

## ASTA CITA AS A STRATEGIC FOUNDATION FOR INDONESIA'S DEFENSE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF GLOBAL RIVALRY

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the global rivalry among the United States, China, and Russia in the competition for regional strategic resources and its implications for Indonesia's security and defense. The rivalry encompasses geopolitical, geoeconomic, and military dimensions, demanding Indonesia's strategic readiness to develop regional defense based on the values of Asta Cita. The objective of this research is to analyze the global leadership styles of major world figures through the theories of transformational leadership (Burns & Bass), adaptive leadership (Heifetz), and military strategic leadership (Clausewitz), while linking them to the development of Indonesia's national defense doctrine toward Indonesia Emas 2045. The research employs a qualitative approach through literature review, policy analysis, and strategic interpretation of global dynamics. The findings indicate that Indonesia needs to apply strategic leadership grounded in Pancasila values, fighting spirit, and defense self-reliance. Building regional defense based on Asta Cita represents an adaptive and transformational step in facing the increasingly complex global rivalry. In conclusion, the synergy between visionary national leadership and defense strategies rooted in national values is essential to achieving self-reliance and resilience in the era of global competition.*

**Keywords:** Strategic leadership, global rivalry, Asta Cita, regional defense, Indonesia Emas.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, the rivalry between the United States, China, and Russia has resurfaced as a key dynamic in the international system. The struggle for influence and strategic resources in the Indo-Pacific region marks a new era of global geopolitics, where economic, military, and ideological dimensions are intertwined (Allison, 2017). China is strengthening its influence through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) policy, while the United States is responding with initiatives such as the Indo-Pacific Strategy and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF). Russia, on the other hand, is strengthening its strategic partnership with China while expanding its energy and defense reach in the Eurasian region (Kaplan, 2020). This rivalry is not only global in nature but also has direct implications for the stability of the Southeast Asian region, including Indonesia, a country with a geostrategic position between two oceans and two continents..

Previous studies have shown that developing countries like Indonesia face a strategic dilemma between maintaining foreign policy neutrality and the need to secure national interests in the context of great power competition (Acharya, 2022). An approach emphasizing hedging strategies is a rational choice in facing great power rivalry without becoming trapped in formal alliances (Kuik, 2008).

However, most previous research has focused on diplomatic and economic aspects, while the dimensions of regional defense development based on national values and philosophies such as Asta Cita have received less scholarly attention.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in its approach, which integrates geopolitical analysis with strategic leadership theory and national defense philosophy. Using theories of transformational leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1990), adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 1994), and military strategic leadership, this study examines how global leadership styles shape the direction of each country's defense policy. Furthermore, this study positions Asta Cita as a conceptual framework for formulating an Indonesian defense strategy that is not only responsive to global rivalries but also rooted in national values and aspirations toward a Golden Indonesia 2045.

Thus, the primary objective of this research is to analyze the dynamics of the rivalry between the United States, China, and Russia in the struggle for strategic regional resources and to formulate how Indonesia can respond through regional defense development based on Asta Cita. This approach is expected to provide academic contributions to the geopolitical and defense literature, while also offering conceptual input for the development of an adaptive and sustainable national defense strategy.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods to deeply understand the dynamics of rivalry between the United States, China, and Russia in the context of the struggle for strategic regional resources and its relevance to Indonesia's defense development based on Asta Cita. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to examine geopolitical phenomena and global leadership contextually and relate them to adaptive and strategic national defense policies.

### 2.1 Location and Data Source

The research was conducted through desk studies and policy analysis in the geopolitical and defense fields covering the Indo-Pacific and Southeast Asia regions, with a focus on Indonesia's strategic position as a global maritime axis. The primary data sources were academic literature, official national defense policy documents (Indonesia's Defense White Paper, 2024), and reports from international institutions such as the ASEAN Secretariat, the RAND Corporation, and the Institute of International Relations (IIR) Prague.

### 2.2 Data collection technique

Data was collected through three main methods:

- Library Research. This involved reviewing books, scientific journals, policy reports, and official government and international organization publications relevant to geopolitics and defense strategy.
- Directed Interviews. This involved seven expert respondents, consisting of defense lecturers, mid-ranking TNI officers, and strategic policy analysts, to gain empirical insights into Indonesia's defense challenges.
- Policy Documentation and Analysis. This involved analyzing strategic documents such as the Golden Indonesia Vision 2045, the Indonesian Defense White Paper (2024), and the National Development Goals (Asta Cita).

### 2.3 Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis to identify Indonesia's strategic position in facing global rivalries and the potential for strengthening regional defense systems. This analysis was strengthened by the use of transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1990), adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 1994), and military strategic leadership, to assess how global leadership styles influence the direction of defense policies of each major country. Furthermore, data triangulation analysis was conducted to ensure

the validity of the research results by comparing findings from academic literature, interview results, and official policy documents. The results of the analysis were then synthesized to formulate a conceptual strategy for Indonesian defense development based on Asta Cita values that is adaptive to changes in the global strategic environment.

### 2.3 Research Procedures

The research process was conducted through four stages:

- Problem identification and formulation of research objectives.
- Collection and classification of secondary and primary data.
- Qualitative analysis and interpretation based on leadership theory and a geopolitical approach.
- Formulation of conclusions and strategic recommendations for strengthening Indonesia's defense towards Indonesia Emas 2045.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Analysis of Global Rivalry and Its Implications for the Indo-Pacific Region

Research shows that the rivalry between the United States, China, and Russia over the past two decades is no longer solely military-based, but has expanded to include economic, technological, and ideological aspects (Allison, 2017; Kaplan, 2020). This phenomenon signals a shift in the global power structure from a unipolar to a multipolar system, in which the three major powers compete for strategic resources and geopolitical influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

China is strengthening its position through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project, which focuses on cross-border infrastructure development. The United States has responded with the Indo-Pacific Strategy and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), which emphasize supply chain diversification and maritime security (Wang, 2016). Meanwhile, Russia, while primarily focused on the Eurasian region, is leveraging energy and defense cooperation with Southeast Asian countries to expand its influence (Zhang & Kaczmarski, 2023). These findings reinforce Acharya's (2022) view that the Southeast Asian region is a strategic arena where major powers seek to establish a "sphere of influence" without direct confrontation. Indonesia, with its geostrategic position between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, is a key actor facing pressure to balance external relations without losing strategic independence.

### 3.2 Indonesia's Strategic Position and Regional Defense Challenges

A SWOT analysis shows that Indonesia possesses strengths in the form of its strategic geographic location, abundant natural resources, and the concept of the Total People's Defense and Security System (Sishankamrata) based on popular participation (Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024). However, weaknesses remain evident in the disparity in mastery of defense technology, budget constraints, and suboptimal

synergy between the various branches of government in implementing defense policies. Opportunities arise from the Asta Cita policy and the Golden Indonesia Vision 2045, which emphasize defense development as an integral part of national development (Bappenas, 2023). Threats, on the other hand, include territorial conflicts in the South China Sea, escalating competition in military technology, and dependence on imported primary weapons systems (alutsista). The following table summarizes the results of the SWOT analysis of Indonesia's strategic position:

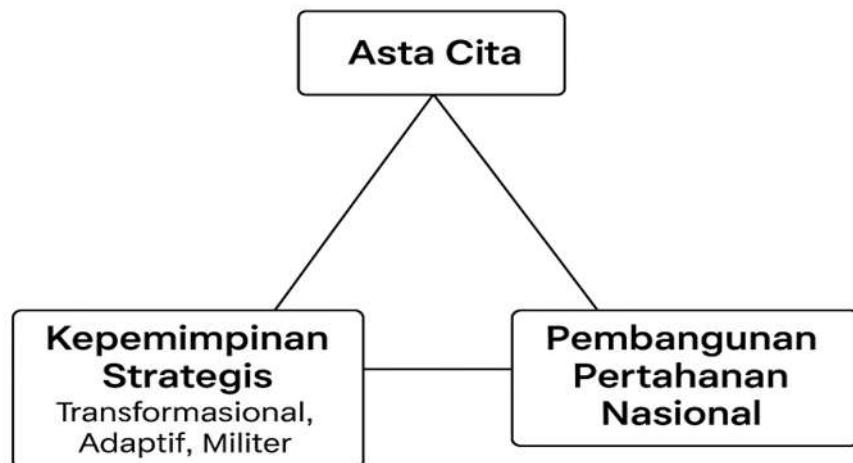
**Table 1.** SWOT Analysis of Indonesian Defense Development in Global Rivalry

Aspect	Description
<b>Strengths</b>	Geostrategic position; universal people's defense system; domestic defense industry potential.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	Defence budget and human resource constraints; disparities in military technology and research.
<b>Opportunities</b>	Asta Cita and the vision of Golden Indonesia 2045; opportunities for multilateral and regional collaboration.
<b>Threats</b>	US-China rivalry in the South China Sea; dependence on defense equipment imports; cyber threats.

### 3.3 Asta Cita sebagai Fondasi Pembangunan Pertahanan Nasional

The main finding of this study is that Asta Cita can be operationalized as a conceptual framework for formulating an adaptive and

sustainable defense strategy. Values such as self-reliance, mutual cooperation, and innovation embodied in Asta Cita align with the principles of transformational leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1990), which encourages structural change based on a national vision.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Relationship between Asta Cita, Strategic Leadership, and National Defense Development

The adaptive leadership approach (Heifetz, 1994) explains that amidst the complexity of global threats, the ability of the government and the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) to adapt defense policies to changes in the strategic

environment is key to success. In this context, defense development based on Asta Cita (Association of National Defense Principles) emphasizes not only conventional military strength but also economic empowerment, defense

diplomacy, and technological sovereignty. Therefore, the findings of this study answer the hypothesis that national defense development based on Asta Cita values and supported by adaptive strategic leadership will enhance Indonesia's deterrent power amidst great power rivalry. This is consistent with the views of Kaplan (2020) and Acharya (2022) who emphasize the importance of "strategic autonomy" for developing countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The rivalry between the United States, China, and Russia over strategic resources in the Indo-Pacific region demonstrates that global dynamics are no longer solely determined by military and economic power, but also by the ability of strategic leadership to manage geopolitical influence and alliances. This study found that transformational, adaptive, and strategic military leadership styles are crucial factors determining the direction of defense policy and a country's position in global competition. For Indonesia, the response to great power rivalry must be based on regional defense development rooted in national values as outlined in the Asta Cita (Association of Nationalities).

This approach not only upholds the principle of an independent and active foreign policy but also ensures the strengthening of national defense independence through the transformation of the values of struggle, technological independence, and synergy between defense institutions.

These findings indicate that the integration of national philosophy and strategic leadership is an effective foundation for addressing changes in the global order. Therefore, the future direction of Indonesia's defense development must position Asta Cita as a moral and strategic compass to achieve the vision of Indonesia Emas 2045: a sovereign, advanced nation that plays an active role in maintaining stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

As a follow-up, further research can deepen the implementable aspects of the strategic leadership model within the context of Indonesia's defense institutions, including strengthening adaptive capacity to changes in military technology and future geopolitical challenges.

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