised by the wider region on Myanmar's own international profile.

II. Inside Myanmar

Rohingya Muslims

Considered among the world's largest, most persecuted stateless peoples at anywhere between 1 million to 1.3 million, Myanmar denies Rohingya Muslims citizenship, restricts their movements, denies them rights to harvest crops they farmed or marry outside their group (Ibrahim 2016). Gravers (2015) pinpointed how Myanmar's Buddhist monks who were engaged in nationalist politics would absorb xenophobia and ideas of danger to identity and religion that were transmitted globally. Ultranationalist organizations like the MaBaTha (Association for the Protection of Race and Religion) have fueled anti-Muslim propaganda for decades against Rohingya (International

Crisis Group 2017a). There is no recognition of their ethnicity in Myanmar's constitution, intentional starvation dogs them and they undergo birth restrictions because to the state, they constitute an unrecognized Muslim group. Myanmar elites referring to them as Bengalis add fuel to a fire lit for years by Buddhist nationalism, espoused by a state that fails to include Rohingya in its list of national races (Ibrahim 2016). Crouch (2016) noted that the history of Muslims identifying themselves as Rohingya in today's Rakhine goes back to the ninth century. Records exist from the thirteenth century onwards showing their presence in Rakhine (Crouch 2016). Like their religion, their skin color is different from most of their neighbors. They speak a different language.

1974 Constitution

Problems gradually began for the Rohingya after the military grabbed power from U Nu in 1962. The country's first prime minister, U Nu, a statesman who led a democracy, had suggested on numerous occasions that Rohingya had the equal status of nationality with other ethnic groups like the Kachin, Karen, Mon and the Shan (Ibrahim 2016, 21). Ibrahim noted that evidence existed in the Burmese legal framework showing the Rohingya were not particularly different from other minorities. They were described as 'Rohingya' in the 1961 census (Ibrahim 2016, 21). This changed after the military came to power. Excluding the Rohingya was a gradual process. Ibrahim pinpointed that in its quest to show its legitimacy as military rulers, the military reasoned that if it could not have an ethnically pure state - which would have meant losing access to economic resources – it could test out having a Buddhist state (Ibrahim 2016, 21). General Ne Win, who

overthrew U Nu in 1962, pushed through the 1974 Constitution, which in effect removed the status of the Rohingya which they had been granted during independence.

Having forewarned against Myanmar's impending genocide, Ibrahim (2016) argued that the Rohingya were possibly a primary target for the country's regime, the opposition and extremists due to specific reasons. One, the Rohingya could be considered a convenient target because they are different in ethnicity and religion (Ibrahim 2016). Second, they are a safe target because they do not have a long history of armed revolt unlike ethnic groups like the Karen and the Shan (Ibrahim 2016).

Purges

Purges of Rohingya Muslims have occurred through time, including in 1978, 1991, 1992 and between 2012 and 2017. Crouch (2016) referred to the *Naga Min* (Dragon King) clearance operation of 1978. When the Myanmar government launched the *Naga Min* operation that year, over 200,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh. Then, as it had occurred in 2017, the Rohingya were massacred, raped and looted. In 1991 and 1992, nearly 250,000 Rohingya Muslims sought refuge in Bangladesh following violence that involved executions, torture and rape by Buddhists together with the Myanmar military in Rakhine state (Crouch 2016). Ethnic violence continued unabated, fueled by extremist organizations such as the MaBaTha and nationalist political parties like the Rakhine Nationalities Development Party, or RNDP. Both the RNDP and MaBaTha were credited for fueling mass attacks against Rohingya in bouts of violence that occurred in 2012, the year when Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party won in the by-elections, opening the path for her to rise to power. Ibrahim (2016) noted that between October 2012 and April 2013, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) estimated some 13,000 Rohingya Muslim refugees ended up in Malaysia

following persecution. An attack against Myanmar's police officers in October 2016, which left nine officers dead, saw an over-reaction on the part of the Myanmar military. This led to the 2016 purging of Rohingyas (Reuters 2016).

Political economy

Rakhine, home to Rohingya, is rich in natural gas and oil reserves which countries like China and South Korea covets. Myanmar underwent political reforms in 2011 and its first free democratic elections in 2015 following almost half of century of military rule, but uncontested power to date lies in the hands of the Myanmar military (Stokke et al. 2018). State autonomy has little meaning when power has failed to adequately shift towards civilian leadership. The Tatmadaw remains the country's primary economic force and state autonomy is confined to the political and economic influence of the military (Stokke et al. 2018, 11). This "military state capture," the scholars note, explains challenges faced in terms of limited state capacity, conflict resolution and the character of the state itself. Myanmar's military regime is heavily dependent on China. The military gave democracy a go in 2011 in hopes of pushing back against China's grip over the country, redefining and strengthening its relations with the US and the EU and using this as leverage against China.

China managed however to grab opportunities where it saw them to influence Myanmar, like brokering peaceful negotiations with Myanmar's myriad armed ethnic insurgent groups both following the 2015 elections and through the years that led to the Rohingya crisis in 2017. Months before the latter occurred, China, together with Russia, blocked a UNSC statement in March 2017 on human rights abuses in Myanmar (Reuters 2017a). In November 2017, roughly two months

after the military clearance operation, China hosted Myanmar military commander Min Aung Hlaing and civilian leader Suu Kyi with Chinese President Xi Jinping (Reuters 2017c).

A crude oil pipeline which links Yunnan province to western Myanmar, one that can transport 12 billion cubic meters of gas and 12 million metric tons of oil a year, began operations in April 2017 (Financial Times 2017).

Chapter 2 – Concepts and Argument

This thesis examines how affective media framing can not only expand our knowledge on the relationship between public activism and foreign policy, but can lead power to emerge through the affective communication of a catastrophe involving a weak ethnic minority group. Such groups, politically weak as a result of intense persecution, are unable to influence foreign policy (Saideman 2002). Theoretically, the current work examines how affective framing, like that of persecution, further categorized to pro-Muslim, pro-humanitarian or both, can do more than steer public attention towards news of foreign affairs events which previously individual state units worked to blot out through non-interventionist language. It can cause variation to occur in a country's foreign policy.

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. First, focus will fall on concepts and definitions used for the empirical analyses of Indonesian and Malaysian media reports. These include genocide, ethnic cleansing, Muslim identity, social constructivism, mediatization and foreign policy, affect and framing, power and language. Secondly, the concepts are pulled together to support the argument that affective media framing can not only galvanize public activism, it can influence a shift in foreign policy.

Concepts

Media and foreign policy

The first application of mediatization was on the impact of the media on political communication. Swedish researcher Kent Asp, according to Brommesson and Ekengren (2017, 4), was the first to speak on mediatization, referring to it as a process whereby a political system “to a high degree is influenced by and adjusted to the demands of the mass media in their coverage of politics”.

Mediatization sees the media morphing into a powerfully-charged independent institution that can permeate into spheres within society and sees to politics losing its autonomy (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017; Hjarvard 2008; Strömbäck 2011).

Politicians end up phrasing their public statements in a way that polarizes, personalizes or a combination of both with a singular intent: their messages will have better opportunities of securing media coverage (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017; Hjarvard 2008). Showing that it can be independent of political sources and report from a multitude of other sources from across continents additionally pinpoints to the media's power in securing greater control over publishable content.

Additionally, foreign policy in Southeast Asian democracies like Indonesia and Malaysia is no longer the domain of state institutions. Civil society organizations and public opinion – as evidenced in the latest May general elections in Malaysia which removed Najib Razak from power – carry a considerable amount of influence. Public opinion and the media have been seen to influence political discourse in Indonesia and Malaysia.

It is worth reiterating the link between media logic, mediatization and foreign policy. Media logic refers to a process through which society and culture at large become influenced by media characteristics (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017, 4). Humanitarian crises, like the 2017 Rohingya attacks, would likely fall under massive media pressure for two reasons. One, with digitalized technology and tools such as Google Maps, snapshots of horrific human suffering – and reportage on the issue - can be communicated quickly through social media like Facebook or Twitter and retweeted, forcing global publics affected by the issue to demand for more information and action, whether from the government, the press or both. Second, actual interviews of persecuted refugees and images of human suffering borne by them, like Rohingya refugees who were knifed, burned,

shot and raped, could accelerate rapid political decision-making in a bid to stop their suffering. Foreign policy decisionmakers, as was the case with the Indonesian and former Malaysian state leaders, would internalize media logic during political deliberations to take particular actions in response to a humanitarian catastrophe.

Media logic differs from political logic. The latter includes a process and a policy dimension (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017, 26). The policy dimension points to efforts to look for solutions for politically-defined problems through means of programs of action (Meyer 2002; Brommesson and Ekengren 2017, 26). Process dimension refers to efforts to secure official acceptance of one's selected program of action (Meyer 2002, 12; Brommesson and Ekengren 2017, 26).

Brommesson and Ekengren (2017) note that political institutions would define a problem, scour for solutions and secure support for said solutions when political logic drives politics. Politics driven by media logic would see politics subordinated to the demands of media logic. Those adapting to the demands of the media are rewarded through the utilization of media logic and it is through the media that they will win popular acceptance for their policies. With political logic, a winner is determined through parliamentary negotiations or elections.

Humans, agency and FPA

Foreign policy when reduced to its fundamental ingredients consists of two elements, namely the national objectives to be achieved and the means taken to achieve them (Crabb 1972). Historically, foreign policy, to Hudson (2005, 65), is an area where decisions are made in secrecy by contained, closed groups of specialists who formulate policies out of public sight. Hudson once quoted Rosenau's pre-theorizing on FPA (1966) where he sets up the grounds for the systematic development of actor-specific theory. What scholars were on the lookout for was a theory which mediated between the complexities of reality and mega principles. To understand foreign policy,

Rosenau pushed for the need to combine information at multiple levels of analysis, from sole state leaders to the international system (Hudson 2005).

Sprout and Sprout (1965) underscored the particularities of human beings deciding on foreign policy, pinpointing its significance to understanding foreign policy choices. What grounds everything occurring between nations and across them are the actions of human decisionmakers either acting in groups or singularly, emphasizing the importance of agent-oriented theory (Hudson 2005). Considered abstractions, states have no agency. Humans alone can be referred to as agents because their agency is the source of all international politics and change within. Hudson (2005) called the identification of the point of theoretical intersection between material and ideational factors, considered determinants of state behavior, as the most significant contribution of FPA to international relations. This point is the human decisionmaker. Accountability in international affairs becomes a problem if theoretical language cannot link acts of human agency to consequences.

Politics, policy and media

In promoting an image of predictability in relation to foreign powers, nation states have often opted to prioritize stability, careful deliberations and farsightedness when conducting foreign policy. Should the mediatization of politics apply to foreign policy, then the latter according to Brommesson and Ekengren (2017, 13) has taken on media logic and its technique, one underscoring “simplification, polarization, intensification, personalization, visualization and stereotypization, and the framing of politics as a strategic game or ‘horse race’” (Strömbäck 2008, 233).

Foreign policy is more likely to adopt media logic under specific scope conditions of mediatization: uncertainty, identity and resonance (Folz 2011). Brommesson and Ekengren (2017) developed their understanding of these categories as follows:

- A. Uncertainty defines the condition where decisionmakers are unable to fall back on set routines and norms. Decisionmakers here are more likely to go for media logic in their search for solutions outside conventional political processes.
- B. Should decisionmakers identify themselves with norms espoused by media logic, they will be more likely to act in accordance to those norms. Decisionmakers here are also more likely to adopt media logic due to the event being polarized and reported through the frame of intense, personalized stories about victims.
- C. Should there be resonance favoring media logic among populaces of a state where decisions are being taken, it becomes more likely for decisionmakers to act according to media logic. The scholars relate resonance to political culture, citing previous research showing that political culture that is consensus-related would resist changes in form caused by media influence.

Affect and framing

Preceding emotion, affect fuels the intensity with which emotions are felt (Papacharissi 2014, 15). It is a “pre-personal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body’s capacity to act” (Papacharissi 2014, 13; Deleuze & Guattari 1987/1980). As feelings could shape how people process information, how they internalize and act on experiences they undergo each day, many

consider affect as part of the cognitive. It could provide the means to understanding human beings as “collective and emotional” (Protevi 2009; Papacharissi 2014, 16). Affect is political.

Emotions can play a key role in assisting people to differentiate between not just the self and the other, but the alignment of “some subjects with some others and against other others” (Ahmed 2004). Politics in democracies like Indonesia and Malaysia have been known to be shaped by the mobilization of the public occurring via online networks and frequently held offline social interactions, like at prayer hall meetings. People will align against others who feel and behave differently from them and will align themselves with those who feel similarly to them. Ahmed (2004) had argued that “it is not just that we feel for the collective... but how we feel about others is what aligns us with a collective, which paradoxically ‘takes shape’ only as an effect of such alignments.”

Patterns of a powered collective emerge from interactions among these bodies, and emotions play a part in this. Emotions can be neutralized or fired up through social relations between bodies, and the role of affect. Emotions can take on more value as it moves between collectives and places. Paying attention to the role that affect and emotions play in the formation of public opinion is key to understanding how politics can evolve in dynamic conditions, where uncertainty prevails. This is not to state that reason has a limited role to play and affect will alter rational decision-making processes on the individual level. People in democracies in the end have to make informed decisions about who governs them and how they are governed, and this is where the role of mass media can come in.

Lang (2016) referred to politics and media as two sides of a coin, adding that the latter was the people's main source of information on the goings-on of politics and that policymakers turn to mass media to get a better read and feel of public opinion. As foreign policymakers 'respond to the public and the public responds to the media' (Soroka 2003; Lang 2016, 10), the media can influence a policymaker's political actions even as this influence may be perceived as unseen. The media can show its power through setting the agenda and enhancing the salience of an issue, which in turn stirs public opinion. This will lead politicians to take the public's mood into account and issue a response. The salience of an issue can be enhanced via media framing, which refers to the organization of a news story in accordance to themes, style and facts to convey a specific storyline (Entman 1993; McCombs, Lopez-Escobar and Llamas 2000).

Genocide and ethnic cleansing

Having escaped Nazis in Poland in 1941, Jewish linguist Raphael Lemkin had coined the word 'genocide' in order to give a name to a crime that till then had no name. Lemkin scoured for a word fitting enough to describe an attack on every feature of nationhood, ranging from religion, economy, biological, physical to the political. Coining the word 'genocide' was a speech act with the intent to not only call it out for it was, a crime of such magnitude spurred by singularity of motive, but one that would push the world to unitedly condemn it. The kind that had clear legal implications and can lead to prevention and punishment.

Lemkin used every resource to devise the Genocide Convention which was then adopted by the UN in 1948 (Power 2002). Genocide, according to Lemkin (1944), had two phases. One constitutes "the destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group" while the other is "the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor" (Lemkin 1944). A specific meaning is attributed to

genocide in international law (Ibrahim 2016). Its definition includes the ‘intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group’. The convention also “called for perpetrators to be punished” and for parties who are part of this Convention to “take such action under the Charter of the United Nations as they consider appropriate for the prevention and suppression of acts of genocide.” The acts that are considered genocidal include a regime of constraints designed to eliminate or erase the group over time, including birth restrictions, organized mass killings of a specific group conducted on a consistent basis, conspiracy to commit the act, attempts to commit it and incitement of the act (Ibrahim 2016).

Ethnic cleansing, according to Bell-Fialkoff (1993), refers to the expulsion of an undesirable population from a given territory as a result of ethnic or religious discrimination, ideological considerations or a combination of these factors. Ethnic cleansing and genocide are often used interchangeably and differentiating between their meanings was crucial (Jenne 2011). Jenne said that the principal distinctions between these concepts lied in the extremity of ethnic removal and the type. Genocide and population transfers were considered subsets of ethnic cleansing, adding that the implied targets were another distinguishing feature.

Power, language and social constructivism

Power, to Barnett and Duvall (2005, 45), is the “production, in and through social relations, of effects on actors that shape their capacity to control their fate.” Humans are power’s intended targets and its effects, going by the Foucault’s formulation (1971). Lang (2016) saw the notion of power, when taken from the perspective of constructivism, as the ability to present political situations in a certain manner. How events are interpreted is how they shall be viewed and it is through language that we interpret the world around us (Checkel 2008). Language is

intersubjective. It changes through use and therefore it cannot be objective and it exists independently of us, so it is not subjective (Guzzini 2005). Meaning and as a result, knowledge, are products of social activity. Our senses will not take in given or ready-made facts passively. Our identification of facts from out of the noise is dependent on notions that already pre-exist, guiding our outlook and perceptions of the world. To a constructivist, the interpretation of power would depend on the contextual conditions (Lang 2016, 5). Social context is crucial to understanding power relations. If there is “(non)cooperation” among states, what needs to be explored is how they perceive each other, because this is what would influence interests and therefore the behavior of states (Hopf 1998, 199). Hopf (1998) considered threats to be socially constructed, therefore threats are not a constant as they are dependent on the construction of an ‘Other’.

Islamic identity

Constructivism provides ways to understand identity politics (Hopf 1998, 192). Religion, like race, ethnicity and nationalism, is considered a variety of identity that is central to how constructivism generates understandings of social phenomena (Hopf 1998, 193). Ismail (2004) argued that Muslims neither reproduced a ‘monolithic Muslim identity’ nor did they engage in the construction of Muslim selves in a uniform fashion. The construction of this Muslim identity in the public sphere was relational, in that it shapes and allowed itself to be shaped by dimensions such as class, technology, politics, lifestyles and gender (Ismail 2004). Literacy has spread widely across Indonesia and Malaysia, for example, and therefore the majority of Muslims in both nations need not rely only on clerics to make sense of their religion in a changing world.

Whilst consumerism enters into the construction of Muslim identities in Indonesia on a daily basis across the country, there have tellingly been clear expressions of Islamic identity and politics in recent years, showing the arrival of a form of Islamic populism that embraces different classes of Muslim societies (Hadiz 2013). This form of populism, led by educated professionals, takes in the poor as well as sections of the middle class from urban areas (Hadiz 2013). Due to the leadership of the current form of Islamic populism found there, the agenda is aimed at reorganizing power that works to the advantage of the varied *ummah* (Hadiz 2013). Identity and religion is a powerful card to hold up in Muslim-dominated Indonesia and Malaysia, one that is held up with pride, freedom and carrying a loud political voice.

Argument

Affective framing can not only galvanize public activism, it can influence a state to shift its stance towards an issue it may have never done before blatantly and publicly. The 2017 Rohingya attacks are an example of an event that took on significant meaning for Indonesian and Malaysian populaces. A chief reason was the intense new reportage of what was projected as the wiping out of a specific collective. Media focus in Indonesia and Malaysia spotlighted the identity of the victims and that of the persecutors alongside stories, images and footage of the persecution.

Pro-Islamic framing enters the picture. A collective of politically weak Muslims, including children, carrying horrific wounds on their bodies, became evident from the photographic images taken by international news wire agencies and published in local Indonesian and Malaysian press (Republika 2017; Media Indonesia 2017; Bernama 2017; NST Online 2017; Utusan Malaysia 2017). Images and text of the persecution and interviews with persecuted refugees are available

on Indonesian and Malaysian media news sites online. The scale of the attack was vast in numbers and intensity. These attacks, as depicted worldwide through news text, photographic and video images, were carried out by a collective of Buddhist nationalists in Myanmar. This collective, going by media reports, continue to deny such persecution took place. This fits the bill of a truly unique event, one that could lead to the expansion of differences in opinion, forming a polarized conflict (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017).

Following the August 2017 attacks, persecution frames, which include stories on genocide and ethnic cleansing, as well as security or sovereignty frames were featured in Indonesian and Malaysian media regularly.

This tells of media characteristics influencing society and culture at large, a process known as media logic. Mediatization occurs when a political system is influenced by and adjusts to the demands of mass media in coverage of politics (Brommesson and Ekengren 2017). News coverage in Indonesia and Malaysia were followed by Islamic public activism in both nations. Foreign policy had indeed adopted media logic and when intensification and personalization occurred, mediatization impacted foreign policy.

This is not to deny the significant role played by uncertainty that loomed over the political positions of state leaders. Depicting a fuller picture in one example, below are diagrams providing a snapshot of Indonesian foreign policy towards the Rohingya after and prior to the 2017 attacks.

Diagram 1: After 2017

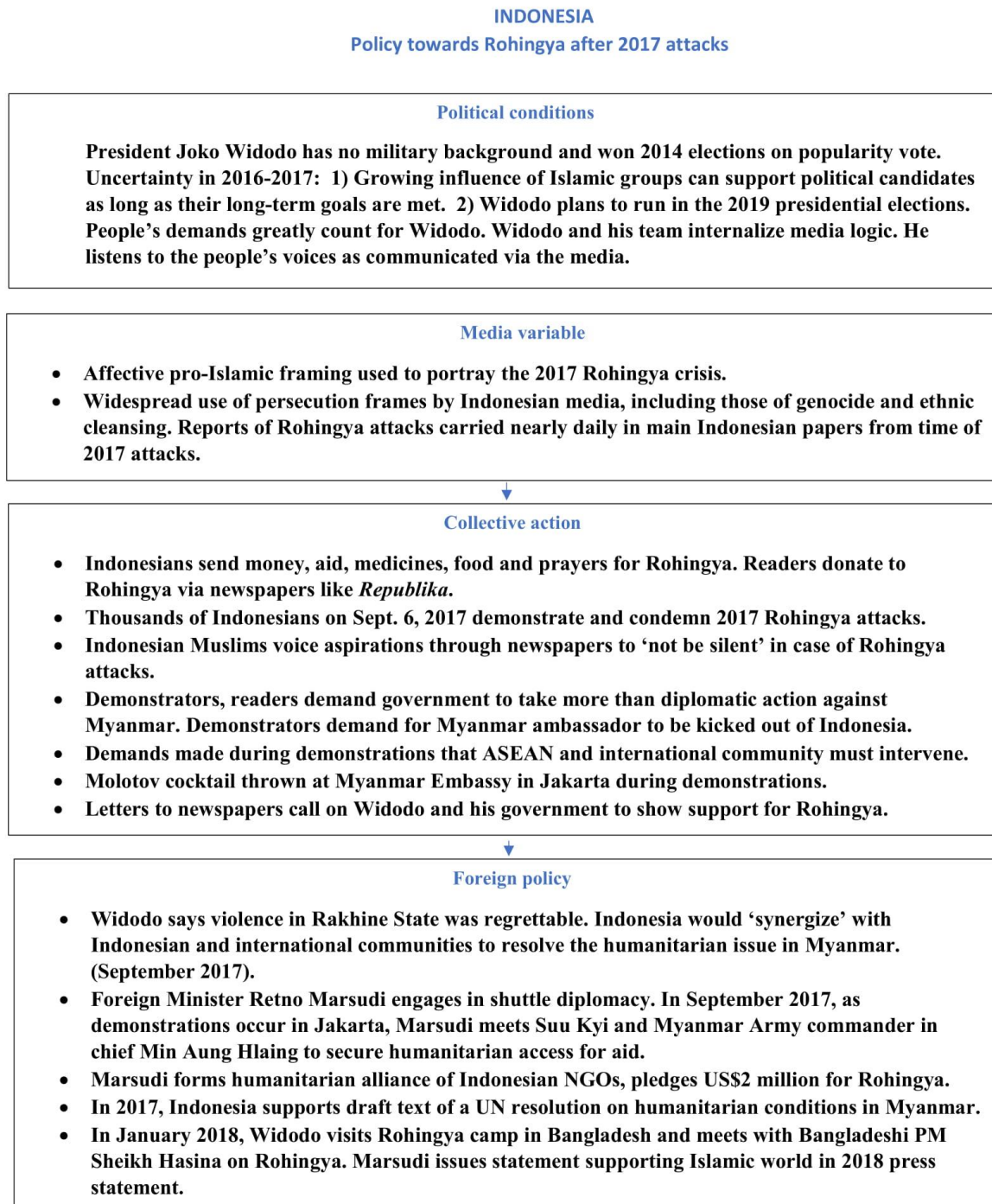
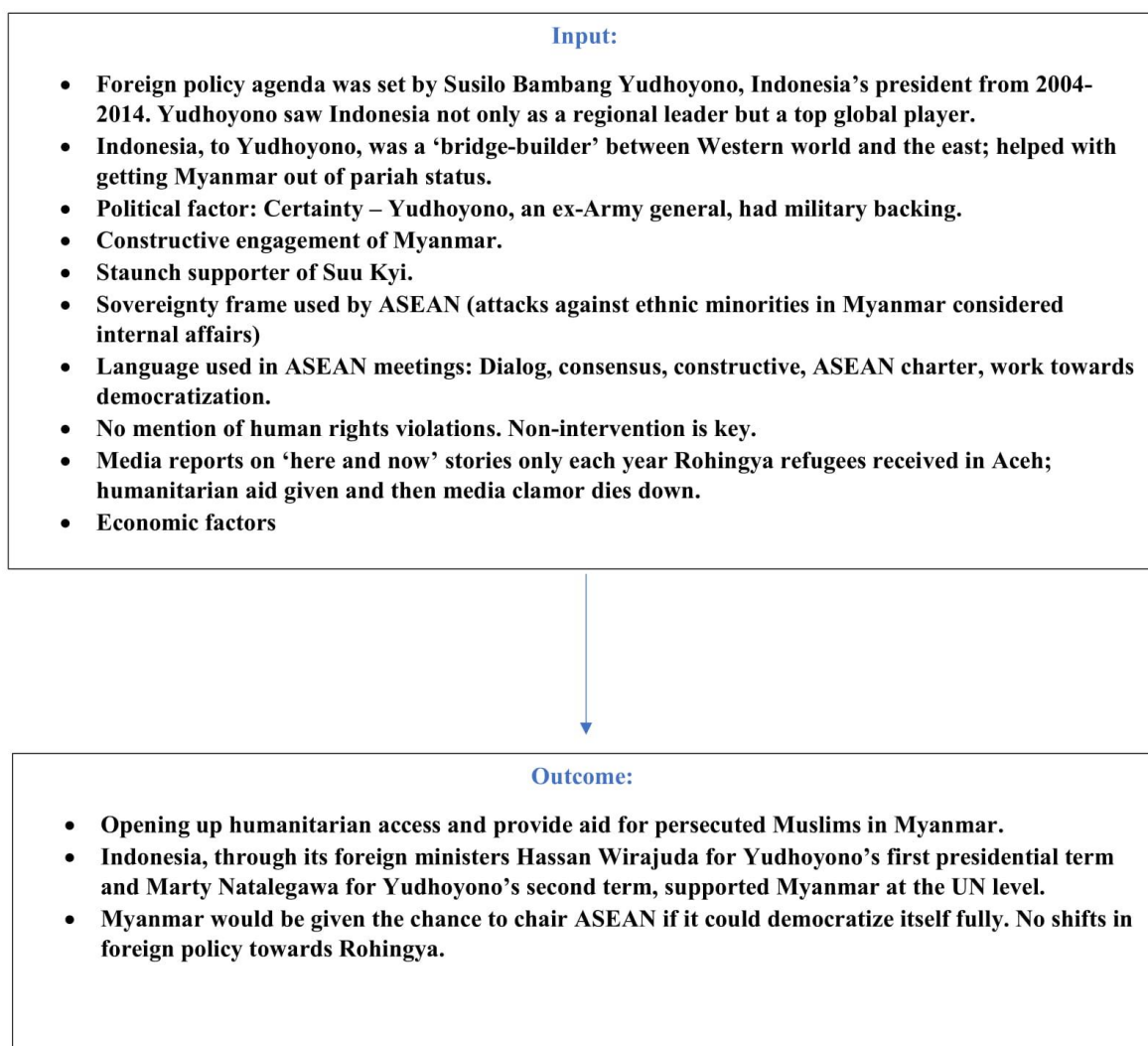


Diagram 2: Before 2017

DIAGRAM 2: INDONESIA
Policy towards Rohingya prior to 2017 attacks



Chapter 3 – Indonesia

An Islamist alliance that mobilized hundreds of thousands to bring down the Jakarta governor in 2016 changed the landscape of Indonesian politics in two major ways. One, politicians are now convinced that to win an election, they must secure conservative Muslim votes. Two, Islamists know that achieving their political goals can be achieved by working through Indonesia's democratic system.

Over eight months prior to the 2017 Rohingya crisis, a gargantuan rally named the '212' paralyzed Jakarta, Indonesia's seat of power, on Dec. 2, 2016. (Al Jazeera 2016; BBC News Indonesia 2016). Arguably the largest demonstration ever to hit Jakarta in Indonesian history, the sea of demonstrators called for the removal of then governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, or Ahok, an ethnic Chinese Christian (CNN 2016; Portal-Islam.id 2016). Home to 10 million residents, Jakarta is a Muslim majority city. If a clear divide was not visible before between Muslims and non-Muslims and the haves and the have-nots in Indonesia, it became evident on December 2, 2016. Ahok had quoted the Al-Maidah 51, a Quranic verse, while introducing a program in a village, was videotaped and then hit with a blasphemy case. He was tried and jailed after the rally (The Guardian 2017).

212 Islamist Movement

This rally cannot be dismissed as a single event that will not lead into similar Islamist rallies in the future. It marked a turn towards the perceived rise of Islamist groups that coalesced into the 212 Movement, one that mobilized Muslims in the hundreds of thousands should mainstream politicians seek this Islamist coalition out for assistance towards winning an election. What this

coalition understands is that Indonesian Muslims leaning towards the right and fall into the category of the have-nots could reposition themselves in one of the world's largest democracies. Religious values do not need to motivate this repositioning as social, political and economic factors - like competition over resources and economic power – would do. Religion however is the primary identifier utilized.

The rally had the targeted goal of removing a non-Muslim Chinese in office, a 'have' deserving of being cast out due to an image constructed via an edited video that became viral on social media depicting Ahok of allegedly having conducted blasphemy. This video was circulated prior to the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial elections. On October 11, 2016, Indonesia's highest Muslim clerical body, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), ruled that the context in which the Al-Maidah 51 had been used by Ahok was blasphemous (BBC News Indonesia 2016; The Jakarta Post 2016; The Jakarta Post 2017). Calls to attend the 212 rally were communicated via social media, which Indonesians are savvy users of (Fealy 2016). After the 212 rally, Indonesia announced that it would begin the blasphemy trial. Ahok was convicted on May 9, 2017, sentenced to two years and jailed (The Guardian 2017).

Government response

There exists a government campaign spotlighting the disunity among Islamist groups themselves and criminalize or ban them (Al Jazeera 2017b). This shows that Indonesia is not going to make an abrupt shift towards the right anytime soon. The 212 Islamist Movement proved that the 'Muslim' card contained enough potency to persuade opinions of hundreds of thousands, when an issue is framed as 'defending Islam once it is assaulted by non-Muslims. What President Widodo

needed to do was strengthen his conservative Muslim base in light of the 2019 presidential elections.

Press

Eight months after Jakarta's 212 rally, a Buddhist 'hate' massacred Muslims in Myanmar. Myanmar's military believed that their persecution of Rohingya Muslims would be hidden from worldview, in that news of the persecution could not logically be communicated when the victims themselves, the potential communicators of the story, were either not going to live or would be left too traumatized to tell. Nationally, most Indonesians read their news online which is why many longstanding Indonesian press publications have constantly updated news websites, some with live feed.

Four classes of words developed for a dictionary by Medzihorsky, Popovic and Jenne (2017) served as a guideline for the analysis of articles selected for this thesis. The classes are human rights violations (HRVs); non-human rights violations (non-HRVs), pro-intervention and non-intervention (Medzihorsky et al. 2017).

Articles from three dailies² were selected which, in light of the dynamic political developments in Indonesia preceding the 2017 Rohingya attacks, represent Indonesian social groups nationwide. *Republika* is a Muslim newspaper backed by the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals, a group formerly led by ex-Indonesian president B.J. Habibie. Founded in 1965, *Kompas*, an independent and influential paper, is the country's most widely read and the oldest Indonesian-language daily. *Media Indonesia* was founded by media baron Surya Paloh, who endorsed Widodo

² Titles of articles coded from the Indonesian dailies listed in Appendices 1-3

for the 2019 elections. Going by the 4IMN newspaper web rankings, *Kompas* heads the pack, *Republika* falls in third place, *Media Indonesia* in ninth.

In the case of *Republika*, readers' letters and statements issued by Indonesia's Muslim figures and lecturers from Indonesian universities aimed at the publication's readers also ran alongside Rohingya-related articles.

REPUBLIKA

Persecution

Going by the coding's findings, analysis of articles and readers' statements published by *Republika* showed segments of text demanding Indonesian Muslims and the government to unite by not staying silent in the 'face of evil' and acting to stop the suffering of Rohingya. Words, phrases and topics that corresponded to the framing of HRVs specifically against civilian Rohingya included "babies killed", "stabbing children", "arson", "systematic rapes", "cleansing", "massacres", "gunshot", "executions", "burned alive", "human solidarity", "evictions", "drowning", "genocide". Calls for the Indonesian government to act decisively on Rohingya were made. The international community and the UN were criticized for not acting against the Myanmar government, viewed as the primary "persecutor". Comparisons were drawn between refugees of Syria, Gaza and Palestine with Rohingya. More than a thousand Southeast Asians, including Indonesians and Malaysians, have flown overseas to fight for the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq and some have returned home. (The Diplomat 2017). Some readers' letters called for more than just diplomacy. The Prophet's sayings and Islamic teachings were drawn upon in some statements, noting that Islam was 'one body and if one part is hurt, all gets hurt'.

Rohingya Muslims headlined front-page news immediately following the 2017 attacks, under a special section titled '*Tragedi Rohingya*'. *Republika* featured near daily articles featuring

persecution frames on Rohingya towards the end of August through to the entire September. Primarily, persecution and pro-intervention frames were used. Articles coded told of the systematic rapes of women while men and children were shot dead or massacred. The terms ‘ethnic cleansing’, ‘erasing the ethnic Rohingya Muslim’ and ‘genocide’ were used interchangeably. Some stressed that Muslims had never carried out a genocide against non-Muslims. Money and aid, even in tiny amounts, mattered to a Rohingya Muslim (16 September 2017, 29 September 2017). Over Rp.1.1 billion (US\$86,000) were collected in donations by *Republika* readers, which was then handed over to five major philanthropic organizations providing aid to Rohingya (20 April 2018). Islam, the statements and news articles pinpointed, was a religion of peace and it was the duty of all Muslims to assist Rohingya by speaking up for them.

Silence in the face of evil would go against Islamic teachings and if you violate Islamic rules, ‘you are the devil’. In a letter published on Sept. 5, Ahmad Sastra, a research division head at Indonesia’s Ibn Khaldun University, a private Islamic educational institution, said that Muslims would receive warnings if they were to go against Allah’s instructions (5 September 2017).

“A Muslim therefore must take a clear stance, which is to side with the truth and prevent disobedience (towards Allah’s instructions). Follow the Prophet... to end the cruelty of the Myanmar regime, a Muslim must pray and speak up, do not be a silent devil” (5 September 2017).³

Reports portrayed young men fleeing as shots rang past them. One report quoted Mohamad Arafat, 25, in Maungdaw, Myanmar, stating that when some 50 Myanmar officers destroyed his village,

³ Translated by author

he ran and he lost track of both his parents. “Officers were cutting people. Shooting us. I am so scared, I will never go back there,” he said. (6 September 2017)

Republika’s Muslim readership, which includes university lecturers, the country’s highest MUI clerical body and leaders of Islamic philanthropic organizations responded to reports which used certain phrases and topics which called for public activism and collective action.

The phrases used were “Muslims, speak up!”, “help with mass prayers”, “help Rohingya with money, aid, medicines”. Phrases and topics that corresponded to the framing of pro-intervention included “send you objections to Myanmar embassy”, “Muslim people should lobby ASEAN”, “Call Muslims to help return Rohingya rights”, “stop the genocide”.

Sociology professor Bagong Suyanto at Airlangga University said victims of the 2017 “genocide” were blameless civilians, that girls and young women were brutally raped to terrorize and rid the country of the Rohingya ethnic group.

“Diplomatic action and conducting an intervention needs to happen to pressure this powerful regime in Myanmar from taking whatever action it wants, because the lives of tens of thousands of Rohingya civilians and their futures are at stake... genocidal acts are those that still violate the most basic humanitarian values. If it is not the international community that cares, who then should Rohingya look to?” (4 September 2017).⁴

⁴ Translated by author

Government response

Praises for Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi flowed in for her shuttle diplomacy skills: she flew to Myanmar to meet Suu Kyi in the first week of September and ensured that Indonesia became the first country to negotiate the opening up of access into Myanmar for aid delivery.

Public activism

Thousands of Indonesians protesting outside Jakarta's Myanmar embassy on Sept. 6 carried slogans that read 'Stop the Genocide in Myanmar Burma' and called upon the Indonesian government to clearly show through action its concern towards Rohingya Muslims. Security officers ensured that the embassy was guarded and water cannons were in place (6 September 2017). On Sept. 16, thousands protested in support of Rohingya at the National Monument Square in Central Jakarta (16 September 2017).

In "End the Rohingya Suffering" published on September 4, a front-page article noted that the first wave of protests had begun at different points in the Greater Jakarta area, including the Hotel Indonesia Jakarta roundabout in Central Jakarta. Protesters called for an immediate end to the violence and for Suu Kyi's Nobel Prize to be revoked (4 September 2017). The same article quotes a Jakarta-based Buddhist monk, Dutavira Mahastavira, saying: "We in Indonesia, I myself and the other monks, are not just concerned but we have been crying, how could this happen (why did attacks occur?)"⁵

Political efforts, demonstrators said, must be galvanized to show that Indonesia, a Muslim-dominated nation, should reach out to other Islamic countries and apply pressure on Myanmar. Other statements stressed that more aggressive diplomatic efforts needed to be taken.

⁵ Translated by author

Risman Muchtar, who heads Jakarta's *Ukhuwah* Commission (Islamic brotherhood) of the powerful MUI, called the erasing of Rohingya Muslims an "extraordinary crime" (15 September 2017). The MUI comprises of influential Muslim clerics. Muchtar said that Indonesia was duty-bound to be "proactive in making world peace" (15 September 2017).

"First, apply political pressure both within the nation; like the more than 1 million Muslim protesters conveying their political aspirations outside the Myanmar embassy; conduct political lobbying at the ASEAN and international level; including across Islamic nations worldwide so that we are one in applying pressure, even to a point of going with political sanctions towards Myanmar," (15 September 2017). Secondly, he said, Muslims across Indonesia need to provide aid to Rohingya Muslims, because "to only demonstrate will not provide logistical help. This would mean that we are allowing Rohingya Muslims to die of starvation and leave them without medical aid," (15 September 2017).⁶

On the extremist side, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), a radical Islamic group in Indonesia, claimed it was "open war with Myanmar" (6 September 2017). FPI spokesman Slamet Maarif said the group was ready to send 10,000 volunteers to Myanmar if the Indonesian and Myanmar governments failed to stop the massacres of the Rohingya (6 September 2017).

Persecution frames months following attacks

Nearly all news articles and statements analyzed featured paragraphs either detailing the methods of persecution or noted that widespread persecution had occurred; that this persecution had caused members of Rohingya Muslim families to end up alone and to flee after viewing family members

⁶ Translated by author

executed or raped; that attacks were organized; that victims had undergone persecution for years and they included children. The Myanmar military was identified as primary persecutor.

On December 12, 2017, *Republika*'s front-page featured an Associated Press (AP) news story, translated into Bahasa Indonesia and summarized, on the methodical rapes of 29 Rohingya girls and women. The ages of the victims ranged from 13 to 26. The rapes occurred between October 2016 to September 2017. The women had consented to their story being told, according to the AP. Going by the translated version featured in *Republika*, all the interviewees with the exception of one said that the rapists were in military-style uniform.

The translated story quotes a border affairs minister in Myanmar identified as Phone Tint as stating that:

“These women are claiming that they were raped, but look at them. Do you think that they are attractive? Raped?” (12 December 2017).⁷

The original quote from AP reads as:

“These women were claiming there were raped, but look at their appearances – do you think they are that attractive to be raped?” (11 December 2017)

The translated version in *Republika* provides details on the methodical rapes of one woman identified as F (12 December 2017). The rapes occur on two separate occasions with the second instance occurring more than three months after the first (12 December 2017). In the first, her husband, bound by military officers, witnesses her rape by officers before he is shot dead (12 December 2017). F had been married for a month. F manages to save herself and ends up being

⁷ Translated by author

sheltered by a couple with a five-year-old boy (12 December 2017). F learns she is pregnant. Over three months later, military officers visit that home, kill the husband and boy, rape the wife and F and leave them for dead. F suffers intense bleeding during the second instance. She picks herself up and begins a journey to reach Bangladesh. This is where she now lives (12 December 2017).

It is not publicly known as to why the full original AP story, featuring interviews of other victims, was not translated by *Republika* in its entirety but as with all newspapers, print space is an issue. Another key issue may have been an editorial decision to not feature the detailed nature of the entire, original AP story considering *Republika*'s Muslim conservative readership. Conservative Indonesian Muslims, both men and women, are not likely to appreciate reading in print explicit details of the rapes of women and consequences of those rapes. To a newspaper, such details would have diverted an issue from one that could galvanize a public, to the kind that may stop them from going to the streets because the latter would entail readers to openly acknowledge that they had read explicit details of a rape, and were angered by such details. The original AP story quoted a gynecologist stating that two rape victims suffered lacerations to their cervixes, for example.

Foreign policy

On January 20, news headlined 'President Jokowi plans to visit Rohingya Camp' quoted Indonesian foreign ministry spokesman Armanatha Nasir saying that the Rohingya issue had caught Indonesia's attention. Widodo planned to visit Bangladesh on January 27 and possibly, a Rohingya camp. This was to be a part of Widodo's foreign policy initiative – a six-day visit to India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Widodo attended multilateral and bilateral meetings throughout his visit which were marked by his promotion of a shift towards

maritime geopolitics, one that spotlighted the Indonesian archipelago and its role as a leader of the ASEAN bloc. Geographically, Indonesia lies between the Indian and Pacific oceans.

On January 25, *Republika* reported that in New Delhi, one of Widodo's stopovers, Suu Kyi would be attending the ASEAN–India Commemorative Summit. Suu Kyi and Widodo were present for the summit. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in 2014 initiated a strategy focusing on the Indian and Pacific oceans. At the 2018 summit, Modi, according to international media, was wooing ASEAN in his attempts to beat down Chinese influence.

On January 28, Widodo was reported arriving with his entourage at a Rohingya camp named Jamtoli, in Cox's Bazar. Widodo praised Bangladesh's prime minister, Hasina, for providing shelter to Rohingya Muslims.

KOMPAS

Government responses

Going by the coding's findings, analysis of articles published by *Kompas* showed segments of text focusing on the Indonesian government's diplomatic efforts towards the 2017 crisis and views of both non-intervention and pro-intervention. These were government responses to outcry voiced by Indonesians as reported in several media. Words corresponding to the pro-intervention frame included "sanction", "support", "action", "stop". Words corresponding to the non-intervention frame included "dialog", "sensitivity", "caution", "domestic". The Indonesian government indicated that Indonesians had spoken about their concerns towards the conditions in Rakhine, which is why diplomacy efforts towards the conditions in Myanmar had been speedy.

In her meeting with Suu Kyi and Myanmar military commander U Min Aung Hlaing in September 2017, Indonesian foreign minister Marsudi said:

“I am in Myanmar to bring the mandate of the people of Indonesia who are very concerned towards the humanitarian crisis currently ongoing in Rakhine State and Indonesia wants to help. I am also here to bring the voice of the international world, stating that the humanitarian crisis in Rakhine needs to soon end.” (5 September 2017).⁸

Indonesia conveyed that it would provide Myanmar with US\$2 million in humanitarian assistance for the victims of violence through Indonesia’s humanitarian alliance for Myanmar, comprising of 11 Indonesian civil society organizations. This alliance was formed on August 31, 2017, or days following the attacks.

The same report quotes University of Indonesia law professor Hikmahanto Juwana referring to sanctions and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) norm. R2P states that the international community is obliged to protect vulnerable groups from gross human rights violations, like genocide. Indonesia, Juwana said, could influence other ASEAN nations to take a stand and implement R2P, like economic sanctions against Myanmar, adding that sanctions could be implemented as a solution to rescuing Rohingya, since this was a regional problem (5 September 2017).

⁸ Translated by author

Separately, former law minister Hamid Awaluddin wrote in *Kompas* that ideally, the armed Rohingya should not be demanding for independence or leave Myanmar to form their own country. They “are not the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka,” suggesting that ARSA neither had the ammunition nor the tremendous support received by Tamil Tigers to wage war against the Sri Lankan government for years. He added that all calls made by parties towards Widodo to pull the Indonesian ambassador to Myanmar out of the country in protest was neither realistic nor productive, particularly since Indonesia needed to implement soft diplomacy (7 September 2017). Awaluddin said:

“Suu Kyi is not just a statesperson, but a politician who must see to the happiness of a lot of parties who can give votes to her own (political) party and to her... the steps taken by our foreign minister, Retno Marsudi, has to be one full of caution. We (Indonesia) cannot be viewed as pushing them (Myanmar)...”.⁹ (7 September 2017).

After meeting with Suu Kyi, Marsudi flew to Bangladesh and met with Bangladesh’s Sheikh Hasina. Marsudi assured Hasina that she would lobby heads of state, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the UN to put an end to this crisis (6 September 2017).

“We are ready to lighten pressures felt by Bangladesh through diplomacy... This crisis needs to end. I repeat, this crisis needs to end,” Marsudi told reporters.¹⁰ (6 September 2017).

⁹ Translated by author

¹⁰ Translated by author.

Infographics featured below the report showed the following reactions from state leaders: Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha said he would open his borders for Rohingya on August 29; Sheikh Hasina on August 30 requests the US government to pressure Myanmar. She was unhappy with refugees running towards her country and seeking refuge there; Turkey on September 1 asks Bangladesh to open its borders for Rohingya, stating that Turkey would pay for it. Indonesian president Widodo on September 3 states that he regrets that violence occurred in Rakhine State and was committed to work with civilian organizations in Indonesia and the international world to assist in ending the crisis.

UN

Vice President Jusuf Kalla attended a UN General Assembly meeting in New York on Sept. 21 (23 September 2017). He informed audiences of Indonesia's '4+1 formula', one which focused on diplomatic efforts towards Myanmar: promotion of peace and recovery of stability; stopping and refraining from any forms of violence; providing protection to all irrespective of religion and ethnicity; and immediate opening of access for delivery of humanitarian aid into Myanmar. These were Indonesia's requests made to Myanmar when Marsudi visited Suu Kyi that September.

Kalla seemed to be hedging about the Rohingya issue going by his statements at UNGA. He did not elaborate on the 4+1 formula at the meeting but said:

“This is what is most acceptable to both parties. It is only this that can be done by us and Myanmar. It is not possible for us to force Myanmar with the sending in of troops or peacekeeping forces because this is a domestic issue.”

2018 and UN bid

Marsudi underscored Indonesia's role in her New Year speech on January 8, 2018 and showed that the country was leaving behind an image of regional insularity (Indonesian Foreign Affairs Ministry's Annual Press Statement 2018). She asked other nations to support Indonesia's nomination for a non-permanent seat in the UNSC for 2019-2020, adding that Indonesia was aggressively lobbying out its campaign through increased participation across international organizations.

MEDIA INDONESIA

Going by the coding's findings, analysis of articles published by *Media Indonesia* showed segments of text in support of efforts of Indonesian Muslims to keep the peace, even as huge demonstrations occurred in parts of the country in support of Rohingya. Words and phrases corresponding to the framing of HRVs specifically against Rohingya included "systematic rapes", "ethnic cleansing", "massacres", "rapes". Words corresponding to the framing of pro-intervention included "action", "stop" and "intervention".

The words 'genocide' and 'ethnic cleansing' were used by protesters. Separate news articles and pieces by religious leaders and academic lecturers utilized the word 'genocide'. Reports of government responses following protests from Sept. 2-4, 2017 included those by Indonesia's top security minister Wiranto who urged the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) – an Islamic group known for its efforts to radicalize fighters - not to send its volunteers to Myanmar, as well as focus on the diplomatic efforts of Vice President Kalla. Kalla, who was former president Yudhoyono's VP and ex-chief of the Indonesian Red Cross, had visited Myanmar during previous cycles of violence.

Arguments were presented for and against non-interference through voices within Indonesian human rights organizations, think tanks and organizations such as the UN and ASEAN. China's Belt and Road (OBOR) initiative is featured in the country's friendly, non-indifferent stance towards Myanmar. News with persecution frames translated into *Bahasa Indonesia* from wire agencies like the *Agence France Presse* were compiled together with local Indonesian humanitarian voices, depicting a united front in support of Rohingya.

Irrelevance of sovereignty

Media analyst Ni Made Vira Saraswati of Indonesian security think-tank, Lemhanas, wrote of the deadlock resulting from talks on Rohingya between members of the UNSC meeting held on Sept. 12, 2017, in an opinion piece (23 September 2017). China backed Myanmar at that meeting and the use of military force to safeguard national stability (23 September 2017). In March 2017, China was backed by Russia in blocking a statement on Myanmar's human rights conditions which was to be read out by other UNSC members, Ni Made said. China is an 'old friend' of Myanmar and China 'embraced Suu Kyi' in support of the OBOR infrastructure-building initiative. OBOR's routes in Southeast Asia include Myanmar. Great powers (Ni Made refers to the UNSC's permanent members) hold a crucial role in resolutions of interstate or intrastate conflicts, and these UNSC members portray the world's 'balance of power' among the world's most powerful nation states – a balance which had not changed since the time of World War II (23 September 2017). The late handling of the Rwandan genocide was because the great powers did not have any interest

in Rwanda (23 September 2017). All ASEAN nations, Ni Made said, are not able to stop the aggressive nature of the Myanmar military due to the non-interference principle.

The non-interference principle is irrelevant in the face of the 2017 crisis, a report quoting Dina Wisnu, an official of ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), said (14 September 2017). The principle was irrelevant because: Indonesia had conducted intensive diplomatic efforts with Myanmar; human rights violations were occurring daily in Rakhine – a matter which could no longer be resolved by Myanmar itself; it was not possible for Myanmar to resolve this problem alone because there are no civil organizations in Myanmar strong enough to fight this ‘internal’ Myanmar issue (14 September 2017).

“I want to hear the Indonesian government say that this humanitarian crisis in Myanmar is a regional problem and not just Myanmar’s,” Dina said. (14 December 2017).¹¹

Separately, Karina Larasati of the ASEAN Studies Center at Yogyakarta’s Gadjah Mada University noted that ASEAN could not intervene over the Rohingya persecution because ASEAN “did not have the capacity to conduct an intervention, what more the handing down of sanctions.”¹² (30 October 2017).

Days following the attacks, the paper carried reports of protests held in cities across Java and the northern parts of Indonesia (Banda Aceh on Sept. 4, 2017 and Medan in North Sumatra on Sept. 6, 2017), by Muslims and non-Muslims supporting Rohingya. Thousands demonstrating on Sept.

¹¹ Translated by author

¹² Translated by author

6, 2017 demanded that the Myanmar ambassador should be kicked out to pressure the Myanmar government to stop persecuting Rohingya (6 September 2017). Protest coordinators included alumni of the 212 Movement, responsible for the 2016 mass rally against former Jakarta governor Ahok (6 September 2017). Demonstrators demanded that a stop be put to “genocide against ethnic Rohingya” (2 September 2017). A Molotov cocktail was thrown by an unidentified person at the Myanmar embassy in protest (3 September 2017).

Demonstrators in the Acehese capital of Banda Aceh, North Sumatra, called Myanmar military’s actions towards the Rohingya “genocidal” in a protest outside the Dharma Bhakti Buddhist Vihara temple (4 September 2017).

“This temple’s leaders must join us in condemning the attacks, because these attacks against the Rohingya were supported by monks in Myanmar. To the United Nations, quickly take over this humanitarian crisis situation... Myanmar will not stop its genocidal actions,”¹³ Michael Octaviano, the demonstration’s coordinator, said. (4 September 2017)

Separately, law professor Prof. Jawahir Thontowi at the Indonesian Islamic University supported intervention, adding that Suu Kyi through neglect had allowed for genocidal crimes to occur (4 September 2017).

“... We demand the UNSC to take a decision reflecting the importance of a humanitarian intervention, and military action as a collective in Rakhine,”¹⁴ Jawahir said (4 September 2017).

¹³ Translated by author

¹⁴ Translated by author

In Jambi province, located on the eastern coast of Sumatra island, over a hundred protesters gathered in a Buddhist alliance, together with the Muslim community of Jambi, in a solidarity event condemning Myanmar (6 September 2017).

“We in the name of Buddhists of Jambi ... condemn the rulers of Myanmar who are allowing crimes to occur against Rohingya. This must stop,”¹⁵ said Budi Harto, a Buddhist in Jambi.

Public action

Islamic boarding schools, locally known as *pesantren*, in Pasuruan, East Java, will take in Rohingya refugees (6 September 2017). *Pesantren* in Pasuruan would also coordinate with others in Lumajang (East Java), Bojonegoro (East Java), Wonosobo (Central Java), Pekalongan (Central Java) and Jakarta on taking in Rohingya (6 September 2017).

“... to us, the violence towards Rohingya is a form of repression that needs to be fought against. To overcome this, we must build up on our solidarity spirit...,” A Suadi Abu Amar, caretaker of the Ar Roudhoh Pasrepan *pesantren* in East Java, said (6 September 2017).

Staff at the Purwakarta regental administration of Central Java collected up to Rp.200 million (US\$15,000 approximately then), to be handed over to the Indonesian Red Cross for Rohingya (4 September 2017).

¹⁵ Translated by author

Purwakarta Regent Dedi Mulyadi said:

“In accordance to the guidance given by the President (Joko Widodo) we are today going to conduct real action, and not just issue condemnations. We have collected funds for the Rohingya community, and hopefully this will lessen their burden.”¹⁶ (4 September 2017).

Government response

Vice President Kalla said he would bring the Rakhine issue to two high-level conferences: one at an Organization of Islamic Cooperation meeting in Kazakhstan and another at a UN General Assembly in New York (5 September 2017). The OIC meeting in Kazakhstan was related to science and technology but he said he would be meeting other leaders there (5 September 2017). The trigger of the humanitarian crisis was not solely about one factor, he said, adding that problems included “historical aspects, politics as well, economy and religion too,” (5 September 2017). Politicians in Rakhine, Kalla said, were in need of constituents, most of whom are Buddhists (5 September 2017).

Indonesia’s top security minister Wiranto forbade the FPI in Indonesia to send volunteers to Myanmar. Wiranto’s statement followed a report that South Sumatra’s branch of the FPI were ready to send volunteers to Myanmar. Wiranto added that the country would not remove the Myanmar ambassador to Indonesia, adding that diplomatic moves were a crucial requirement at this juncture. “... if we were to remove the ambassador, there would be no diplomatic relations, and then through what (means) are we going to send aid (to Rohingya)?”¹⁷ (5 September 2017).

¹⁶ Translated by author

¹⁷ Translated by author

ANALYSIS

Widodo's penchant to listen to the people's demands became even more crucial after he learned that the landscape of Indonesian politics was changing, marked by the rise of Islamist groups and the 212 rally in 2016. To win the 2019 presidential elections, Widodo needed to secure conservative Muslim votes.

After the 2017 attacks occurred, Indonesian media used affective frames focused on intense persecution and Muslims, carrying titles with words like genocide and ethnic cleansing. Coverage of this crisis occurred consistently for months. Reports featured voices of Indonesians from different provinces demanding more than just diplomatic action from the Indonesian government. Calls were made to the government to show solidarity towards Rohingya. Indonesian Muslims asked for all to speak up for the Rohingya and help them. Collective action included providing aid, money and medicines for the Rohingya to street demonstrations involving thousands in the country, following media reportage. Calls to provide shelter for Rohingya refugees were made, should they seek it in Indonesia. In response, Widodo calls the violence in Rakhine regrettable and states that the government would work with Indonesian and international communities to resolve the issue. Foreign Minister Marsudi flew to Myanmar to meet with Suu Kyi and the Myanmar military, urging them to open humanitarian access for aid delivery. She succeeds, then flies to Bangladesh to liaise with its prime minister on Rohingya.

Widodo's key diplomatic moves occurred in January 2018 when he visited South Asian countries, including India and Bangladesh, in a week-long visit. A former furniture businessman, Widodo previously noted that he looked to gain real results from his efforts in multilateral or bilateral

engagements. He needed to prop up his domestic and international standing as a statesman. The main event was the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in India, where Widodo pushed the Indo-Pacific region as a strong trade bloc, one spotlighting Indonesia's geopolitical position. Myanmar's Suu Kyi attended this summit. No media report exists that tells of a separate meeting specifically involving only these two leaders at that summit.

Another important event was visiting the Rohingya camp in Bangladesh and Widodo's meeting with Bangladeshi prime minister Sheikh Hasina, which showed his concern for Rohingya and boosted his image in Indonesia. Realist approaches aside, Indonesia has a strong track record of acting as peacemaker, having done so with the southern Philippines. Indonesia also contributes to peacekeeping missions in Africa.

Chapter 4 – Malaysia

1MDB

The Wall Street Journal in 2015 reported the existence of a paper trail tracing US\$700m from 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), Malaysia's state-owned investment fund, to bank accounts belonging to then Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak (WSJ 2015). The 1MDB scandal today is called the world's largest financial scandal, with some US\$4.5 billion siphoned off and funneled into accounts linked to Razak. This May, Malaysians voted Razak out of power, choosing 92-year-old Mahathir Mohamad instead to lead Muslim-dominated Malaysia. Mohamad was the country's prime minister from 1981 to 2003. Razak's loss in the May elections was the first loss recorded since the country's independence from Britain over 60 years ago. When Razak took office in 2009, he had set up 1MDB for purposes of promoting investments through the formation of global partnerships in the real estate, energy and tourism business sectors (Gabriel 2018). Instead, US\$4.5 billion were borrowed via bonds and siphoned overseas (Gabriel 2018).

Nearly two years prior to this May's elections, Razak used the religion card in his speeches and campaigning strategies to divert media attention away from the scandal. During this period – as opposed to prior to 2016 when he had remained silent over the Rohingya issue – Rohingya became a buzzword for Razak. According to Rohingya Vision, a television operation staffed fully by Rohingya which has a studio and a newsroom in the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur (Al Jazeera 2017), Razak was the first ASEAN leader to call the Rohingya violence a genocide (Rohingya Vision 2017). He championed their cause, rebuked Suu Kyi publicly and is perceived to have pushed the Rohingya issue to international attention.

After Razak's government suffered an electoral setback in 2013, it decided to fall back on conservative Islamization. This is evident in statements made by Razak's government officials. They were eager to garner Muslim votes from the country's Malay ethnic group. The Razak government's concern for Rohingya Muslims seemed more a strategic tactic because it strengthened the rhetoric on Islam.

One telling example was the rally on December 4, 2016. Following the October 2016 attacks against the Rohingya in Rakhine, Razak called for a rally, attended by thousands, to support the Rohingya.

The country, home to over 130,000 Myanmar refugees, has a vocal ethnic Rohingya human rights group (Mehrom). Many Rohingya work illegally across Malaysia's construction sites (The New York Times 2007). In previous years, Razak was silent on the Rohingya issue, like any other ASEAN nation state leader. Arguments exist that this silence is not about non-interference. Rather, it is a sustained, purposeful act to avoid securitizing the Rohingya matter, which according to the Copenhagen School of critical security studies, requires a speech act. Jones (2011) had noted that oligarchic interests played a key role when it comes to Southeast Asian nations' policies on Myanmar. Oligarchs within the region would consider refugees from Myanmar a commodity that can be exploited, for example. The issue therefore would not be securitized. Malaysia's economy depended on foreign labor, including about a million illegal workers (Jones 2011). Quoting NGO leaders, Jones alleged that migrants from Myanmar had been used to construct Putrajaya, Malaysia's federal administrative capital (Jones 2011).

Press

Articles from three media¹⁸, namely the *New Straits Times (NST)*, *Malay Mail Online (MM)* and *Utusan Malaysia*, are analyzed. Unlike the case study of Indonesia, this chapter will not have the names of the news media as subheadings but focuses on two issues: persecution and security.

Persecution

Mehrom president Zafar Ahmad Abdul Ghani told *Utusan Malaysia* that to the Myanmar military, dogs are treated with more respect than Rohingya. Rohingya sat at a far lower rung than dogs because if a dog was murdered in Myanmar, a person could face charges (*Utusan Malaysia*, September 2017). If a Rohingya was killed, the body would simply be thrown into a sack and dumped in the river. Zafar added that the 2017 attacks had from August 25 till September killed 160,000 children, women and men. He added that 35 Rohingya villages had been burned down. Women were raped and dismembered. The Rohingya women, Zafar said, were raped by military officers in mosques. Myanmar's military also dumped Rohingya live into a single, huge hole, burned them, and instructed leaders of Rohingya villagers to take the blame for the massacres and arson (*Utusan Malaysia*, September 2017).

In an Oct. 20, 2017 report, Serantau Muslim Welfare Organization's president, Raja Ahmad Iskandar Raja Yaacob, attacked the Myanmar government's statement that the 2017 attacks were a singular action of retaliation following attacks on police posts by ARSA. He seemed angry at the half-hearted attempts of Islamic countries to help the Rohingya, pinpointing the fact that some of

¹⁸ Titles of articles coded from Malaysian dailies listed in Appendices 4-6

these countries were still rolling out “the red carpet” for Myanmar’s leaders whom he said were “involved in the genocide”. (Utusan Malaysia 2017).

On Nov. 16, 2017, a report noted that 30 women and children had been trapped and burned alive by Myanmar’s military in Rakhine. Rohingya, the report said, were being treated like animals. (Utusan Malaysia 2017).

An opinion piece by former UN International Labor Organization regional deputy director Rueben Dudley told of his horror and shame at the attacks (NST, December 2017).

“The brutalising, systematic elimination and driving out of the Rohingya people from where they have lived for generations has continued with increasing violence for decades. Yet, we have been silent, while, with impunity and endorsed by the authorities, thousands of Rohingya children, women and men were, and are being, assaulted, massacred or forced to flee to an unknown future, facing peril, starvation, disease and death.”

On January 3, 2018, the NST reported that international response to the Rohingya crisis had been insignificant and slow compared to international outrage after terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels. Historical reference was made to previous acts of ethnic cleansing. It referred to the 1978 Dragon King clearance operation. Similar operations occurred in 1991 and 1992. NST suggested the aim was to make the Muslim minority in Myanmar an invisible one.

Security

NST conducted its own investigations into the human trafficking aspect of the Rohingya issue, particularly of refugees fleeing from Myanmar to the Malaysian-Thai border, in the border town of Wang Kelian. This is linked to Malaysia’s find of 139 graves in more than two dozen human trafficking camps, used by gangs smuggling migrants across the border with Thailand in May

2015. The NST followed up on this investigation a few times and focused on the Rohingya. The NST reported that many Rohingya migrants died of starvation, diseases and being stuck in cages in the Wang Kelian trafficking tragedy. The migrants could have been rescued if police had taken speedier action in January 2015 (NST, December 2017). Human smugglers bringing in people from Myanmar, mostly Rohingya Muslims, into Malaysia use the jungles of southern Thailand and the northern part of Malaysia as a route. This expose had generated praise by netizens on social media.

The Malaysian Border Security Agency Act came into force in December 2017 to secure Malaysia's land borders in light of the growing number of smugglers and human traffickers (NST, December 2017). NST reported that contraband worth some RM2 billion (US\$501.4m) entered Malaysia every year, including weapons. The article also told of human trafficking death camps, suggesting that ASEAN should do more to deal with human trafficking problems as this was a regional issue. It further states that the trafficking of Rohingya and Bangladeshis was still continuing and that stopping the people flow at source required Myanmar to stop persecuting the Rohingya (NST, December 2017).

Both NST and MM quote international news wire agencies when Malaysia intercepted a boat carrying 56 Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar, off the Langkawi island in April (NST, April 2018; MM, April 2018).

Another security feature refers to terrorism and radicalization. According to human rights activist U Kyaw Win of the Burma Human Rights Network, Myanmar could become a terrorist "breeding ground" due to an unfolding crisis where thousands of Muslims were displaced or missing (September 2017, Malay Mail). Many Myanmar refugees end up either heading to Thailand or Malaysia and illegally work there. Former Malaysian parliamentarian Nur J. Mohamed noted that

the international community should work to rid the world of the source of terror organizations like the IS. He specifically referred to the injustice suffered by Rohingya as a catalyst that could create chances for groups like IS to “infiltrate and hijack” the struggle of Rohingya (January 2018, Malay Mail).

Collective action

Demonstrators from a coalition of civil society organizations on Sept. 8, 2017 demanded the country’s home ministry shut down the Myanmar embassy in Malaysia over the Rohingya attacks (Utusan Malaysia 2017).

In another development, the Malaysian Youth Parliament in October 2017 passed a motion calling on the Malaysian government to urge international organizations, including the United Nations, to play a more serious role in ending the persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar. The Malaysian youth and sports minister, Khairy Jamaluddin, noted that Malaysia stood firm on the Rohingya issue and would push international communities to help Rohingya who were refugees in Bangladesh (MM, October 2017).

During the time of the crisis, Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Malaysia’s current deputy prime minister, had been leader of the country’s federal opposition. In September 2017, Wan Azizah was reported to have lent her voice to side with the Malaysian government in pressing ASEAN to take stronger action against Myanmar (MM, September 2017). She had added that ASEAN should convene an emergency meeting of all ASEAN leaders, where stronger diplomatic measures needed to be taken against Myanmar (MM, September 2017).

Foreign policy

On September 24, 2017, NST reported Malaysian foreign minister Anifah Aman's reasons for disassociating Malaysia from the ASEAN chairman's statement on the humanitarian condition in Rakhine, one of which was its "misrepresentation of the reality." The statement omitted the Rohingya as one of the affected communities. While Malaysia condemns the attacks against Myanmar security forces on Aug 25 launched by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), subsequent 'clearance operations' efforts by Myanmar authorities were disproportionate (and) led to the deaths of many innocent civilians and caused more than 400,000 Rohingya to be displaced. (NST, September 24)."

According to the Malay Mail, it was Malaysian diplomacy under the guidance of Razak that led then US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to switch the US's stance on Myanmar's actions against Rohingya Muslims to "ethnic cleansing" (November 2017, Malay Mail).

In mid-March 2018 at the ASEAN-Australia Summit in Sydney, one attended by Suu Kyi, Razak warned that Myanmar's Rohingya crisis would be a catalyst for a wave of regional radicalization (NST 2018a). He urged audiences at that summit to pay attention to the crisis and that neighboring countries needed to strengthen their anti-terror legislation to prevent possible terror attacks in the region. Southeast Asian leaders agreed to push for cooperation on combating the threat posed by possible extremists.

“Rakhine, with thousands of despairing and dejected people who see no hope in their future, can be a fertile ground for radicalization and recruitment by Daesh-affiliated groups,” Razak said (Malay Mail 2018).

ANALYSIS

The 2017 Rohingya crisis arrived at a time when Najib Razak was struggling to stay in power as reportage of the 1MDB corruption allegations dogged him. Considering that the Malaysian general elections were to be held in May 2018, Razak used his voice at the ASEAN level as well as the UN level to bring up the issue of Rohingya possibly in efforts to shore up his Muslim credentials at home and secure votes for the 2018 elections. The scale and the brutality of the 2017 attacks however, which resulted in more refugees arriving into Malaysia, saw both persecution and security frames employed in the reportage of the Rohingya crisis in Malaysia, a country which also has a vocal Rohingya human rights group. A matter which also lent to intensification of reportage on Rohingya migrants is the human trafficking aspect. An expose by the *New Straits Times* on the Wang Kelian graves, where it is believed that remains of Rohingya migrants fleeing persecution were found, led to the generation of more news stories and praise from Malaysians. This combination of factors possibly played a role in influencing variation in Malaysian foreign policy towards the Rohingya.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

What is it about the 2017 Rohingya crisis that precipitated shifts between Indonesian and Malaysian foreign policy towards the Rohingya? This question is linked to a singular point: how both the Muslim-dominated nations, when it came to the purges of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar through time, mostly looked the other way until after the 2017 genocide.

This thesis's purpose was to firstly show what primary factor or factors made Indonesia and Malaysia, two nation states with a combined population of some 250 million Muslims in Southeast Asia, decide to not only take another look at the persecution of Rohingya Muslims, but reconsider foreign policy alternatives specifically related to the Rohingya persecution issue – a matter both nations knew about but had ignored for decades. Secondly, this work was aimed at a better understanding of the media's role in Indonesia and Malaysia to affectively frame the 2017 Rohingya crisis in a way that linked public opinion to foreign policy. An increased frequency of news coverage in both countries using persecution frames galvanized the Muslim publics to 'act' in support of Rohingya Muslims. The Islamic populations of both nations asked their respective countries, through street rallies and voices covered in the press, to support the Rohingya through a more active form of action.

News stories and opinion pieces published by three dailies in Indonesia and three media in Malaysia were analyzed for this thesis. The time frame selected was between the end of August 2017 to mid-April 2018. Each of these media organizations have good, interactive news websites.

This thesis found that when news stories in each country took on a persecution frame, then the government was more likely to move away from a non-interventionist position and towards an interventionist one. In recent decades prior to the 2017 Rohingya crisis, Southeast Asian state

leaders would never use the word ‘Rohingya’ during ASEAN meetings with the purpose of keeping the peace with the Myanmar government as well as to resist securitization of the Rohingya issue. After the 2017 crisis, Malaysia publicly dissociated itself from an ASEAN statement which omitted the word ‘Rohingya’, while Indonesia conducted shuttle diplomacy to work towards becoming the first country to open access for emergency humanitarian aid to reach Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar. Indonesia succeeded.

Chapter 1 provides historical background on how both Muslim-dominated Indonesia and Malaysia, within the context of the regional organization ASEAN, dealt with Myanmar before and after the 2017 Rohingya crisis. The chapter elaborates on points linked to constructive engagement with Myanmar and the ASEAN non-interference principle - how this principle was stretched in some cases and adhered to in others. Chapter 2 discusses the thesis’s argument through theoretical and conceptual perspectives. Definitions on mediatization, foreign policy, genocide, ethnic cleansing and Islamic identity are provided in this chapter. Chapters 3 and 4 focuses on Indonesian media analyses and Malaysian media analyses respectively.

Through time, a public show of regional solidarity towards Myanmar, whether on the international stage like the UN or formal press briefings following ASEAN meetings, has been the norm for Indonesia and Malaysia. This was prior to the 2017 attacks. Any discussion by member states on the existence of conflict within their respective nations and – if the matter was brought up by a foreign minister - the means to resolve such conflicts, were confined to informal ASEAN fora.

Efforts to initiate a talk among “ASEAN family members” to discuss conflicts within each nation in informal ASEAN fora had begun when Indonesia initiated them following the 1998 reform movement.

Indonesia. Between 2004 and 2014, Indonesia was led by President Yudhoyono. Hassan Wirajuda and Marty Natalegawa were the foreign ministers during Yudhoyono's first and second presidential terms respectively. During his presidential terms, it was Yudhoyono who set the agenda on subjects ranging from foreign policy to Indonesia's global standing as a regional leader. This is different to how foreign policy is dealt with during the presidential term of Joko Widodo, elected in 2014 because of his popularity. Foreign policy today can be set in accordance to the people's popular demands.

Malaysia. Then Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak was politically defeated in May this year due to a rise in his unpopularity – as well as the unpopularity of his wife - driven by the 1MDB graft scandal. Even as Razak attempted to use the Rohingya issue to shore up his Muslim credentials, news in Malaysia, adopting persecution and security frames for Rohingya Muslim stories, competed with those of the upcoming 2018 Malaysian general elections and the 1MDB scandal. An ethnic Rohingya organization as well as a diasporic community exists in Malaysia. On one side, Malaysian media reported through the security frame about Razak conducting shuttle diplomacy - from meeting US president Donald Trump allegedly to talk about the Rohingya issue to traveling to Australia to talk at an ASEAN summit about regional destabilization caused by Rohingya. On the other, news reportage of Rohingya persecution in Myanmar cannot gloss over the fact that over 100,000 Myanmar refugees living in Malaysia are unable to live decent lives, find steady jobs or enjoy basic freedoms like being legally recognized by a state.

All in all, this thesis's findings do prove to some degree that persecution frames adopted by the media resulted in some variation in Indonesian and Malaysian foreign policy after the 2017 crisis. Agency had been shown by state leaders and foreign ministers in both states, coupled with local media reportage of Rohingya persecution in both countries. The findings are not solely derived

from analyses of Indonesian and Malaysian news articles on the 2017 crisis, but from discussions of various aspects linked to the Rohingya issue that begin from Chapter 1 through to the end of Chapter 4. They cover aspects linked to the following perspectives: historical, internal affairs, Islam, theory, concepts and positions taken within ASEAN and at the UN level.

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Appendix 1: *Republika* and *Republika.co.id* excerpts

The following is a list of titles of news articles and *Republika* readers' statements and letters used for coding and analyses for this thesis. The articles, statements and letters were selected in accordance to public reactions to the 2017 Rohingya crisis and government responses to this crisis.

Dates: Original Title in *Bahasa Indonesia* (English language translation of title)

1. 04 September 2017: *Apakah Rohingya tidak boleh hidup di bumi?* (Can't Rohingyas live on this earth?)
2. 04 September 2017: *Sudahi Derita Rohingya* (Stop the Suffering of Rohingyas)
3. 04 September 2017: *Rohingya, Siapa Peduli?* (Rohingya, Who Cares?)
4. 05 September 2017: *Akhiri Duka Rohingya* (End the Suffering of Rohingyas)
5. 06 September 2017: *Tragedi Rohingya – Kenangan Pilu di Perbatasan* (Rohingya Tragedy – Sad Memories at the Border)
6. 06 September 2017: *Jubir: FPI Siap Kirim 10 Ribu Laskar ke Rohingya* (Spokesman: FPI Ready to send 10,000 volunteers to the Rohingya)
7. 15 September 2017: *Pemusnahan Etnis Rohingya Muslim Kejahatan Luar Biasa Islam Ibu Kota* (Eradicating Rohingya Muslims an Extraordinary Crime against Islam)
8. 16 September 2017: *Energi untuk Rohingya* (Energy for Rohingyas)
9. 16 September 2017: *Ribuan Peserta Aksi untuk Rohingya Sudah Padati Monas* (Thousands rallying for Rohingya are crowding National Monument Square)

10. 17 September 2017: *Rohingya Etnis Paling Sengsara* (Rohingya is the most persecuted ethnic group)
11. 29 September 2017: *Rohingya Membutuhkan Bantuan Kita* (Rohingyas need our help)
12. 19 November 2017: In Picture: *Luka Fisik Pengungsi Rohingya* (In Pictures: Physical Wounds of Rohingya refugees)
13. 19 January 2018: *Jokowi berencana kunjungi Kamp Rohingya* (Jokowi plans to visit Rohingya Camp)
14. 28 January 2018: *Jokowi tiba di Cox's Bazar Kunjungi Kamp Rohingya* (Jokowi arrives at Cox's Bazar to visit Rohingya Camp)
15. 20 April 2018: *Pembaca Republika Serahkan Bantuan Rp 1M untuk Rohingya* (Republika readers hand over Rp 1 billion to Rohingyas)

Appendix 2: Kompas and Kompas.com excerpts

The following is a list of titles of news articles and opinion pieces used for coding and analyses for this thesis. The articles were selected in accordance to public reactions to the 2017 Rohingya crisis and government responses to this crisis.

Dates: Original Title in *Bahasa Indonesia* (English language translation of title)

1. 30 August 2017: *Bantu Rohingya, Menlu Retno akan Terbang ke Myanmar* (To help Rohingyas, Foreign Minister Retno will fly to Myanmar)
2. 31 August 2017: *DPR Desak Pemerintah Panggil Dubes Myanmar Bahas Rohingya* (Indonesian House of Representatives Push Government to Call Myanmar ambassador to discuss Rohingyas)
3. 03 September 2017: *Jokowi Minta Myanmar Hentikan Kekerasan terhadap Warga* (President Joko Widodo demands Myanmar to stop Violence against its people)
4. 05 September 2017: *Temui Otoritas Myanmar, Menlu Retno Tawarkan Solusi untuk Warga Rohingya* (Foreign Minister Retno meets with Myanmar's authorities and offers a solution for Rohingyas)
5. 05 September 2017: *Pesan Warga RI Disampaikan* (Message of the Indonesian people has been conveyed)
6. 06 September 2017: *RI Siap Membantu Banglades* (Republic of Indonesia Stands Ready to Assist Bangladesh)

7. 07 September 2017: *Nestapa Rohingya* (Sorrowful Rohingya)
8. 17 November 2017: *Asean Lunak Soal Isu Rakhine* (Asean is soft on the Rakhine Issue)
9. 10 January 2018: *RI Dorong Kemitraan Global* (Republic of Indonesia pushing for Global Partnerships)
10. 26 January 2018: *Psikolog: Anak-anak Rohingya Trauma dan Takut Kembali ke Myanmar* (Psychologist: Rohingya children traumatized and fear returning back to Myanmar)
11. 29 January 2018: *Di Banglades, Presiden Jokowi Serahkan Bantuan untuk Pengungsi Rohingya* (In Bangladesh, President Joko Widodo Hands over Aid to Rohingya Refugees)
12. 24 April 2018: *Bertemu dengan Presiden Myanmar, Jokowi juga Singgung Pengungsi Rohingya* (President Joko Widodo mentions Rohingya refugees in meeting with Myanmar President)

Appendix 3: Media Indonesia and *Mediaindonesia.com*

excerpts

The following is a list of titles of news articles used for analyses for this thesis. The articles were selected in accordance to public reactions to the 2017 Rohingya crisis and government responses to this crisis.

Dates: Original Title in *Bahasa Indonesia* (English language translation of title)

1. 02 September 2017: *Pembantaian Rohingya, Kedutaan Myanmar di Jakarta Mulai Didemo* (Rohingyas Massacred, Demonstrations begin at Myanmar Embassy in Jakarta)
2. 03 September 2017: *Polisi Masih Selidiki Pelemparan Molotov ke Kedubes Myanmar* (Police still investigating the throwing of a Molotov cocktail at Myanmar's Embassy)
3. 04 September 2017: *Masyarakat Aceh Kecam Pemerintah Myanmar di Vihara* (Communities in Aceh Condemn Myanmar government at Buddhist Temple)
4. 04 September 2017: *Guru Besar UII: Pembantaian Rohingya Bentuk Genosida* (Professor at Universitas Islam Indonesia: Rohingya Massacres a form of Genocide)
5. 04 September 2017: *PNS Purwakarta Kumpulkan Dana Untuk Rohingya* (Officers at Purwakarta's local administration collect funds for Rohingya)
6. 05 September 2017: *FPI Dilarang Kirim Relewan ke Myanmar* (FPI forbidden from sending volunteers to Myanmar)

7. 05 September 2017: *Wapres akan bawa isu Rakhine ke OKI dan PBB* (Vice President to bring Rakhine issue to the OIC and the UN)
8. 06 September 2017: *Umat Buddha Jambi Kutuk Kekerasan terhadap Warga Muslim Rohingya* (Buddhist community in Jambi Condemn Violence towards Rohingya Muslims)
9. 06 September 2017: *Pesantren di Pasuruan Siap Tampung Pengungsi Rohingya* (Islamic boarding schools in Pasuruan ready to take in Rohingya refugees)
10. 06 September 2017: *Umat Islam di Medan Turun Ke Jalan Kutuk Kasus Rohingya* (Muslims in Medan Protest and Condemn attacks on Rohingya)
11. 14 September 2017: *Prinsip Nonintervensi Tidak Relevan Untuk Krisis Rohingya* (Non-intervention principle is not valid for Rohingya crisis)
12. 30 October 2017: *PBB Siapkan Draf Resolusi Tekan Myanmar Akhiri Kekerasan Terhadap Rohingya* (UN prepares draft of a resolution to pressure Myanmar to end violence against Rohingyas)
13. 21 April 2018: *Partai Aceh Apresiasi Nelayan Aceh Selamatkan Pengungsi Rohingya* (Political party, Partai Aceh, appreciates Acehnese fishermen for rescuing Rohingya refugees)

Appendix 4: *Utusan Malaysia* Online excerpts

The following is a list of titles of news articles used for analyses for this thesis. The articles were selected in regard to coverage of the 2017 Rohingya crisis.

Dates: Original Title in *Malay* (English language translation of title)

1. 04 September 2017: *Rohingya terus dizalimi* (Rohingyas continue to be persecuted)
2. 06 September 2017: *Rohingya... Jangan Terlepas Pandang* (Rohingya... Don't Lose Sight of Them)
3. 06 September 2017: *Kepelbagaian wajah Islamophobia* (Different faces of Islamophobia)
4. 06 September 2017: *Kuasa Besar perlu 'Pujuk' Myanmar* (Big Powers need to 'Coax' Myanmar)
5. 09 September 2017: *Tutup Kedutaan, Usir Rakyat Myanmar* (Close the Embassy, Get rid of Myanmar's people)
6. 10 September 2017: *Anjing Lebih Mulia Berbanding Kami* (Dogs are nobler than us)
7. 24 September 2017: *Urus Rohingya melalui Asean* (Handle Rohingyas via Asean)
8. 20 October 2017: *Sah Myanmar Genosid* (Myanmar did conduct genocide)

Appendix 5: *New Straits Times* excerpts

The following is a list of titles of news articles used for analyses for this thesis. The English-language articles were selected in regard to coverage of the 2017 Rohingya crisis and government responses to the crisis.

Dates: Title of Article

1. 24 September 2017: Malaysia calls ASEAN chairman's statement on Rakhine a 'misrepresentation of the reality'.
2. 24 November 2017: Ethnic Cleansing, it is.
3. 7 December 2017: Genocide: Hear the Rohingya Cries.
4. 16 December 2017: We have been silent on the Rohingya.
5. 21 December 2017: Rohingya Leaders Demand Justice Following Wang Kelian Exposé.
6. 17 March 2018: PM: Region Could Plunge into Chaos if Humanitarian Crisis in Rakhine State Not Addressed.
7. 03 January 2018: Rohingya Genocide Must End.
8. 21 January 2018: Reject Repatriation Plan.
9. 20 March 2018: Rohingya Policy Needed.

Appendix 6: *Malay Mail* excerpts

The following is a list of titles of news articles used for analyses for this thesis. The English-language articles were selected in regard to coverage of the 2017 Rohingya crisis and government responses to the crisis.

Dates: Title of Article

1. 29 August 2017: DPM denies arbitrary issuance of UNHCR card for Rohingyas.
2. 09 September 2017: DPM:Malaysia wants superpowers to act against Rohingya oppression.
3. 10 September 2017: DPM urges Suu Kyi to help stop violence against Rohingyas.
4. 25 September 2017: Pakatan backs Putrajaya, wants firmer Asean action on Myanmar's Rohingya crisis.
5. 26 September 2017: Humanitarian crisis in Myanmar 'breeding ground' for terrorism, forum in KL told.
6. 03 October 2017: Perak Sultan: Courage needed to stop Rohingya genocide.
7. 26 November 2017: Malaysia's diplomatic advocacy on Myanmar starts yielding results with US branding Rohingya crisis 'ethnic cleansing' — Malay Mail
8. 06 January 2018: Choke Off Terror Recruitment Sources, Deputy Minister Urges.
9. 17 March 2018: Najib: Rohingya plight no longer a domestic issue.