

## Indonesia's Interest in The South-South Triangular Cooperation

### (SSTC) Policy to Fiji during Joko Widodo's 2014-2019 Government

**Ica Cahayani**

10.22146/globalsouth.70998

Department of International Relations,  
Faculty of Social and Political Sciences,  
Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia  
icacahayani2998@mail.ugm.ac.id

*This study was conducted to explain Indonesia's interests in the South-South Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) policy towards Fiji in the Joko Widodo administration in 2014-2019. This study uses the theory of national interest and foreign policy. The research method used is descriptive qualitative. The research method is used to explain and explore Indonesia's interests through the SSTC's policy towards Fiji with three interests, namely economic, political and security interests. The results showed that Indonesia chose Fiji as a country to implement the SSTC policy because Fiji is one of the south Pacific countries, especially Melanesian countries and Indonesia still failed to carry out diplomacy with Vanuatu. Fiji is a country that has an important role in the internal organization of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), Fiji's involvement is very large in making MSG policies, because Indonesia's goal of being included in the MSG requires a major country that has an important role in the MSG, Besides Indonesia having economic interests, Fiji provides opportunities big for economic development and new market share for Indonesia in the south Pacific region, considering that this region is very strategic, this region has become the location of a trade war between China and the United States. Indonesia's strategy to gain economic, political and security interests by providing through the implementation of the SSTC policy is a form of great concern for Fiji.*

**Keywords:** *Indonesia; Fiji; South-South Triangular Cooperation; Melanesia; Melanesian Spearhead Group*

#### Introduction

The Indonesia-Fiji bilateral relationship is a form of cooperation initiated by the Indonesian government. Indonesia-Fiji have conducted diplomatic relations since 1974 with the signing of the Agreement by the Indonesian Ambassador and the High Commissioner of Fiji, in New Zealand. The development of cooperation was seen significantly during the administration of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. At that time the issue of the independence of Papua and

West Papua and violations of human rights continued to be discussed internationally. International criticism continues to occur at every annual UN Human Rights session (Cramer & Carleton, 2015). The criticism came from South Pacific countries who considered the Papuan people to be part of South Pacific Melanesian ethnic group (Wardhani, 2009). These countries also encouraged the independence of West Papua from Indonesia as evidenced by the membership of West Papua in the MSG (Melanesian Spearhead Group)

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2016). MSG also urges Indonesia to withdraw from West Papua by granting self-determination to its people (Chauvel, 2021).

The support of the Melanesian community for the independence of West Papua is substantial (MacLellan, 2015). Melanesian countries recognize West Papua as an independent country despite it still internationally acknowledged as the territory of the Republic of Indonesia (Somare, 2015). This statement is an effort of Indonesia's domestic politics so that the government continues to carry out diplomatic activities in the Melanesian Spearhead Group. One of the opportunities for Indonesia in the MSG is that it requires assistance from the Melanesian countries of the South Pacific. Before Indonesia carried out its diplomacy to Fiji, Indonesia carried out diplomacy with Vanuatu to enlist the support of Melanesian countries that influence and increase separatism in Papua. However, it continues to experience failure up to four diplomatic attempts (Sabir and Fitriani, 2018). Thus, the Indonesian government is trying to improve its diplomatic reach by developing a more robust relations with MSG member countries besides Vanuatu. As an MSG member country which has the same position as Vanuatu, Fiji had given a positive response to Indonesia's initiative and helped Indonesia to be involved within the MSG (Zahidi & Musfiroh, 2018). To maintain this relationship, Indonesia provides various assistances to Fiji through the South-South Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) policy. Indonesia's diplomacy towards Fiji gave significant

results for Indonesia's foreign policy, notably by joining the MSG organization (Bhakti, 2006).

In 2017 Indonesia's defence cooperation with Fiji aims to increase a positive image in the South Pacific region as a good military and member of the MSG (Maula, 2018). But behind the security interests of reducing separatism in West Papua, Indonesia also has other interests in its relations with Fiji. These interests include political and economic interests where Fiji is considered as a new market for Indonesia and Fiji is the target for Indonesia to spread its democratic values. As part of Indonesia's strategy to achieve its economic, political and security interests, Indonesia has been implementing SSTC policy to Fiji by providing various economic, educational, and humanitarian assistance, as well as development in the political field such as women empowerment and encouraging good democratic practices (Kedutaan Besar RI, Fiji, 2015).

In 2019, Indonesia's diplomacy was aimed to achieve a globally competitive economy. In this regard, Fiji provides a great opportunity for Indonesia's economic and market development in the South Pacific region, considering that the region is very strategic because it is located between China and the United States. Therefore, Indonesia needs a new market in the region, with Fiji serving as the main trading centre (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2016). Through the policy of SSTC, Indonesia's interests towards Fiji include security, political, and economic interests. Indonesia has the same vision in security through the mandate

of the UN Security Council. Apart from traditional security in Indonesia and Fiji, there are also non-traditional security such as natural disaster, transnational crime and climate change. In 2017, Indonesia and Fiji's Minister of Defence and National Security Fiji Ho, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola signed a Memorandum of Understanding on defence cooperation with the Indonesian Minister of Defence (The Fijian Government, 2017). This cooperation is to increase the confidence of the two countries in their commitment to support each other politically and security. This commitment is very meaningful for Indonesia because it is able to provide opportunities to obtain its interests even though it has to go through long diplomacy and through the assistance of the SSTC. Thus, there are three main interests of Indonesia in choosing Fiji to implement the SSTC policy.

Thus, the study refers to two research questions (1) Why did Indonesia choose Fiji as one of the destination countries for implementing the SSTC policy? (2) How does Indonesia achieve its political, security and economic interests with Fiji through SSTC framework?

### **Framework**

The SSTC framework for bilateral diplomacy is used by Indonesia to achieve its national interests in Fiji. Through the SSTC, Indonesia can achieve three main interests, namely short-term, medium-term and long-term political, security and economic interests. According to Isnaeni and Wardoyo (2017) Indonesia chose SSTC as a political tool to increase power and prestige.

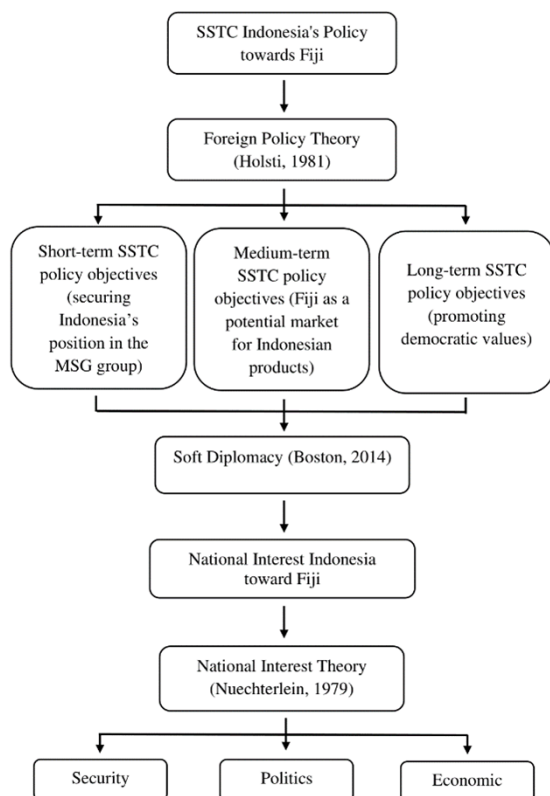
According K.J. Holsti (1987) foreign policy has short-term, medium-term and long-term policy objectives in three classifications, namely:

1. Core values are the most important interests of the state concerning the existence of a state.
2. Middle term objectives, economic interests.
3. Long term goals desire to realize world peace.

These policies are compiled in economic, political and security interests as explained by Donald E. Nuechterlein that the result of the formation of foreign policy is the national interest of the country, namely Indonesia's SSTC policy towards the country of Fiji contains several Indonesian interests. Donald E. Nuechterlein, classifies national interests into: (1) security interests; (2) economic interests; (3) political interests; (4) ideological interests. To obtain these interests, Indonesia uses soft diplomacy, namely through the SSTC to enter the MSG as an organization of Melanesian countries. Through soft diplomacy, it can have an impact on the future of West Papua and reduce human rights violations in Indonesia. Boston (2014) in stated that the diplomatic space varies greatly for countries to obtain their national interests. Diplomacy is a method for conveying messages and interests of the State in the fields of politics, economy, trade, social and culture, defence and other interests in international relations, in order to achieve mutual understanding between two countries (bilateral) or several countries (multilateral). Diplomacy is one of the im-

portant instruments in the implementation of a country's national interest. According to S.L. Roy (1995), diplomacy is also said to be a two-way interaction process between two countries carried out to achieve each country's foreign policy.

Related to some of the theoretical foundations above, the relevance of determining the state to implement its national interests is a natural action for a country. Briefly, it can be seen from the following chart:



**Figure 1.** SSTC Policy to National Interest

## Methods

Indonesia's SSTC policy in Fiji show a lot of interests both for Fiji and for the South Pacific region. To strengthen the analysis, this study uses the conceptual basis of foreign policy according to K.J Holsti (1981), national interests according to Donald E. Nuechterlein and diplomacy ac-

ording to Boston (2014). To support the results of this study, researchers used primary data and secondary data to present research results. The primary data and for this section were collected mostly from Indonesian government documents and analysed qualitatively. While secondary data obtained by researchers through various reference journals and official websites. Quoting Susan E Wyse's opinion, qualitative research is more exploratory research (Bakry, 2016). The research method is used to explain and explore Indonesia's interests through the SSTC's policy towards Fiji with three interests, namely economic, political and security interests. And the reason why Indonesia chose Fiji as the destination country for implementing the SSTC policy compared to other countries in the south pacific region.

## Indonesia's Political and Security Interests through the SSCT Policy towards Fiji

Indonesia's cooperation with Fiji represented Indonesia's interests in politics and security in the territory of the Republic of Indonesia. The political support of the state of Fiji and the Melanesian countries of the South Pacific or the previous MSG for the independence of West Papua to break away from Indonesia greatly disturbed the political stability and internal security of Indonesia. Political stability and security in question is that Indonesia will tend not to show the chaotic domestic political conditions due to the upheavals in West Papua which are influenced by other countries. Therefore, the policy of cooperation with Fiji is important for Indonesia. This foreign policy is man-

ifested in the SSCT policy, namely the formation of trust in the south pacific countries towards Indonesia on human rights issues in West Papua. Human rights violations in Papua have always been criticized by MSG countries in every annual UN Human Rights session. Fiji plays an important role in the association of these organizations.

Cultural and racial differences between the Papuan people and the Indonesian people in general are one of the reasons that are often cited by the Papuan people as a justification for their claim as not being part of Indonesia. According to Wonda (2007) he claimed that Papuans are not Malays, but Malenesians (Wonda, 2007). This can be proven that West Papua are not part of the Indonesia apart from history and skin colour (race) which tend to be different from the Indonesian people who are Malay. Another strong reason is that they are not part of the Indonesia, namely when the youth oath day on October 28, 1928 was not attended by any representatives from Papuan youth (Viartasari, 2018).

Therefore, it continues to be used as the basis for support for South Pacific countries including Fiji that West Papua have a different history, race while the racial similarities with the Melanesian countries of the South Pacific are much greater. There are Melanesian countries in the South Pacific that have a basic constitutional basis, where their domestic political policies always lead to the Melanesian race. These Pacific Melanesian countries which have a constitution that their country will not be fully independent if there are Melanesian racial areas are

still experiencing human rights violations. This means West Papua which are still within the territory of the Republic of Indonesia. This policy was also adopted by the state of Fiji before receiving education on governance from Indonesia. Indonesia's SSTC policy towards Fiji aims to influence Fiji's domestic policy for the sake of Indonesia's political and security interests.

Indonesia with the support of Fiji entered the MSG organization with political reasons that Indonesia has a number of scattered Melanesian communities compared to South Pacific Melanesian countries spread over several provinces, namely Maluku, East Nusa Tenggara and Papua (Lawson, 2015, Wangge and Lawson, 2021). Indonesia through Fiji plays politics in the South Pacific, especially in the MSG policy. Indonesia as a country that has a good level of economic growth compared to South Pacific countries so that Indonesia contributes to the management of various commodities in Fiji. In the field of education, Indonesia provides scholarships for Fijian students. The policy aims to promote good relations with Fiji (Jaelani, 2020).

Since Indonesia has carried out diplomacy towards Fiji, Indonesia has been included as a member of the MSG. The admission of Indonesia has had a significant impact for Indonesia to approach the Melanesian countries of the South Pacific so as not to create the issue of human rights violations in West Papua and not to support the separatist actions of the region leaving Indonesia. However, the criticism continues to this day but its significance tends to decrease

because at the 2020 UN session there is only one Melanesian country that still criticizes human rights violations in Indonesia, namely Vanuatu at the 2020 UN Human Rights Annual Session. Even Indonesia became a member of the UN Human Rights Council in 2020- 2022 with Japan, South Korea and the Marshall Islands.

Based on the statement of the Deputy for Politics, Defence, Security, and Human Rights in the Office of the Presidential Staff of the Republic of Indonesia, the security interest in Indonesia's contribution to Pacific Peacekeeping is an emphasis on the security of West Papua. Indonesia and Fiji are not only concentrated on economic development and human resources but also on maintaining the harmonization of social security and stability in West Papua, respecting the use of national criminal law, as well as instruments with due observance of the legal process and human rights in carrying out free law enforcement. Indonesia and Fiji put more emphasis on Security Building Capacity (Kementerian Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manusia RI, 2016).

Based on K.J. Holsti's framework, security and political interests are integrated into national interests, namely, *first*, the short-term entry of Indonesia into the MSG organization and participating in dialogue at the MSG Summit. *Second*, the medium-term support from South Pacific countries not to criticize human rights violations that have an impact on the image of democracy and the enforcement of human rights values in Indonesia. *Third*, in the long term, so that Indonesia will continue to maintain peaceful relations, secure territory, and break the

chain of conflicts in Papua and West Papua. There is no permanent condemnation of human rights violations in Indonesia as well as spreading democratic values and good cooperation with South Pacific countries.

### **Indonesia's Economic Interests Behind SSCT Policy towards Fiji**

Indonesia's economic interests until 2019 based on the statement of the Foreign Minister Retno L.P Marsudi initiated trade relations with Fiji through the Indonesia-Fiji Preferential Trade Agreement (IF-PTA) which was previously committed to increasing economic growth between Melanesian countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2019). The Fiji government affirms its support for Indonesia's commitment to increasing cooperation with South Pacific countries as Indonesia's contribution to regional peace and security stability. Indonesia invites Fiji to collaborate in the 2020 Pacific Fair organized by the Indonesian government. Pacific Fair 2020 is expected to produce many partnerships in the economic field, maintaining the positive momentum that has been built with South Pacific countries during the Pacific Exposition. The agreement will expand opportunities for cooperation between the two countries in the fields of investment, infrastructure and connectivity (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019)

A number of Indonesian products already exist in the Fiji market, including lubricating oil, soap, automotive products, buses, construction materials, and electronic equipment. According to BPS data, the Indone-

sia-Fiji trade balance in 2017 was US\$23.5 million, with a surplus on Indonesia's side (Dante, 2019). Indonesia's total trade in the Pacific region in 2018 was US\$10.67 billion. This figure rose 3.05% to US\$10.37 billion. In January-March 2019, Indonesia's total trade reached US\$2.04 billion. Indonesia's largest export destinations to the Pacific region are Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, East Timor and Papua New Guinea. Indonesia's main export products to the Pacific include electronics, palm oil and tobacco. Meanwhile, Indonesia's imports from the Pacific region are coal, livestock products, wheat, iron ore concentrate and raw sugar. Fiji has the natural resource potential of the MSME sector and the potential of the industry-based tourism sector is considered capable of being globally competitive (The Fijian Government, 2021). Abdul Kadir Djaelani, Director General of Asia & Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia emphasized that Fiji has a high commitment to development cooperation by taking into account the changing dynamics of regional and international cooperation that will support strategic areas of development (Jaelani, 2020).

An Indonesian construction company opened an office in Fiji, namely Audie Pacific Engineering. Fiji has become a global communications and transportation hub (sea and air) for the South Pacific region. Entering the Fiji market, the company can export products to other archipelagic countries with low import duties. Based on the statement of the deputy foreign minister, Indonesia will open a Second Exposition in the Asia Pacific

because knowledge about Indonesia is still lacking so that it is considered that Indonesia's existence is not yet clear (Siregar, 2020). According to Donald E. Nuechterlein (1976) economic interests are the goal of close economic relations between Indonesia and Fiji in improving the trade and investment process and product exports (Jaelani, 2020). Fiji provides a new market for Indonesia so that it can be used as an initial jump for Indonesia to enter the Pacific Islands market. Foreign policy based on K.J.Holsti consists of short-term, medium-term and long-term policies. Indonesia's national interest in Fiji as stated by the Indonesian ambassador to New Zealand that the economic interests. Indonesia through its proximity to Fiji and several South Pacific countries is a long-term policy (Kementerian Luar Negeri RI, 2017).

Indonesia's economic interests in Fiji have not brought huge profits, but these interests are long-term. If Indonesia does not make an early jump, Indonesia will not get trading space in the south pacific, considering that the south pacific are countries that have become the new economic axis after China and America carried out a trade war in the Asia Pacific region (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2019). The South Pacific is the world's trade and telecommunications route, the axis of trade in Asia and South America. (Sukawarni, 2020). The implementation of the policy looks significant because of Indonesia's geographical structure. Indonesia has a potential interest in the maritime area of the South Pacific countries with a composition of 80% of the sea area. The important role of

the maritime sector is closely related to the trade war between China and America in the region. However, Indonesia is approaching the South Pacific region, namely Australia/Pacific Set Up, New Zealand/Pacific Reset, United States of America/Pacific Pledge Indo Pacific Command, China/Belt Road Initiative (BRI), UK/Pacific Up Lift, ASEAN/Indo Pacific Outlook, Indonesia/Pacific Elevation, all of this is related to SSTC (Yahaya, 2020). Meanwhile, the largest donor countries in the South Pacific are Australia, the United States, China, New Zealand and Japan (Matthew and Pryke, 2017).

In addition, Indonesia's political interests are political competition and position at the United Nations. The United Nations adopts a one country one vote system regardless of the size of the county, regardless of the number of populations of the country. In consideration of world politics in various major UN forums, each country has the same voice even though it has a small demographic number (Yahya, 2020). Indonesia needs the support of every policy plan in every session or nomination of the head of the UN special delegation. So, efforts to approach Fiji and the South Pacific countries to obtain a positive image in international relations that prioritize soft power (Bandoro, 2014). Based on the senior diplomat from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indri Hapsari stated that Indonesia has not achieved maximum results in cooperation and diplomacy with Vanuatu (1) the implementation of Indonesian public diplomacy is still dominated by state actors and does not involve non-state actors; (2) the non-optimal implementation of the three di-

mensions of Indonesia's public diplomacy strategy; and (3) the strong influence of Melanesian doctrine (Ahmad, 2018). Therefore, Indonesia chose Fiji as a country that is considered capable of having a positive impact on Indonesia's political interests in the South Pacific region. Fiji assists Indonesia in diplomacy and in carrying out political communication to encourage the security of the West Papua regions to remain within Indonesian territory.

### **Indonesia's Foreign Policy Strategy Behind SSTC Policy to Fiji**

Through the SSTC, Southern countries want to improve their reputation, gain support from other Southern countries in international forums, and pursue a broader economic agenda. By leveraging an analysis of domestic politics, Indonesia's experience shows that a more pragmatic approach to SSC reflects a broader transformation of Indonesia's domestic political configuration (Wiranti and Alfian, 2019). The political transformation of the SSTC is considered as a mechanism to change the asymmetric relationship of the Global South with the dominant Global North. The material approach highlights SSTC's strategic values for Southern powers. Through the SSTC, Indonesia wants to improve its reputation, gain support from other Southern countries in international forums, and pursue a broader economic agenda. Indonesia under the administration of President Joko Widodo, Indonesia's leadership and role in SSC (South-South Cooperation) was strengthened (Kementerian Luar Negeri RI, 2017) President Joko Widodo de-



fined the implementation of SSC as one of the government's priorities, so that from the above policy, a cooperation policy between Indonesia and Fiji was obtained through the Development Cooperation Agreement (DCA) policy (Saripudin, 2013).

The SSTC policy is Indonesia's strategy in strengthening cooperative relations between the two countries. Indonesia's strategy involves Fiji in security politics collaborating in training and sending female peacekeepers in the UN Security Council until 2020 has reached 2700 personnel. Through an interview, the Fijian Ambassador Amena Youvoli did not specify the exact number of female Fijian personnel sent as international peacekeepers (RZN, 2021). However, the training is to encourage Fiji to contribute to international peace and development. The peacekeeping training also involved Fiji as a form of training and education in the military field. Indonesia emphasizes external security interests which are considered very related to Fiji's military development which will have an impact on internal security including maritime security, nature borders, terrorism and climate change. In 2017, Indonesia and Fiji's Minister of Defence and National Security Fiji Ho, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola signed a Memorandum of Understanding on defence cooperation with the Indonesian Minister of Defence (The Fijian Government, 2017). Fiji reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening and expanding cooperation in the defence sector on the principles of equality, mutual benefit, mutual respect and trust.

Following Rosenau's opinion, the author concludes that the Indonesian govern-

ment's policy in cooperating with Fiji is based on internal and external factors. Utilization of natural resources, considering that Fiji is a maritime country with marine wealth that has not been managed properly. Diverting Fiji's attention to focus on economic growth for his country rather than being heavily involved in Indonesia's foreign policy affairs in Papua and West Papua. The importance of the country's economic growth is the main emphasis of Indonesia's foreign policy in Fiji. On the other hand, the Indonesian government wants no other interpretation of the human rights violations that have occurred in Papua and West Papua. In 2016, Fiji received 14 assistance programs from the Indonesian government such as the Skills Training Program, Expert Delivery, Knowledge Sharing, Workshops and Internships (The Fijian Government, 2017).

Skills training programs are programs that are often held up to about 56%, workshops 16%, knowledge sharing 12%, integrated programs 8%, internships and dispatch of experts 4%. The training is carried out in class which is equipped with field visits. The SSTC program also includes a development problem program with a percentage of activities reaching 74%, economic problems 14%, and good governance and peace 12% (Annual Report of Indonesia's South-South and Triangular Cooperation, 2016). Development includes student exchange, manufacturing product development, macro and microeconomic management, and public finance. Meanwhile, Good Governance and Peace Building include human relation skills in setting government protocols to achieve

a good policy implementation development system.

Indonesia also facilitates 30 companies engaged in the halal food and beverage sector, electronics and finance. In the Pacific exposition activity, there are 50 companies from Pacific countries participating in tourism, trade, investment, and cultural exhibitions (Jaelani, 2020). Indonesia's economic diplomacy for South Pacific countries can increase Indonesia's role in the Pacific, encourage an integrated Pacific market, and introduce the potential of countries in the Pacific region. At the Pacific exposition, Indonesia displayed superior products from East Indonesia, represented by five provinces, namely Papua, West Papua, Maluku, North Maluku, and East Nusa Tenggara. The presence of the Indonesian industry is accompanied by the cooperation of the Indonesian Embassy in Wellington, the Canberra Trade Attaché and the Indonesian Trade Promotion Centre (ITPC) to bring potential buyers and increase transaction potential (Kementerian Perdagangan RI, 2019).

Indonesian programs are participated by Indonesian Melanesian youth from East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, and Papua. The involvement aims to encourage the development of a network of field observations and assistance, market surveys, industrial visits, field assistance, and online assistance. The Fiji Ambassador appreciated the Indonesian government's commitment to assisting the economic development and human resources in Fiji. The partnership between Indonesia and Fiji continues to be enhanced for more strategic directions (The Fijian Government,

2017). Indonesia assists Fiji in managing climate change and its small population, limited state income and limited resources (Hauger, 2015). According to the 2017 SSTC Indonesia annual report, Fiji has ranked as the largest beneficiary because Fiji has significant appeal to Indonesia's larger role, both bilaterally and regionally. Indonesia's preference for providing assistance to Fiji is either in the program to change the governance system for the better to make a positive contribution to the balance of Fiji's domestic and foreign politics (Pamasiwi and Arsyani, 2016)

The Indonesia-Fiji relationship reflects its support for the consistency of cooperation and the exclusion of any movement to support Papuan separatism. Indonesia and Fiji support each other in international forums such as the United Nations, IMO, ECOSOC and others. Indonesia's strengthening of relations with Fiji is also reflected in the number of collaborations (Pamasiwi and Arsyani, 2016). Relations between Indonesia and Fiji in increasing the intensity of involvement in various sectors of the economy, tourism, governance, fisheries, development and even military ties. The proximity of the geographical conditions in the region gives it the privilege to improve relations between Indonesia and the South Pacific countries as well as the cultural similarity of the South Pacific countries and the population of eastern Indonesia (Pamasiwi and Arsyani, 2016).

Indonesia also sees another potential for Fiji as one of the areas for capacity building projects between Indonesia, namely the Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting (GRPB) pilot project for Fijian officials.

The program tends to influence the internal policies of the Fijian government. Cooperation in the field of women's empowerment began in 2013 with a memorandum of understanding between the Indonesian ministry of women's empowerment and child protection (I-MWECP) and the Fijian ministry of women, children and poverty alleviation (9F-MWCPA) (Alata and Mukhtarov, 2022). The agreement establishes technical cooperation to discuss gender project ideas. In 2017, Indonesia committed to assist Fiji in gender mainstreaming by implementing the framework and tools for implementing and implementing gender responsiveness (GRPB) in seven Fijian Ministries. Thus, Fiji has a Strengthen Gender Mainstreaming (SGM) program (USIP-1, 2017).

Indonesia is considered advanced in GRPB implementation, so Fiji adopts GRPB as an effort to organize the GRPB governance and governance system. As for Indonesia's interests, firstly, a pilot project on the real and sustainable implementation of Indonesia's GRPB in Fiji. Indonesia will acquire medium- and long-term access to monitor and evaluate the development of GRPB implementation within the Fiji government. Second, by holding the reference privilege to implement the GRPB, Indonesia can direct Fiji to adopt the implementation of the GRPB to support Indonesian politics going forward. Third, the process of drafting the GRPB regulations is supervised by Indonesia. Opportunity to lead Fiji in narrowing down the country's regulations with different regulations. The implementation of the Fiji policy is beneficial for Indonesia to gain

access to the development sector (Pamasiwi and Arsyani, 2016).

Sustainability of cooperation between Indonesia and Fiji after significant political changes. Changes in democratic governance have made the country of Fiji more respectful of women's involvement. Women take up national leadership positions, with eight women elected as Members of Parliament (out of 50 MPs), the first female Speaker and four women appointed as Ministers/Assistant Ministers. The progress of political democracy and the economy shows that Fiji has become part of the MSG country which has succeeded in obtaining significant developments (Aid Investment Plan Fiji, 2019). These political changes have made Indonesia continue to strive to make Fiji a partner for cooperation in various fields, Fiji has become a new country that has become the centre of attention for the economic markets of various countries, especially Australia, as stated in the collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Indonesia continues to be aware that there will be competition in paying attention to change in Fiji even though through the SSTC program Indonesia has succeeded in providing a transformation of political values, democratic governance.

### **Indonesia-Fiji Cooperation**

There are several areas of cooperation between Indonesia and Fiji through the SSTC in order to strengthen the cooperation between the two countries. Cooperation includes political, economic, security and educational cooperation.

## Politics

Politically, the government of Fiji supports the territorial integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, as stated by the President of Fiji during the submission of the Indonesian Ambassador's credentials, Indonesia and Fiji have established cooperation in fighting for common interests in various UN and non-UN forums. Unity of view on various issues, including the principle of an archipelagic state, anti-nuclear and attention to the issue of climate change has been a pillar of bilateral relations so far. Fiji has provided support for Indonesia's candidacy in UN (Embassy of Indonesia, Suva, 2015).

The similarity of Indonesia's agenda in paying attention to humanitarian issues between Indonesia and Fiji. In the field of Human Rights, both of which focus on the United Nations Human Rights Office of The High Commissioner (OHCHR) on human rights abuses. Indonesia-Fiji relations at the UN can be seen at the 72nd UN General Assembly in 2017 with an agenda of focus on people, vows to prioritize peace, do even more in tackling myriad challenges. In the general assembly, Indonesia used human rights for the first time to answer when other countries mentioned the issue of human rights violence that occurred in West Papua. The issue was raised by Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Saint Vincent and the Guardian. However, the Fijian government has shown its defence of Indonesia against accusations by other Pacific Island countries. During the process of Indonesia applying as a permanent member of the MSG, Fiji was

one of the countries that played an important role in Indonesia's membership of the MSG. In March 2011 Indonesia officially became a member with observer status thanks to the assistance of Fiji and Papua New Guinea in the 18th MGS Summit in Fiji. Indonesia's status increased to an associate member at the 20th MS Summit in Solomon Islands 2015 (Zahidi & Musfiroh, 2018).

## Economics

Cooperation between Indonesia and Fiji in the economic field covers the fields of trade, investment and tourism. The cooperation is a form of collaboration to support each other's national development.

*Trade and Investment.* In the field of trade and investment, Indonesia sees the great economic potential in Fiji so that through SSTC. Fiji has a strategic area to become a new market for Indonesia in the South Pacific. This is supported by the Fijian people who have the same taste in products as the people of eastern Indonesia. Fiji has a fairly large market potential for Indonesian products because Fiji can be used as an entry point for Indonesian export goods to the Pacific region considering Fiji's strategic position in the South Pacific and the only country that has an adequate capacity ocean port. Various Indonesian products that have entered the Fijian market are paper products, textile fibres, electrical appliances, household electronic equipment, furniture, gifts and crafts, clothing, instant food, coffee, plastics, shampoo, bath soap, detergents, industrial products, chemical products, and manufacturing tools.

The high level of per capita income is supported by a very high level of consumption and there are few daily necessities that are produced domestically. This situation is an opportunity for Indonesian products to produce daily necessities at competitive prices compared to export products from Australia and New Zealand. Ministerial Statement on Launching Negotiations for the Indonesia-Fiji Preferential Trade Agreement Director General for Asia Pacific and African Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Desra Percaya and the Main Secretary of Fiji Industry, Trade and Tourism, Shaheen Ali in March 2019 announced that there were negotiations on the Preferential Trade Agreement between the two countries. Joint commitment to improve bilateral trade and economic relations between Indonesia and Fiji. This commitment is in line with the results of the meeting between the Indonesian Ambassador to Fiji, H.E. Benjamin Camadi and Fiji's Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Hon. Premila Kumar, January 2019, in Fiji. The two countries agreed that strengthening trade and economic partnerships would bring economic, social benefits and improve the living standards of Fiji and Indonesia. Structured economic development is able to promote trade, technical cooperation, and exchange of information (Kementerian Keuangan RI, 2019).

Fiji and Indonesia established a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) to realize and facilitate cooperation between companies, including small and medium enterprises. The Indonesia-Fiji Preferential Trade

Agreement (IF-PTA) negotiations cover trade in a limited number of priority products (Andri, 2019). In addition, Indonesia can be a gateway for Fiji to enter the ASEAN market as well as Fiji as a trade entry point for the South Pacific Island countries. Fiji is the most developed island nation in the South Pacific, with a population of approximately 900 thousand people, with stable political conditions and positive economic growth. According to BPS data, Indonesia Fiji's trade balance in 2017 was USD 23.5 million dollars (Indonesian Embassy, Suva, 2015). The Fiji Islands Trade and Investment Bureau (FTIB) plans to invest in Indonesia, focusing on joint ventures, namely: tourism, manufacturing and food processing.

*Tourism.* As one of the world's tourist destinations, Fiji tourism contributes significantly to national income. However, Fiji still relies on imports of goods to support the tourism industry, such as hotel interior decoration, furniture and others. This is a big enough opportunity for Indonesian products. Many hotels and resorts in Fiji bring furniture from Indonesia (Yahya, 2020). Indonesian cooperation in the tourism sector is better known as ecotourism, namely training to make handicrafts from wild plants in Fiji to be used as interior accessories for hotels, houses and so on. Fiji is known as a country that has wild plants that are identical to wild plants that live in eastern Indonesia. So that through the Pacific Expo, Indonesian youth conducted weaving training to produce products that support tourism in Fiji. (Yahya, 2020).

### Indonesia-Fiji Relations in the Field of Education and Security

Indonesia and Fiji are also cooperating in education in an effort to improve human resource development in Fiji. In addition, they also cooperate in the security sector, in this case Indonesia and Fiji conduct joint military training.

*Education.* Cooperation between the governments of Fiji and Indonesia is also established in the fields of culture, education. Cooperation in the field of education between Indonesia and Fiji has been going on since 2003. Cooperation is implemented in the form of scholarships and student exchanges for Fijian students. Cooperation in education between Indonesia and Fiji consists of three scholarships awarded by Indonesia namely in Indonesian arts and culture, postgraduate scholarships and student programs (Indonesian Embassy, Suva, 2015). In addition, Indonesia Fiji is also increasing cooperation between youth organizations and sports development. Fiji and Indonesia formed a Memorandum of Understanding for exchange, trainers for sports medicine experts, science and technology as well as other information exchanges (The Fijian Government, 2014).

*Security.* Fiji is a country with a small military, about 3500 troops. Although it is a maritime country, the emphasis is on land security. State security is more emphasized on personnel, than on equipment and weapons. Fiji's military and police personnel are well known for serving in the Middle East and

other conflict areas under the United Nations. The head of the Fiji Police Force (FPF) and the Indonesian police have collaborated in the field of military education and several matters related to countering terrorism and transnational crime (Indonesian Embassy, Suva, 2015). In 2017, Indonesia and Fiji's Minister of Defence and National Security Fiji Ho, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola signed a Memorandum of Understanding on defence cooperation with the Indonesian Minister of Defence (The Fijian Government, 2017).

### **Conclusion**

Indonesia's policy in providing development assistance through the SSTC scheme is inseparable from the national interest. The policy of providing international development assistance plays a role in strengthening Indonesia's interests and affiliations in the South Pacific region. SSTC Indonesia strengthens Indonesia's unfulfilled interests. The framework of Indonesia's bilateral diplomacy through the SSTC is a form of Indonesia's strategy in obtaining national interests, both political, economic and security. Indonesia chose Fiji as the country to implement the SSTC policy because Fiji is a Melanesian South Pacific country that has a position and a major role in the internal organization of the MSG. Fiji consistently supports the integrity and sovereignty of Indonesia. In addition, Indonesia's interest in joining the MSG has not been achieved through the state of Vanuatu which continues to criticize Indonesia, and provides support for independence for Papua and West Papua out of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. On

the other hand, the implementation of policies reflects the fulfilment of international roles. The implementation of the SSTC policy is closely related to fulfilling Indonesia's role as a middle power country. Indonesia as a developing country became the basis for selecting SSTC as a policy scheme for providing international development assistance services. This research also encourages an understanding of the SSTC which has not been sufficiently publicized both nationally and internationally. Therefore, to fully fulfil the potential of Indonesia's SSCT diplomacy in realizing Indonesia's interests in the eyes of the international community, efforts to strengthen Indonesia's international policy narrative.

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