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62 YEARS OF INDONESIA-MEXICO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS: SOME REFLECTIONS AND WAYS FORWARD*

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Abstract

The paper attempts to discuss the Indonesia-Mexico diplomatic relations over the last 62 years (1953-2015). The paper shows that during the Soekarno administration, Indonesia and Mexico enjoyed the peak momentum of their bilateral political relations. The bilateral relations deteriorated during the Soeharto regime, despite some re-invigoration to strengthen economic relations was visible in the later period. In the post-Soeharto regime, the bilateral relations have strengthened, particularly in the economic sphere. The paper points out that there is plenty space that both countries could seize to strengthen the bilateral relations. But to achieve this goal, both countries need to have strong political willingness, work hard, and address the inherent matters and issues in innovative and creative manners. In the economic sphere, both states need to find resourceful ways on how to evolve from being a competing partner to become an emerging collaborative partner. To support the Indonesian economic diplomacy programs, Indonesia should also need to strengthen the socio-cultural and political cooperation. The paper holds that achieving a so-called 'comprehensive partnership' as agreed by both Head of State in the Joint Statement 2013 seems to be a visible goal to be achieved in the near future.

Keywords: Economic diplomacy, diplomatic relations, Indonesia, Mexico, comprehensive partnership.

62 AÑOS DE RELACIONES DIPLOMÁTICAS ENTRE INDONESIA Y MÉXICO: ALGUNAS REFLEXIONES Y CAMINOS A SEGUIR

Resumen

El artículo discute las relaciones diplomáticas entre Indonesia y México durante los últimos 62 años (1953-2015). Muestra que durante la administración Soekarno, Indonesia y México disfrutaron del punto más alto en sus relaciones políticas bilaterales. Éstas se deterioraron durante el régimen de Soeharto, a pesar de alguna revitalización para fortalecer las relaciones económicas que fue visible en su periodo tardío. En la etapa posterior al régimen Soeharto, las relaciones bilaterales se han fortalecido, sobre todo en la esfera económica. El artículo señala que hay mucho espacio el cual ambos países podrían aprovechar para fortalecer las relaciones bilaterales. Pero, para alcanzar esta meta, ambos países necesitan tener una fuerte disposición política, trabajar duro y afrontar los temas y problemas inherentes de maneras innovadoras y creativas. En la esfera económica, ambos estados necesitan encontrar maneras recursivas para evolucionar de ser socios competidores a convertirse en socios colaboradores emergentes. Para

apoyar los programas diplomáticos y económicos de Indonesia, ésta también necesita fortalecer la cooperación sociocultural y política. El artículo sostiene que alcanzar una llamada “cooperación plena”, como fue acordado por ambos jefes de estado en la Declaración Conjunta de 2013, parece ser una meta visible de lograr en el futuro cercano.

Palabras clave: diplomacia económica, relaciones diplomáticas, Indonesia, México, cooperación plena.

62 ANOS DE RELAÇÕES DIPLOMÁTICAS ENTRE A INDONÉSIA E O MÉXICO: ALGUMAS REFLEXÕES E CAMINHOS A SEREM SEGUIDOS

Resumo

O artigo discute as relações diplomáticas entre a Indonésia e o México durante os últimos 62 anos (1953-2015). Mostra que durante a administração Soekarno, Indonésia e o México disfrutaram do ponto mais alto nas suas relações políticas bilaterais. As quais se deterioraram durante o regime de Soeharto apesar de alguma revitalização para fortalecer as relações econômicas que foi visível no seu período tardio. Na etapa posterior ao regime Soeharto, as relaciones bilaterais se fortaleceram, sobre tudo na esfera econômica. O artigo aponta que existe muito espaço no qual ambos países poderiam aproveitar para fortalecer as relações bilaterais. Mas para alcançar esta meta os dois países necessitam ter uma forte disposição política, trabalhar fortemente e enfrentar os temas e problemas inerentes de forma inovadoras e criativas. Na esfera econômica, ambos estados necessitam encontrar maneiras recursivas para evolucionar de ser sócios competitivos a transformasse em sócios colaboradores emergentes. Para apoiar os programas diplomáticos e econômicos da Indonésia o mesmo também necessita fortalecer a cooperação sociocultural e política. O artigo afirma que para alcançar a chamada “cooperação plena”, como foi estipulado por ambos chefes de estado na Declaração Conjunta de 2013, parece ser uma meta visível de conseguir no futuro próximo.

Palavras-chave: diplomacia econômica, relações diplomáticas, Indonésia, México, cooperação plena.

Background

Mexico is one of Indonesia's old friends in Latin America. It is the second oldest Indonesian friend in the Latin American region, just after Brazil. Formally, the diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Mexico started on 6th April 1953, after both states signed the Joint Declaration on Opening Diplomatic Relations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2013). Prior to the diplomatic establishment in 1953, during the Presidency of Adolfo Ruiz Cortinez, in 1952, Dr. Josue de Benito López which was the senior advisor at the Mexican Ministry of Trade had already came up with the idea to open up a commercial relation and establish diplomatic relations with Indonesia (Pramudyo, 2004). However, it was in early 1953 that Dr. López finally communicate the idea about the opening up diplomatic relation with Mexico to the Indonesian official, Dr. Mukarto Notowidigdo, who was the Indonesian ambassador in the U.S. at that time (Pramudyo, 2004). Before the diplomatic relations establishment or even before the Indonesian independence in 1945, earlier contact of Indonesia-Mexico bilateral relations were noted.

First, Ambassador Melba Pria mentioned both countries contact dates

back to the 18th century, when Spain ruled both the Philippines and Mexico (Anjaiah, 2008). Certain places in Indonesia, from Sulawesi to Flores, had contacts with the Spanish colonial regime. Indonesia exported cinnamon to Mexico; meanwhile, Mexico introduced vanilla to Indonesia. All of these commodities were sent through Chinese ships sailing from the Philippines via Indonesia and China, and finally to Mexico. Further, in 1930, a Mexican citizen, Mr. Miguel Covarrubias, visited Indonesia for the first time and came back in 1933 supported by the Guggenheim Institute to conduct a research about Bali (Library of Congress, 2011). He lived in Bali during the Netherlands East Indies regime and spoke Melayu with Balinese accent.

During his stay in Bali, he made manuscripts, cartoons, a film¹, and pictures about Bali geography, Balinese society, and life in Bali. He wrote a famous book in English titled "The Island of Bali" in 1937 and the second edition of his book in 1938 became a best seller and was widely published around the world, making Bali a famous place. Another Mexican citizen, the former Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Head of the Instituto Cultural Mexico – Indonesia (ICMI), Ing. Patiño Navarrette, also visited Indonesia in 1939 to con-

¹ The film was re-made by José Benítez Muro. Miguel Covarrubias stay in Bali produced an important book on the Balinese culture, "The Island of Bali" and he also shot images in 16mm, but never made the movie. In the 1990s, José Benítez Muro saved the material and put the footage together to give it a structure, finally making the film. The excerpt of the Miguel Covarrubias documentary 'La Isla de Bali' filmed in the 1930s is available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9DScGxfabU>.

duct a plants and fruits research, particularly their suitability for cultivation in Mexico (Pramudyo, 2004). The seeds of palm oil, mango, rambutan, jackfruit, and other tropical fruits were brought and cultivated in Mexico.

In general, over the years, Indonesia-Mexico bilateral relations have been cordial despite certain ups and downs among others due to the different Head of State paradigms and program priorities, and the domestic conditions of their respective countries. During the first Indonesian President, Ir. Soekarno regime, since the opening of the diplomatic relations, Indonesia had a clear stance and viewed Mexico as a strategic country to have as a partner, hub, and bridge in the Latin American region. Soekarno had very cordial relations with the Mexican President, Adolfo López Mateos and in fact, in this period both states enjoyed the peak of the political relations era in the bilateral diplomatic relations history.

The closeness of Indonesian relations with the Mexican government and several other Latin American countries such as Argentina, Uruguay, and Cuba was in fact a breakthrough of the President Soekarno as part of his foreign policy agenda. Mr. Atmono Suryo, which used to be assigned at the Indonesian embassy in Mexico in 1955, stated that Indonesia-Mexico bilateral relations should be viewed as a breakthrough after the independence of the Republic of Indonesia. As an independent state, Indonesia wanted to be free from any interference of the Nether-

lands and to uphold the Indonesian opening of the preamble constitution of 1945, the so-called *Undang Undang Dasar 1945* (Pramudyo, 2004).

During the Soeharto regime, the bilateral relations deteriorated from being 'very close friends' to become just 'friends'. During this period, Soeharto's foreign policy priorities were to support national economic development and enhancing people's prosperity (Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 1971). Thus, in accordance to this national interest, Mexico was not viewed as an important partner. This was understandable as Mexico was a developing country, a donor-recipient country, and the Mexican-made products were uncompetitive, for instance, when compared to the U.S made products. Nevertheless, from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s, some attention was paid by the Indonesian government as the Latin American region was viewed as a potential non-traditional market for Indonesian products and with a market portfolios diversification purpose (Sjahril, 2012). On the other hand, Mexico started to view the Asian Pacific region as a dynamic one to which the country needed to engage with, particularly for economic cooperation.

In the mid-1990s, due to disturbances such the Tequila Crisis in 1994 and the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997-98, the bilateral relations slowed down as both states emphasized on recovering their domestic economic and political matters. Starting the mid-2000s, as

the U.S. economy faced a prolonged recession and the European region experienced economic crisis followed by a prolonged recession, this in fact became a turning point for countries such as Indonesia and Mexico to act and find new potential markets to support economic growth. Indonesia, despite having a relatively good economic performance, needed new potential markets to boost exports to help support the national economic growth. Meanwhile Mexico, which is highly dependent on the U.S. market performance, was adversely affected² by the global economic crisis; thus, the country needed to diversify its economic relations by finding new potential markets to help strengthen economic competitiveness and boost economic growth.

Thus, due to this rationale, during this period the bilateral relations enhanced, not only in economic relations but also in many other cooperation areas that have risen over the years. In fact, in a joint statement issued in 2013, both countries agreed to establish a so-called comprehensive partnership, acknowledging the strategic value of bilateral relations between both countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. 2013). However, to achieve such objectives, there are challenges and lingering classical matters that both states need to address. It is already a classical matter that countries from these two different con-

tinents, due to conventional problems such as distant geographical location, language barriers, lack of infrastructures, lack of awareness, the interests of local people from both countries, and still a relatively low people-to-people contact have ultimately caused the bilateral relations between Indonesia and Mexico to persistently remain below their potentials over the years. If both countries want to achieve and elevate their partnership into a next stage, then both sides essentially need to work hard and at the same time should have a strong political willingness to advance on such goals.

This paper attempts to reflect and discuss the dynamic of the Indonesia-Mexico bilateral relations over the last 62 years (1953-2015). The discussion covers ups and downs of the Indonesia-Mexico diplomatic relations over the years and the lessons that could be learned from the past reflections. The paper also discusses and explores ways forward to strengthen and elevate the Indonesia-Mexico relations into a so-called comprehensive partnership as agreed by both head of states in a joint statement 2013. For Indonesia, Mexico is perceived as an important partner in Latin America as the country ranked the 14th largest economy in the world with a total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) amounting to US\$1.283 trillion with a total population of 125.4 million people in 2014 (World Bank, 2015). Further, both countries have re-

² In 2009, Mexico posted a negative economic growth with -4.7 percent.

affirmed their commitment to closely cooperate on common concerns and interests in international fora such as the United Nations (UN), the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC), the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the World Trade Organization (WTO), and in groups such as Group 20 (G-20), Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey and Australia (MIKTA), and including Indonesia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) with the Pacific Alliance as well.

Considering its economic potentialities and potential common concerns and interests that could closely cooperate in quite a diverse international fora, then the potential to elevate the partnership into a new stage is somewhat a realistic goal that could be achieved in the future. Few scholarly research papers have been done so far on Indonesia-Mexico relations. This paper offers a study to enrich economics and international relations studies particularly on Indonesia-Mexico relations literatures. The study is also meant to provide some policy-making recommendations, particularly the appropriate economic diplomacy measures to strengthen and elevate the Indonesia-Mexico relations into a new higher stage.

Indonesia-Mexico Diplomatic Relations: a discussion

In this section, the paper discusses the dynamics of Indonesia-Mexico diplomatic relations for the period 1953-

2015. The discussion splits into five stages: 1) President Soekarno Regime (1945-1967) - The Golden Momentum of the Bilateral Political Relations; 2) President Soeharto Regime - A Silence Period in the Indonesia-Mexico Diplomatic Relations, and Some Reinvigoration & Disturbances in the Later Period (1967-1998); 3) The Indonesian Transition Period - The Reform, the Economic Recovery, and the Take-off of the Bilateral Economic Relations (1998-2004); 4) President Yudhoyono Regime - The Global Economic Recession and the Momentum Towards the Re-strengthening of Economic Relations (2004-2014); and 5) The Jokowi Presidency and the Implications and Ways Forwards of the Indonesia-Mexico Bilateral Relations (2014-now).

President Soekarno Regime (1945-1967) – The Golden Momentum of the Bilateral Political Relations

During the first stage of the Indonesia-Mexico bilateral relations (1945-1967), Indonesian first President Soekarno visited Mexico three times (1959, 1960, and 1961) as part of his official journey to the Latin American region. and he did have a very close relationship with Mexican President, Adolfo López Mateos. In return, López Mateos also paid an official visit to Indonesia in 1962. Soekarno and López Mateos close relations marked the golden momentum of the bilateral political relations. In Mexico, when people were asked about Indonesia, many would

mention Soekarno, and he was well known for his statement “Go to hell with your aids” to the U.S. government. Strengthening diplomatic relations with the Latin American counterparts was Soekarno’s initiative and it was in accordance to the Indonesian foreign policy agenda, the so-called “*Politik Luar Negeri Mercusuar*” or “Lighthouse Foreign Policy” (Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 1971). Indonesian foreign policy main focus during the Soekarno regime was the recognition of Indonesia as a sovereign and independent country and the fight for anti-imperialism in all of its manifestations. During the Cold War era, Indonesia was not allied to any power blocs (United States vs. Soviet Union), but instead was one of the founding countries to establish a Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) back in 1961.

To show Indonesian foreign policy spirits against any forms of imperialism and colonialism, Indonesia held the Asian African Conference 1955 in Bandung, gathering many leaders from Asian and African states, most of which were newly independent states (Asian African Conference Commemoration 2015 Committee, 2015). Apart from strengthening Indonesian relations with Asian and African countries, since

the Asian African Conference 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia had an objective to make breakthrough among others by further opening diplomatic relations with the Latin American states³. This was a major step as during this period the period of the decolonization era and independent struggle took place.

Indonesia had a clear stance that Mexico was a strategic country to have as a partner, hub, and bridge in the Latin American region. Among the Latin American states, Mexico was the most important partner for Indonesia in the region. This could be seen from the Indonesian Embassies Classification⁴ in which the Indonesian embassy in Mexico City was ranked I.B, well-above Indonesian embassies in other Latin American countries, specifically, Buenos Aires, La Habana, and Rio de Janeiro which were all ranked I.C. In fact, during this period, the Indonesian embassy in Mexico City was comparable to the Indonesian embassies based in Brussels, Rome, or Ottawa (Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 1971). On 10th April 1961, Indonesia had its first Indonesian ambassador to Mexico, Teuku Ismael Mohammad Thayeb which made now the Embassy of the Republic of

³ Indonesia did invite Mexico to become a member of the NAM; however, Mexico, which was the pioneer for third world countries, finally became an observer of NAM, despite supporting the goals of this movement known as *Dasasila Bandung*. In turn, Mexico also pioneered the North-South High Level Conference in Cancun.

⁴ During the Soekarno Regime, the Indonesian Embassy Classification was divided into three categories: I.A. (The biggest and most important post), I.B. (The mid-level post), and I.C. (The low priorities post).

Indonesia in Mexico City to become a “fully-fledged embassy”⁵.

In the economic sphere, formally the bilateral trade relations started in 1962 after signing the *Indonesia-Mexico Trade Agreement* (1961) and a year later, with the *Revised Protocol on the Trade Agreement* (1962). But during the Soekarno regime, the bilateral trade relation was limited. Indonesia had a strong and cordial political relation with Mexico, but this cordial relation was not followed by the strengthening of the economic relations. In the late 1950s, although there was no official trade data record, Pramudyo (2004) described that during those periods Indonesian main export commodities were mostly limited to natural rubber and pepper. In 1962, the total trade amounted US\$1.76 million and all of this trade relation consisted only on the Indonesian export, as imports from Mexico were none.

The first noted trade exchange was backed in 1955, in which Indonesian delegations visited Mexico City and explored for trade visiting several Mexican companies, particularly textile and skin-made product companies. The visit resulted in an agreement to open trade exchange between natural rubber from Indonesia and textile products from Mexico

through the Indonesian Central Trading Company (CTC) and the Dr. Josue De Benito Company (Pramudyo, 2004). For Indonesia, the opening of trade cooperation was important as Indonesia could perform commercial relations with the Latin American states without having to pass/transit via the United States. This trade cooperation was in accordance to the Indonesian “Lighthouse Foreign Policy” agenda and a manifestation of an independent and active foreign policy. The objectives were also to strengthen relations among developing nations (or South-South Cooperation).

In the socio-cultural cooperation, Indonesia officially inaugurated two elementary schools, the *Escuela República de Indonesia* in Tacuba, Mexico City and the Indonesia-Mexico Cultural Center (ICMI) which was first led by the Mexican Vice-Minister of Agriculture, Ing. Patiño Navarrette in 1959. In return, Mexico officially inaugurated the ‘*Sekolah Dasar Republik Mexico*’ at Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta (1962). Further, in 1967, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Mexico City and the Centro Estudio Oriental, Faculty of Philosophy and Languages, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (UNAM) signed an educational cooperation in teaching Indonesian language⁶. This showed

⁵ Meanwhile the first Mexican ambassador to Indonesia, Brigadier General Albarrán Lopez, was appointed in October 1962.

⁶ Mr. Nana Sutresna Sastradidjaja was the Head of the Cultural and Information Division at the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Mexico City. Mr. Bannoedoyo Pakoeningrat, local staff at the Indonesian embassy, was assigned to become the Indonesian language teacher. The UNAM students who attended the Bahasa Indonesia class reached to 23 students from different faculties. Nonetheless, it stopped operating in 1973 as more UNAM students preferred to learn Japanese language as it was deemed to be more useful/beneficial as a result of stronger Mexico-Japan relations.

both countries had strong solidarities and political will to enhance the image and the awareness about both states and also the strengthening in all areas of cooperation.

In 1964, Bank Indonesia opened a representative office led by Mr. Mul-yoto Djojomartono and assisted by Mr. Munarwi and Mrs. Emmy Tari-ma. Further, a branch of Central Trading Corporation (CTC) was opened and led by Dr. Kho Liong Bing. But, due to the misunderstandings, these representative offices were closed within less than a year. Thus, since then until 1966, the bilateral trade relations dramatically declined (the official trade volume was zero) due to the economic and political situation in Indonesia (Pramudyo, 2004). And, only in 1967, both countries posted trade relations figures amounted US\$134,803. During the Gustavo Díaz Ordaz administration, Indonesia-Mexico bilateral relations

deteriorated. It was not only visible from the extreme decline in trade volume, but also in the Mexican foreign policy towards Indonesia itself. Mexico was very precautionous in engaging relations in all fields of cooperation. Despite the fact that Mexican foreign policy was anti-imperialism (or anti-colonization), and a free and active foreign policy (the Estrade Doctrine), in certain circumstances that stance did not show up⁷ (table 1).

President Soeharto Regime (1967-1998) – A Silence Period of the Indonesia-Mexico Diplomatic Relations, and Some Reinvigoration & Disturbances in the Later Period

The Silence Period of the Indonesia-Mexico Diplomatic Relations (1967-1988)

During the earlier period of the President Soeharto regime (1967-1988), politically speaking, Soeharto did not have

Table 1. Trade Relations between Indonesia and Mexico for the Period 1962-1967 (In Million USD)

Year	Export	Import	Total Trade	Trade Balance
1962	1.757724	0	1.757724	1.757724
1963	0	0	0	0
1964	0	0	0.421571	0
1965	0	0	0.089480	0
1966	0	0	0.050757	0
1967	0.138907	0.004104	0.143011	0.134803

Source: World Integrated Trade Solution (2015)

⁷ For instance, Mexican stance on Irian Jaya (East Papua) was in fact abstain, as Netherlands had a stronger bargaining power over Indonesia and was close friend to Mexico. Further, the G-30-S/PKI rebellion became widely known due to the news in Mexico, and the news press asked 'where is Soekarno?'

close relationship with the Mexican leaders due to what Soekarno did in his presidency. The bilateral relations deteriorated from being 'very close friends' to become merely 'friends'. During this period, there was a clear difference in terms of the foreign policy of both states, in which Indonesia was positioned as "right of center" and Mexico was "left of center" (Pramudyo, 2004). During the New Order regime, Soeharto's foreign policy priorities were to support the national economic development agenda and enhancing people's prosperity. There were three main diplomacy programs: to obtain Official Development Assistance (ODA); strengthening economic, trade, technical, information, and cultural cooperation at bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels; and to secure and conduct the Act of Free Choice (PEPERA) in Irian Jaya (Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 1971). Taking into account these main diplomacy programs (particularly the economic programs), then, Mexico was not viewed as an important partner, as the country would not be able to support the Indonesian economic development agenda.

In the political realm, Mexico was initially cautious about Indonesia as they suspected that the new Indonesian President, General Soeharto, was a pro U.S. military leader (pro-Western block). Indonesia did clearly pointed out the stance that the country was not

pro U.S. or Western bloc, but it was an Indonesian government that was fully supported by the people of Indonesia which did not want communism in Indonesia (Pramudyo, 2004). This stance received a strong appreciation by the Mexican government and in accordance to the Mexican Estrada Doctrine on non-intervention and auto-determination policies. As a result, Mexico gave a clear stance and vote supporting Indonesia on Irian Jaya issue in the United Nations held in November 1969.

In the economic realm, Mexico was viewed by the Indonesian government as a developing country and a donor recipient country; thus, the Indonesian embassy in Mexico City was classified as D-3 in the Indonesian Embassies Classification⁸. During the Soeharto regime, in general the Latin American and African states were D-3 embassies as they were the developing, debtor, and capital importing nations, and could become competitors with Indonesia in order to obtain ODAs and capital from the developed countries such as United States, Japan, and the Western European countries, as well as from international organizations. Several embassies in Africa were closed due to financial reasons and the shift on the Indonesian foreign policy paradigm as a result of the changing political regime from President Soekarno to President Soeharto (Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 1971).

⁸ During the Soeharto Regime, Indonesian Embassy Classification was divided into three categories: D-1. (The biggest and most important post), D-2. (The mid-level post), and D-3. (The low priorities post).

This shift in foreign policy paradigm considered the Latin American and African states as secondary priorities partners due to: first, these countries were categorized as indebted countries; second, the Indonesian foreign policy re-orientation to make friends with the Northern Hemisphere states such as the United States, the Western European nations, and Japan; third, the geoFigureal distance and the need to do trade via third countries, product similarities, and low product competitiveness (including Mexican-made products) made the Indonesian government reluctant to do business and, for instance, over the years Indonesia-Mexico economic relationship was more a rivalry than a complementary partnership.

But despite a more formal political relation and the lack of political will from the Indonesian administration, the bilateral trade relation did show significant increase during this period. In 1968, the bilateral trade volume was only US\$1.401,446 and in 1988 reached to US\$27.9 million (World Integrated Trade Solution, 2015). This was due to efforts made by the Mexican side to find new potential markets including Indonesia to export the primary and manufacturing products for the purpose of reducing trade dependence with the United States in the late 1970s. For instance, Mexico

did send a trade officials mission led by the Minister of Trade, Elisco Mondoza Berrueto and, among others, explored to export 900 Volkswagen jeep vehicles (Safari) to Indonesia (Pramudyo, 2004).

During this period, the main obstacles were that bilateral trade relations needed to go through third countries. For instance, Indonesia imported Mexican cotton from Japan and the Mexican Volkswagens from West Germany. Meanwhile, Mexico bought Indonesian natural rubbers via Amsterdam, London, or New York (Pramudyo, 2004). As a result, for the case of Indonesia, the Indonesian business groups were reluctant to buy Mexican industrial products as it was expensive and it was more convenient and competitive to buy from the conventional trading partners such as Japan and the United States. Since then, there were strong perceptions among business groups from both countries according to which, due to the long geoFigureal distance, even a 'direct trading' would not be beneficial for both countries.

Apart from trade cooperation, there was also technical cooperation, and the first visible technological cooperation was between PT. Krakatau Steel and HYLSA SA, a steel manufacturer in Monterrey, Mexico⁹. Other technical

⁹ PT. Krakatau sent 200 labors for training in HYLSA steel manufacturer in Puebla and Monterrey and HYLSA SA sent 85 employees to help develop the PT. Krakatau Steel project, in which the company bought patents and built 4 steel manufacturers in Cilegon using the vapor energy from HYLSA SA which started to operate in 1982. This successful technical cooperation project made Dr. Ing. Raúl Quintero Flores, Technical Director HYLSA SA become an Honorary Consulate for the Republic of Indonesia in Monterrey in 1990.

cooperation initiatives were: the Mexican support for the Indonesian general election in which Mexico supplied 3600 Volkswagen Safari jeep vehicles in CKD form for assembling in Jakarta (1977); 7 Indonesian trainees were sent for training at Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maíz y Trigo (CIMMYT) to learn to cultivate corn and wheat, and processing methanol into combustion (1984-1985).

In the socio-cultural realm, as part of the Indonesian diplomacy agenda, the Indonesian government made efforts to strengthen cultural cooperation including strengthening the Instituto Cultural México – Indonesia (ICMI), strengthening relations with the press

media, and the Escuela de la República de Indonesia. ICMI also opened a branch in Guadalajara and Ing. Jesus Gonzalez Gortazar, Honorary Consul for the Philippines in Guadalajara, was chosen to be the Head of ICMI¹⁰. Further, other initiatives made were back in 1973; the former Indonesian ambassador to Mexico, Mr. Hidayat Mukmin wrote several books and one of them was titled “*kerikil-kerikil tajam di Amerika Latin*” (the sharp pebble gravel in Latin America) which was sold in Indonesia to enhance awareness about Latin America. In the late 1970s, a sister city agreement (*ciudad hermanas*) was signed between Tuxpan, Jalisco State and Ende in Flores (Pramudyo, 2004).

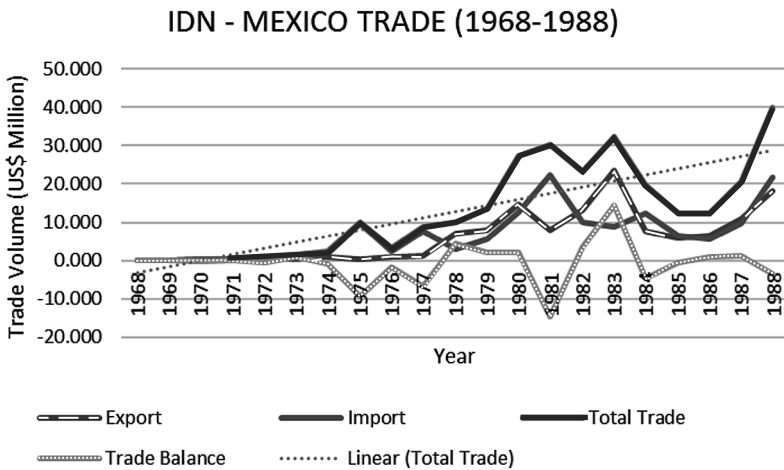


Figure 1. Trade Relations between Indonesia and Mexico for the Period 1968-1988 (in Million USD)

Source: World Integrated Trade Solution (2015).

¹⁰ ICMI in Mexico City was headed by Eva Samano de Lopez Mateos, the wife of ex-President Adolfo Lopez Mateos.

There were also exchange visits of a number of government officials and private sectors. For instance, in the late 1970s, the Indonesian parliamentary delegations led by vice-chair of the Indonesian People's Representative Council, Mr. Mashuri, visited Mexico and, among others, went to Cancun and visited the Mexican Parliament, and both parties signed for inter-parliamentary cooperation. Also, another visible solidarities support were the Indonesian assistance to support the Mexican government in the 1985 Mexico City earthquake.

Indonesia-Mexico Diplomatic Relations: Some Reinvigoration and Disturbances (1989-1998)

During the later period of the Soeharto administration (1989-1988), a stronger bilateral relations, particularly the economic ones, were visible in this period. Both heads of state paid official visits. Soeharto paid an official visit to Mexico in 1991 as part of his journey for attending the High Level Conference G-15 in Caracas, Venezuela (1991). Soeharto met the Mexican President, Lic. Carlos Salinas de Gortari and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations. Further, in October 1995, Soeharto visited Cancun during Soeharto's journey to Cartagena, Colombia, to lead the Indonesian delegations for the 11th Non-Aligned Movement High Level Conference. In November 1995, Soeharto also met

the Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce during the AELM III within the APEC framework, Osaka, Japan. In November 1997, President Soeharto also stopped by in Cancun in his way to Canada for the APEC meeting.

For the Mexican side, in November 1994 the Mexican President, Lic. Carlos Salinas de Gortari¹¹ visited Indonesia to attend the APEC meeting in Bogor and in 1995 Mexico became a member of APEC. This member admission helped to further strengthen the bilateral and regional relations. Since 1994, Mexico showed strong interest to engage more with Asian counterparts as it was viewed that the region had significant and dynamic economic growth.

In the economic realm, entering the late 1980s and after the Cold War ended, economic diplomacy for the purpose of enhancing prosperity received high attention and became a priority agenda for many countries around the world including Indonesia and Mexico (Woolcock, 2011). The Indonesian government started to pay attention and viewed the Latin American region as a potential market (non-traditional market) for exporting the Indonesian products and market portfolios diversification purpose. On the other hand, Mexico started to view the Asian Pacific region as a dynamic region in which the country needed to engage particularly for economic cooperation.

¹¹ The elected President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce also visited Indonesia.

For the trade relations, during the period 1989-1998, despite some disturbances such as the Mexican Crisis in 1994 and the Indonesian financial crisis in 1997-98, both countries were still able to manage a relatively significant trade volume increase from US\$77.38 billion (1989) to US\$254.86 billion (1998). During this period, the number of government and business officials' visit increased and, to support the bilateral trade relations, in December 1992 the Indonesian Trade Promotion Center (ITPC) started to operate in Mexico City. Besides, technical cooperation was also visible under the framework of South-South cooperation.

In the late 1994, Peso currency was devaluated against US Dollars and Mexico experienced the worst economic crisis since 1987. This tequila crisis spread to many regions around the globe including Latin America, Asia, and Europe. The Mexican crisis in 1994 did slightly slowdown the Indonesia-Mexico trade relations, from US\$185 million (1994) to US\$180 million (1995). In spite of it, in the subsequent years, the trade increased until the 1997-98 Asian financial and economic crisis that among others struck Indonesia and significantly impacted the Indonesian economy, including the Indonesia-Mexico economic relations. The bilateral trade relations de-

clined from US\$254 million (1998) to US\$203 million (1999). As a result of the Indonesian financial crisis, many of the activities including socio-cultural activities¹² and the exchange of visits by the government officials and private sectors declined. Further, in July 1998 the ITPC office in Mexico City was also closed down (Pramudyo, 2004).

The Indonesian Transition Period - The Reform, the Economic Recovery and the Take-off of the Bilateral Economic Relations (1998-2004)

In the political sphere, Indonesian President visited Mexico in 2000 and 2002. In April 2000, the Indonesian President, Abdurrahman Wahid, visited Cancun for a work visit and met the Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon. His visit was part of his journey to the High Level Conference on Non-Aligned Movement in La Habana, Cuba. And in October 2002, President Megawati visited Los Cabos to attend the APEC Summit. During the sidelines, Megawati met the Mexican President, Vicente Fox Quesada. During the period 1998-1999, with a political turmoil situation in Indonesia, people in Mexico were informed on the democracy process in Indonesia and the independence of Timor Leste. This was a challenging period for the

¹² Regarding socio-cultural activities, despite a significant decline of activities, since 1998 there were Indonesian missionaries coming to Mexico for missionaries purposes. Also, in September 1997, a lecturer from Universitas Indonesia, Evi Yuliana Siregar, taught Bahasa Indonesia in the Center for Asian and African Studies, El Colegio de Mexico (El Colmex). As of November 2014, Mrs. Evi was also appointed as the Head of the Indonesian Diaspora in Mexico.

Indonesian government to address and re-clarified the Mexican views on the Indonesian current political situation. During this period, the first Bilateral Consultation Forum (BCF) was held in Denpasar, Bali on 11th April 2003. The BCF is an important forum to discuss cooperation in all areas such as Political and Economic cooperation.

In the economic sphere, trade relations declined in the early transition period. In 1998, the bilateral trade volume reached US\$254 million to US\$203 million in 1999. And in the following years, bilateral trade relations showed a slightly increasing trend with certain fluctuations. In 2000, the bilateral trade volume amounted US\$273 million and rose to US\$309 million in 2004. Also, over the years the number of exchange visits by both countries started to increase and the number of Indonesian workers¹³ working in Mexico were also rising. For the business collaboration, the Mexican Ministry of Trade and Industry (SECOFI) recorded that as of March 1996, there were 4 Mexican companies¹⁴ investing in Indonesia. Further, in 1998, a Mexican cement company, CEMEX¹⁵, which was the

third biggest cement company in the world, bought 25.53% of the PT. Semen Gresik shares for US\$290 million (Pranasidhi & Silaen, 2006). In December 2003, there was also an agreement to import gas from the field located in Tangguh, Papua, with a deal valued in US\$24 billion for 20 years of contract.

In the socio-cultural field, in May 2003, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Mexico City established 'Casa de la Cultura LOKA BUDAYA' to facilitate socio-cultural activities in Mexico (Pramudyo, 2004). There were also initiatives such as the establishment of the Asociación Cultural Indonesia-Mexico (21st April 2001) to reunite former Mexican Darmasiswa scholarship holders in order to support the Indonesian cultural activities and the Indonesian House supporting trade cooperation. In another event, in December 2004- Indonesia experienced a Tsunami in Aceh and the people of Mexico showed support to help Indonesia. The Mexican government sent three big ships full of food, medicine, relief materials, and doctors to Indonesia to help tsunami victims in Aceh and Nias Island (Anjaiah, 2008).

¹³ There were many Indonesian workers not registered but who worked at South Korean and Taiwanese companies in the *zona maquiladora* close to the U.S. border. Further, there is an increasing number of Indonesian ship crews working at the ship cruise operating in the Caribbean route and fish catching ships owned by Taiwan.

¹⁴ Two operated in trade sector; one in steel and iron industry; and one in trading food, beverage, and tobacco.

¹⁵ But due to the reform and changing political situation in Indonesia, CEMEX faced difficulties as there was a demand by the local people for 'spin off' (separation) of the PT. Semen Padang (a subsidiary from PT. Semen Gresik) from PT. Semen Gresik. As CEMEX failed the negotiation with the Indonesia Central Government, finally the case was brought up to international arbitration, International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in Washington in December 2003.

President Yudhoyono Regime - The Global Economic Recession and the Momentum towards the Re-strengthening of Economic Relations (2004-2014)

During the Yudhoyono administration, this period could be argued as the take-off of the bilateral economic relations. Indonesia has passed its transition period, the Mexican economy was also relatively stable, and the event of the global economic crisis became a turning point and an important momentum to strengthen and elevate the Indonesia-Mexico bilateral relations. Economic diplomacy to enhance prosperity and economic growth were priorities agenda. Thus, during this period the commercial relations were further accelerated.

In the political sphere, the bilateral relations were cordial and friendly. President Yudhoyono paid an official visit to Mexico in 2008, while the Mexican President, Enrique Peña Nieto, visited Indonesia in 2013. In 2008, Yudhoyono paid an official visit to Mexico and met the Mexican President, Felipe Calderón Hinojosa. The visit coincided with the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations. In 2012, both leaders also met during the sidelines of the APEC Summit in Vladivostok, Russia. In 2013, Nieto visited Indonesia and met Yudhoyono on the sidelines of the APEC Summit in Bali. During this 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations, both leaders in a joint statement agreed to establish a comprehensive partnership as recognition of the strategic value of

the bilateral relations and shared the vision to work together in shaping the global agenda by closely cooperating in international fora, such as United Nations, FEALAC, APEC, G-20, and WTO to closely contribute to global causes of common concerns and interests (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2013).

Further, within the political realm, there are new emerging groups such as MIKTA and the Pacific Alliance. MIKTA is an informal group formed in 2013 and consists of five major middle power countries: Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia. Meanwhile, the Pacific Alliance is a Latin American trade bloc formed in 2012 and consists of four member states, namely, Mexico, Chile, Peru, and Colombia. In 2015, Indonesia became an observer of the Pacific Alliance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015b). Other visible political cooperation initiative was the establishment of the Indonesia-Mexico Friendship Group at the Parliamentary level in 2011 by the Mexican Head of the Foreign Relations Committees to strengthen inter-parliamentary cooperation between both countries. In 2013, the Indonesian parliament visited Mexico, which coincided with the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

During this period, both countries conducted the Bilateral Consultation Forum (BCF), 2nd BCF (10-12 May 2007, Mexico City), 3rd BCF (9-10 May 2011, Jakarta) and the 4th BCF (2nd August 2011, Mexico City). This forum is cru-

cial to help strengthening the bilateral relations. One of the current priorities of Indonesia-Mexico bilateral relations is to strengthen economic relations, particularly trade and investment. To strengthen bilateral trade relations, in May 2009 Indonesia re-opened the Indonesian Trade Promotion Center (ITPC) in Mexico City. Further, both countries have signed many agreements to strengthen economic, political-security, and socio-cultural cooperation.

In the economic sphere, the U.S. economic recession and the European financial and economic crisis followed by a prolonged recession caused the global economic crisis and this event has led many countries around the world to proactively find new market opportunities in order to boost economic growth as their traditional trading partners (markets), the U.S. and Western European states, experienced prolonged economic recession. The global economic recession has in fact led many developing countries, including Indonesia and Mexico, to intensively search for and explore new markets. Indonesia aims to strengthen trade relations with potential and untapped markets such as the Latin American region, the Eastern European region, the Central Asian region, and the African region. For the Indonesia-Latin American trade relations, despite some trade volume improvement, the overall bilateral trade relations with 33 Latin American states were still small and only accounted for 2.735 percent of the total Indonesian trade with a total trade volume of US\$8.4 billion (2014).

During this period, Indonesia-Mexico bilateral trade volume increased significantly from US\$309 million (2004) to US\$1.03 billion (2014). The bilateral trade reached its peak in 2012 with US\$1.21 billion. During the last 5 years (2010-2014), Indonesian exports to Mexico showed a rising trend with an average of 2.65 percent but, however, the Indonesian import from Mexico has slowed down to 0.31 percent. In 2014, the Indonesian main exports to Mexico were: Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof (US\$204 million), Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof (US\$86 million), Footwear, gaiters and the like; parts of such articles (US\$83 million), Animal or vegetable fats and oils and their cleavage products; prepared edible fats; animal or vegetable waxes (US\$63 million), and Rubber and articles thereof (US\$62 million). Meanwhile Indonesian main imports from Mexico are Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof (US\$41 million), Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof (US\$39 million), and Iron and steel (US\$19 million) (figure 2).

The Jokowi Presidency and the Implication and Ways Forwards of the Indonesia-Mexico Bilateral Relations (2014-onwards)

Joko Widodo (Jokowi) became the Indonesian President in October 2014. During the Jokowi administration, the incumbent Indonesian President

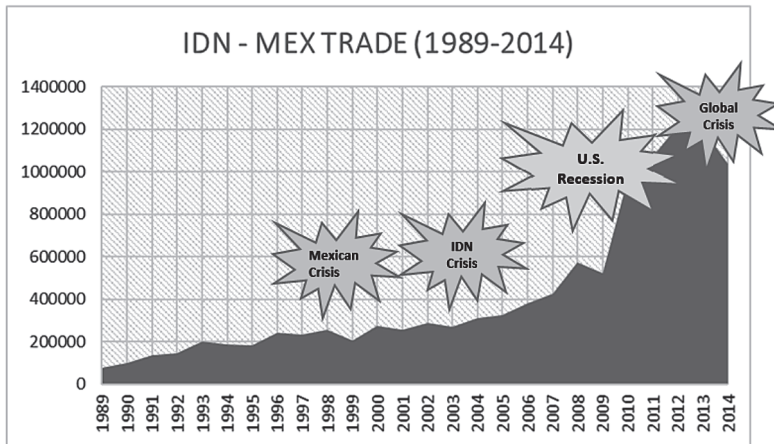


Figure 2. Trade Relations between Indonesia and Mexico for the Period 1989-2014 (In Million USD)

Source: World Integrated Trade Solution (2015).

emphasizes to strengthen economic diplomacy as its foreign policy priorities (Nurhayat, 2014). The Indonesian diplomats are expected to become the salesman abroad and expected to be able to boost export and bring foreign direct investment as much as possible in order to support boosting the economic growth. Currently, Indonesia views Mexico as a potential and important partner in Latin America. Mexico is the second largest economy in Latin America. In 2014, the country ranked 14th largest economy in the world with a total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) amounted US\$1.283 trillion with a total population of 125.4 million people (World Bank, 2015). This very rough glance of economic potentialities clearly shows a tremendous market in which Indonesia should further proactively engage in. Mexico also views Indonesia as a strategic partner in the Southeast Asian region with its economic potentialities, among others its

large population (labor surplus), open economy, a democratic country, and a fast-growing emerging country. With these potential assets and together with a cordial and friendly relations, then, the opportunity to elevate the partnerships from just merely friend into a comprehensive partnership (as agreed by both Heads of State in the Joint Statement 2013) seems to be feasible. But to achieve this visible target, both countries need to work hard and address the inherent matters and issues in an innovative and creative manner.

Both countries may have learned from their past economic crises experiences in the mid and late 1990s, and the prolonged economic recession in the U.S. and Western European region - their traditional markets- have pushed both countries to actively search for new potential markets. Nevertheless, the recovery of the U.S. economy in recent years may lead them to re-think

the situation and has become a challenge for both countries: the willingness and seriousness of both countries to further deepen the bilateral economic relation. For instance, Prof. Juan José Ramírez Bonilla (2015) explained that the current Mexican foreign policy priority is to strengthen the bilateral relations with the United States, followed by the European Union and the Asian region. Mexico still relies significantly on its economic relations with the U.S. and with weak linkages to the Asia Pacific counterparts. In Asia, China is viewed as the most important commercial partner for Mexico, meanwhile Japan and South Korea are viewed as an important financial partner. Further, the Southeast Asian region is still considered as a secondary priority region within the Asian continent.

In 2004, Mexican-United States trade relations amounted US\$266.6 billion and 10 years later, the trade volume reached US\$534.5 billion. Mexico's main trading partner is the United States (80.3 percent of total exports and 49 percent of imports). Meanwhile China, the second biggest trading partner, accounted 1.5 percent of total exports (behind Canada and Spain) and 16.6 percent of imports, far ahead of South Korea (3.4 percent), Japan (4.4 percent), and Germany (3.4 percent) (HSBC, 2015). Further, looking from trade indicators such as the Trade Intensity Index (TII) and the Trade Complementarity Index (TCI), it can be seen that the bilateral trade relation evidences some concerns despite some improvement. During the period

1998-2013, the trade pattern of the bilateral relation was more as substitutes rather than complementary partners, but with some improvement. In 1998, the TCI was 36.5 points and in 2013 was 40.79 points. Further, based on the TII data over the given period, the TII has in fact declined from 22.31 points in 1999 to only 19.61 points in 2013 meaning that over the years the bilateral relation is getting less intense. This demonstrated that the efforts made by both sides to strengthening were not enough to intensify the bilateral trade relations despite the fact that the trade volume increased over the last several years.

It is already a classical matter that countries from these two different regions due to conventional problems such long distance, language barriers, poor infrastructures, lack of interests by local people from both regions, and low people-to-people contact have ultimately caused the trade between Indonesia and Mexico to be below their potentialities over the years. Further, for Indonesia, over the years Indonesian foreign policy in Latin America is viewed more as an alternative market that Indonesia needs to engage in order to diversify its exports and market portfolios. Although attempts have been made to reinvigorate and enhance the economic cooperation at the regional and bilateral level within the recent periods, nonetheless, at least until 2014, Indonesian bilateral trade with its partners in the South American, Caribbean, Central American, and North American (except U.S. and

Canada) regions shows a relatively low trade volume. As an illustration, in 2014 Indonesia’s trading relations in Latin America was only 2.735 percent of the total Indonesian trade and in fact this figure is the highest in the Indonesia-Latin American trade history.

Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemlu), Mexico is handled within the Directorate of North and Central American Affairs. In 2014, Indonesian trading volume with Mexico amounted

US\$1.038 billion making the biggest trading volume among Central American countries but however very lagged behind the North American countries, the United States of America (US\$24.7 billion) and Canada (US\$2.6 billion). Among the Latin American countries, Mexico ranked third just behind Brazil (US\$4.05 billion) and Argentina (US\$1.7 billion). The current Indonesia-Mexico bilateral trade relations are still below their potential and more efforts could be made to strengthen bilateral trade volume (figures 3 & 4).

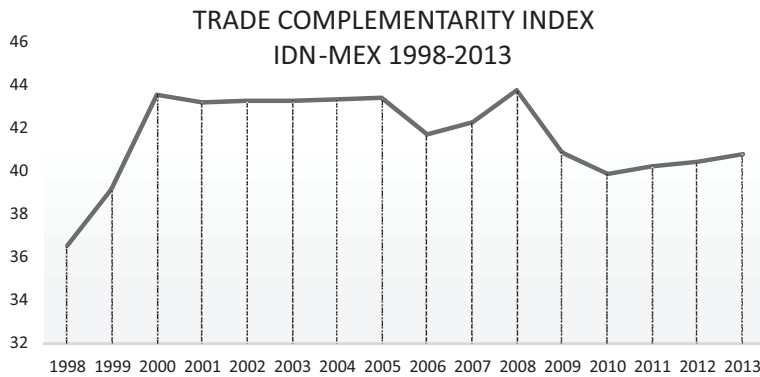


Figure 3. Trade Complementarity Index between Indonesia and Mexico for the Period 1998-2013

Source: World Integrated Trade Solution (2015).

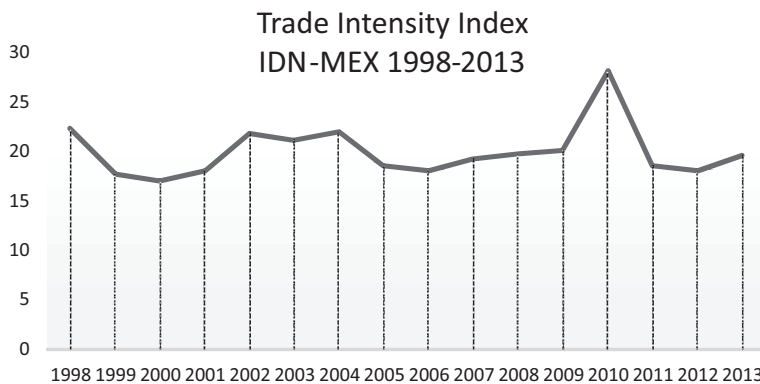


Figure 4. Trade Intensity Index between Indonesia and Mexico for the Period 1998-2013

Source: World Integrated Trade Solution (2015).

Given those facts, both countries must find ways to address the matters in order to achieve the ultimate objective of being a comprehensive partner rather than merely a friend. For the economic relationship which is the core of the current bilateral relations, both states need to find creative ways on how to evolve from rival country (competitor) to become an emerging collaborative partnership.

Some lessons could be learned, for instance, from the Mexico-People's Republic of China (PRC) and Mexico-India bilateral economic relations. From the Mexican political viewpoints, its relationship with the PRC (and to some extent also India) is important to demonstrate its political and economic independence from the United States. In fact, PRC considers Mexico¹⁶ as one of four countries in Latin America being a strategic partner along with Brazil, Venezuela, and Argentina (Xinhua English, 2005) (table 2).

From the economic viewpoint, Mexican relations with the two countries were able to evolve from being competitors to become partners. India-Mexico economic relations have been characterized as more complementary over the years. India focuses its position in the service sector (particularly Infor-

mation Technology), pharmaceutical industry, as manufacturer of medium technology machinery, and entertainment. In the Maquiladora sector, U-Flex India (Flex Americas S.A. de C.V) built state-of-the art manufacturing facilities producing high quality packaging film in Tamaulipas State (Flex Film Ltd, 2015). For Sino-Mexico economic relations, historically, due to the similarities in the export structures of both countries, the bilateral trade relations have been characterized more as competition than complementarity, with the net balance of payments position heavily favoring PRC (Ellis, 2009).

Over the years, for instance, the Chinese low-end manufactured goods like textiles and footwear have been strongly competing with the Mexican labor intensive textiles and footwear and the Mexican products have been losing ground in this competition, not only within the Mexican market but also in the U.S. market. Further, PRC also exported significantly more sophisticated products to Mexico such as motorcycles, computers, appliances, and cars. Despite such difficulties, both countries have somewhat successfully managed to turn their economic relationships from being rivals into partnerships involving integrated, global production chains, with a por-

¹⁶ In 2003, PRC upgraded its relationship with Mexico from "all-around cooperative partnership" (*quanmian hezuo huoban*) to "strategic partnership" reflecting the combination of the political and economic importance that Mexico represents for PRC. In the same year, for big countries such as South Korea, for instance, PRC augmented its status from "cooperative partnership" which was created in 1998 to "all-around cooperative partnership". This implies that from the PRC's view, Mexico is a more important partner than South Korea.

Table 2. Trade Relations between Indonesia and North and Central American Region Counterparts for the Period 2013-2014 (In Thousand USD)

Nº	Country	2013			2014			Δ (%) 2014/2013		
		Export	Import	Total	Balance	Export	Import		Total	Balance
1	Belize	1016.28	1652.03	2668.31	-635.75	861.90	3302.90	4164.80	-2441.00	56.08
2	El Salvador	9609.48	56102.11	65711.59	-46492.63	11966.10	279.70	12245.80	11686.40	-81.36
3	Guatemala	35865.16	6040.53	41905.69	29824.63	34715.00	791.90	35506.90	33923.10	-15.27
4	Honduras	7521.95	1433.55	8955.50	6088.40	7352.80	1273.90	8626.70	6078.90	-3.67
5	Costa Rica	22838.74	27663.06	50501.80	-4824.32	24363.60	4061.20	28424.80	20302.40	-43.72
6	Mexico	687275.50	515792.46	1203067.96	171483.04	850874.40	187462.00	1038336.40	663412.40	-13.69
7	Nicaragua	22951.34	838.29	23789.63	22113.05	13693.40	155.30	13848.70	13538.10	-41.79
8	Panama	151668.10	13696.13	165364.22	137971.97	109118.20	39489.40	148607.60	69628.80	-10.13
9	Canada	782347.31	2067471.21	2849818.52	-1285123.90	755021.30	1860197.90	2615219.20	-1105176.60	-8.23
10	USA	15741131.92	9081821.49	24822953.41	6659310.43	16529904.40	8170107.70	24700012.10	8359796.70	-0.50
	Total	938746.54	623218.16	1561964.70	315528.38	1052945.40	236816.30	1289761.70	816129.10	-17.43

Source: World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS) and Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia (2015).

tion of the production operations located in Mexico (Ellis, 2009). The PRC has made significant investment in the Maquiladora zone. The giant Chinese computer manufacturer, Lenovo¹⁷, for instance, established a computer plant in Monterrey with investment amounting US\$40 million (2009) and the Chinese logistics company Hutchison Port Holdings have made significant investment in the Mexican port sector located in Baja California and Veracruz (Hutchison Port Holdings Limited, 2015). Further, the Chinese companies such as Huawei, Oppo, Foxconn and ZTE have planned to build commercial stores and factories in Mexico (Ruiz, 2014). These companies have become increasingly important providers of components and services in the Mexican telecommunications sector.

But, above all these emerging collaborative relationship, much of their success depends on the U.S. market condition. For instance, the global recession in 2008 have made the Chinese companies such as the Chinese automaker Zhongxing, Geeley¹⁸, and FAW Group¹⁹ to withhold their planned investment to build auto plants and performing some final-assembly operations in the maquiladora zone, Mexico (Yan, 2008 & Alvolante, 2008).

Taking into account the current Indonesian and Mexican foreign policy orientations, the current constraints and opportunities to strengthen the economic relations, and the lessons learned from Mexican economic relations with PRC and India, in the next sub-section the study attempts to provide some applied ways-forward policy recommendations for the Indonesian government that hopefully could be useful to elevate the current Indonesia-Mexico diplomatic relations into a higher level.

**Towards an Indonesia-Mexico
Comprehensive Partnership
Agreement: Shifting from a Rivalry
Partnership to an Emerging
Collaborative Partnership.**

In accordance to the Kemlu Mission outline, Mexico is classified as a non-traditional market for Indonesian export and an important partner in several bilateral, regional, and international fora. Specifically, the mission of the Indonesian-Mexico diplomatic relations that need to be achieved are: to increase Trade, Tourism, and Investment (TTI); to open Indonesian representatives; to increase the signing of bilateral agreements; and to increa-

¹⁷ Lenovo Website (2009), "Monterrey será centro tecnológico estratégico en México", 18 February. Available online: http://www.lenovo.com/news/mx/es/2009/02/18_02_2009.html

¹⁸ In fact, Geeley finally established an auto plant in Uruguay in 2012 joint with Nordex, an Uruguayan company. The investment is targeted to penetrate the Brazilian market and the South American market as a whole.

¹⁹ Due to the global economic crisis, Grupo Salinas – FAW Group plan to build a joint assembly car plant has been called off (Gao, 2009).

se people-to-people contact (Marsudi, 2010). Currently, Indonesia and Mexico have cordial relations, but translating these good political relations into good economic relations is a challenge. The paper attempts to provide policy recommendations in accordance to the Kemlu Mission guideline.

Both countries look at themselves as emerging powers with great influence on their own sub-regions; both are secular and democratic countries, and with diverse and strong ties in their traditions. Both have somewhat similar level of agricultural, industrial, and technological development, thus, making the trade relations to some extent characterized as rivals rather than partners. Nowadays, the bilateral talks are mainly oriented to strengthen commercial relations, with both nations looking to diversify their export portfolios; to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and to enhance joint technological developments in strategic and highly complementary areas.

Both sides acknowledge the significant economic potentialities of both countries, in which Mexico, on its side, clearly recognizes Indonesia as the largest economy in the Southeast Asian region with huge commercial opportunity for Mexican companies, and as a potential gateway to the Southeast Asian market. On the other hand, Indonesia views Mexico as a potential economic partner in the Latin American region and could become a gateway to penetrate the U.S. market and the Central American region. Further,

both countries have common interests to share in the international fora such as the UN, G-20, FEALAC, MIKTA, APEC, and WTO. Therefore, the opportunity to elevate the bilateral relations into a next stage is quite realistic if both countries have strong political willingness, resolve the inherent problems that impede the current bilateral economic relations, and implement the work in a rightly guided manner.

In the economic realm, first, Indonesia should make use of the Mexican strategic geoFigure position *vis-a-vis* the United States. From the commercial perspective, the geoFigure proximity of Mexico to the U.S. is a powerful competitive advantage for trade, in terms of logistics costs and service responsiveness. These advantages are increased by the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, thus, goods produced in Mexico meeting certain criteria could enter the U.S. market with virtually no fees, and this creates potential opportunities for Indonesia, for instance, to locate certain companies for final-assembly operations in Mexico.

Apart from reaping benefits by a virtually tariff-free exported products to the U.S. market, this maquiladora business could also provide opportunities to acquire new technologies and improve production processes through partnership with the Mexican firms. The Maquiladora sector has not only attracted the U.S. investors by moving their production operations to Mexico due to cheaper production cost, but also many

other countries such as the PRC, India, South Korea, and European countries open their production operations in the maquiladora zone. As a starting point, the Indonesian government could send an assessment team²⁰ to assess the potential cost and benefits from investing in the Maquiladora sector.

Meanwhile, for the Mexican side, as a reciprocity, the Mexican entrepreneurs could explore to invest in the suggested sectors, The Masterplan for Acceleration and Expansion of Indonesia's Economic Development (MP3EI). The MP3EI is an investment guidance book mainly investing in infrastructures and strategic sectors to ultimately support Indonesian competitiveness. The investment would also be expected to bring 'know-how' knowledge and technology.

Second, Indonesia should strengthen its marketing program and market intelligence. The Indonesian government has not effectively identified or leveraged Indonesia's competitive advantages and the targeted types of products that Mexicans wish to purchase. Indonesia should promote and sell the Indonesian brands to an expanding and increasingly affluent Mexican middle class that is developing a taste for a broad variety of foreign goods. The Mexican people are open and

very keen to know and explore more about Indonesia, just like the Indonesians that have interests to know and explore more about Mexico. Therefore, the Indonesian government should make use of this opportunity not only through promoting Indonesia with its socio-cultural programs but also simultaneously marketing the internationally recognized brands of Indonesian products.

Further, Indonesia must leverage a product's Indonesian identity to appeal to the Mexican consumers' growing interest in foreign goods. In a Business Dialogue, Ambassador Yusra (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015a) asserted that quality and uniqueness are the keys to penetrate the Mexican market, two things that are owned by Indonesia. Indonesia has many unique products of high quality that can potentially be very well received in Mexico. The author identified three potential businesses to promote Indonesian identity: the culinary business, the creative and the entertainment industry. In the culinary industry, the Indonesian government should creatively find ways to bring Indonesian business people and to find the Mexican entrepreneurs (or business partners) to open Indonesian restaurants²¹ and foodstores in Mexico. The restaurants sell the Indonesian

²⁰ Also, the assessment team could also attempt to identify the potential industries and companies that Indonesian entrepreneurs could fit in the Maquiladora sector. This assessment is important, knowing the fact that the Indonesian entrepreneurs are risk-averse, and concern about risks of making investment abroad.

²¹ So far, there is only one Indonesian restaurant in Mexico City.

food, while the Indonesian foodstores sell among others Indonesian spices and processed foods in Mexico. To support the culinary business, the Indonesian government needs to negotiate for tariff dismantlement and ensure all Indonesian food ingredients, recipes, spices, and including processed foods to be able to smoothly enter the Mexican market. This trade negotiation should be done in a reciprocity basis, as the Mexican restaurants²² are also starting to expand their culinary businesses in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, in the creative and entertainment industry, the Indonesian government should approach the Mexican television to explore for featuring Indonesian film and sinetron (soap operas), joint creative videogames, music, and cartoon (for instance, featuring the Mariachi-Dangdut music and the Mariachi-Wayang cartoon). Promoting Indonesia via the creative and entertainment industry should be more effective and able to touch all level of societies in Mexico. This creative and entertainment promotion activities not only help promote awareness and the positive image about Indonesia, but also simultaneously could help to promote and attract Mexican tourists to visit Indonesia. The Indonesian government mindset should shift from 'tourism & business promotion as

usual' to a more 'creative and innovative tourist and business promotion', and one way to achieve this is to optimally use the available creative and entertainment resources.

In the textile and footwear industries, both countries could also potentially be complementary rather than rivals as long as both states focus on brands, product uniqueness, and quality. As discussed above, theoretically and historically, Indonesia-Mexico trade relations are more of substitutes rather than of complementarity, such as the exchange of textiles and footwear. The case may be true if only taking into consideration the cost of production and price of the products, holding other factors constant. However, if the trade focuses on brand image, product uniqueness, and quality, then bilateral trade relations could still be dynamic and even enhanced. For instance, Indonesia produces shoes from fish skin (precisely skin of snapper and tilapia) and this shoe uniquely is waterproof with a smooth texture, almost like snake skin. The more exposed to water, this shoe gets stronger, because basically, the fish lives in water (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015a). Meanwhile Mexico could export its traditional formal and casual guayabera²³ shirts with its appealing Mexican product identity and uni-

²² Several Mexican restaurants can be found in Indonesia, such as Amigos Bar & Cantina, Hacienda Bar & Grill, Loco Mama, Chili's Grill & Bar, and PuertoBello Express (Qraved Journal, 2015).

²³ Guayabera is a traditional Latin American garment. Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Cuba (where it is the official dress garment as of 2010) all recognize the guayabera as a form of "national dress" and their political leaders often wear them at public events (Centeno, 2012)

queness, as it suits in hot weather such as in Indonesia with its tropical weather.

Third, to smoothen the Indonesian business activities in Mexico, the Indonesian business people needs to work with local Mexican partners to build sales and distribution networks in Mexico. This applies for Indonesian investors who want to open production facilities in the Maquiladora zone which crucially need Mexican partners for its sales and distribution networks. Further, to facilitate business cooperation and people-to-people contact, Indonesia and Mexico should open a direct transportation link in the future. A codeshare agreement between Garuda Indonesia and Aeromexico in 2013 was an excellent step to begin with, but it is not enough. For the Sino-Mexican relations, a direct Aeromexico flight between Tijuana and Shanghai was opened in April 2008 (Dibble, 2010). These direct transportation links have facilitated the flows of people between the two states.

Indonesia and Mexico have huge population, both are emerging countries and with an increasing number of middle-income groups, thus, making both states potential for strengthening commercial relations. This booming number of middle class groups are characterized with 'price and cost sensitive' groups. For instance, despite the Mexican middle-income class

are open and interested to explore a broad variety of foreign products, this buyer group is still characterized as 'price sensitive'. Meanwhile, for the business group where most of which are Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) a faster and cheaper transportation link is essentially needed. Over the years, both states are concerned with the vast geoFigure distance and the assumed high transportation cost which ultimately hindered commercial relations. Therefore, given those facts, a direct flight and shipping route should be urgently needed to address those matters. The direct transportation link ultimately reduces transportation cost, thus, making both countries' commodities cheaper and helping to facilitate business-to-business contact (and people-to-people interaction as a whole).

For the airlines business perspective, given the economic potentialities and the huge number of population in both countries, then a direct flight should be viable and potentially profitable for the commercial airlines²⁴. Connectivity between Southeast Asian and the Latin American region is becoming increasingly important given the rapid growth in both markets. So far, the Southeast Asian – Latin American routes are fulfilled by the Gulf and European carriers such as Emirates, Air France, KLM, Etihad, and Qatar Airways (CAPA Center for Aviation, 2013). The Southeast Asian and Latin American carriers could offer

²⁴ So far, Singapore Airlines is currently the only Southeast Asian carrier serving the Latin American region. Singapore Airlines operates a direct flight to Sao Paulo via Barcelona.

quicker and cheaper flights by opening a direct flight. This could be done unilaterally by the airline carriers such as Singapore Airlines or by building close partnerships with airlines counterparts such as the Garuda-Aeromexico codeshare agreement²⁵.

Further, as suggested by Pramudyo (2004) both countries need to establish a roadmap to build the maritime cooperation, not only for the transportation and tourism sectors, but also to make use of its potentialities, for instance, for sea-lanes communications and aqua-cultures. Pramudyo stated that in this century, the maritime sector is an important resource for both states and could be used by the people as a source of food and medicines.

To support the Indonesian economic diplomacy program in Mexico, the socio-cultural programs should be strengthened particularly to promote awareness and a positive image of Indonesia. In the socio-cultural sphere, some lessons learned could be shared from the PRC socio-cultural cooperation with Mexico. There is a number of universities and centers teaching Mandarin language

in Mexico. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) arguably was the first Latin American university to establish Centro de Estudios China-México (Cechimex) dedicated to China studies (Ellis, 2009). From the Sino-Mexican relations experiences, Indonesia could also establish a similar Center, a Center for Indonesia-Mexico Studies (Cindomex).

The Cindomex should become the center of excellence to learn about Indonesia-Mexico studies. Given the available resources, one potential location would be at the El Colegio de México²⁶ (El Colmex). El Colmex alone would not be effectively able to establish Cindomex and further, making this Center viable in the long-run. Some lesson learned from the past such as the teaching of Indonesian language MoU between the Indonesian Embassy in Mexico City and the UNAM only lasted 6 years (1967-1973), and the ICMI, which was inaugurated in 1959, stopped operating in 1984. Therefore, the efforts to establish Cindomex need to be supported by the Indonesian government and the relevant Indonesian and Mexican stakeholders. A Memorandum of

²⁵ The Garuda-Aeromexico codeshare agreement is the first Southeast Asian and Latin American codeshare partner.

²⁶ El Colmex has the minimum required resources: first, the higher institution has a Center for Asian and African Studies called Centro de Estudios de Asia y África (CEAA) with at least two competent lecturers and experts, namely, Mrs. Evi Siregar, who is a permanent Indonesian language lecturer at CEAA and whom since November 2014, has assumed the Head of the Indonesian Diaspora based in Mexico; and Prof. Juan José Ramírez Bonilla, a professor and researcher with expertise in the Southeast Asian region. Further, El Colmex is also one of the best think tanks in Mexico and the Latin American region. The 2014 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report by the University of Pennsylvania revealed that El Colmex ranked third in Mexico, behind Consejo Mexicano de Asuntos Internacionales (COMEXI), and Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE).

Understanding (MoU) on Academic and Socio-cultural Cooperation between Cindomex and the Indonesian Embassy in Mexico City (KBRI Mexico City) and Center for Policy Analysis and Development on American and European Regions (Pusat P2K2 Amerop), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia could be a good starting point. The Strategic KBRI Mexico City and Pusat P2K2 Amerop – El Colmex Partnership could become the embryo and a locomotive through facilitating second-track people-to-people contact, hence helping to achieve a more dynamic, progressive, and mutually cordial ties between both countries and ultimately to help to raise the Indonesia-Mexico diplomatic relations into a Comprehensive Partnership.

Further, Kemlu should also use the past and existing assets and networks including: Cenderawasih School, a school owned in Jakarta by Kemlu; Escuela de la Republica de Indonesia in Mexico; and re-activate the ICMI that is no longer in operation, and to invite the descendants of the former prominent figures such as the child or grandchild of Adolfo Lopez Mateos López and Miguel Covarrubias to support the Cindomex. Indonesian government should also make use of the Indonesian diaspora in Mexico to support the Cindomex program. Indonesian diaspora could no longer be viewed as a ‘brain drain’ but instead should

become a ‘brain hub’ for the Indonesian people. They have powerful ‘brain power’ with potential innovators, entrepreneurs, pioneers, educators, and workers, with lots of knowledge, ideas, capital, and networks. Thus, the Indonesian diaspora is an important asset to help boost greater economic and social links between Indonesia and Mexico. Despite the fact that Indonesian diaspora is relatively limited in Mexico, it is nonetheless a valuable asset and partner that Cindomex needs to collaborate with. For instance, their expertise could be used for a business and economic forum (such as doing business in Indonesia and Mexico through sharing experiences), and cultural activities such as teaching Indonesian language.

Still in the socio-cultural realm, the Indonesian government could make initiatives to build the President Soekarno Statue in Mexico City. In the past, Soekarno was an important figure and quite well-known in Mexico. This request is important as the Soekarno statue would symbolize the cordial relations between Indonesia and Mexico in the past. The Mexican government did twice requested the Indonesian government to build the Soekarno statue during the Soeharto administration, but the Indonesian government neglected the request²⁷ (Pramudyo, 2004). Now, during the Jokowi administration, it is opportune for both

²⁷ In 1963, the Mexican government requested the Indonesian government to build the Soekarno statue at the corner of the street between Paseo de la Reforma and Arquimedes, Polanco, Mexico City. But due

states to build a symbolic President Soekarno statue in Mexico City. Further, Jokowi is a member of the PDIP Party which is led by Megawati Soekarnoputri, a former Indonesian President and the daughter of Soekarno.

Last but not least, Indonesia could also re-strengthen its sport cooperation sharing best practices in low profile cooperation such as natural disaster management and human trafficking issues. For sport cooperation, back in 1964, a former prominent Indonesia badminton player, Mr. Tan Joe Hok became badminton coach at Deportivo Chapultepec, Mexico City (Pramudyo, 2004). The Mexican people do love sports; thus, it opens a big opportunity to promote Indonesian sports such as badminton, pencak silat (Indonesian martial arts), and sepak takraw by sending coaches to Mexico.

In the political realm, both countries could build a value-added partnership by establishing more dynamic, progressive, and mutually beneficial relations through working closely on common interests in the regional and international fora. Currently, both states have cordial relations and both are democratic and emerging economies that benefit from open economies with robust growth rates and a signi-

ficant level of economic power. These are important foundation and a milestone in the mutual endeavor towards an active, dynamic, and stronger cooperation. There are many international fora, among others the United Nations, APEC, MIKTA, FEALAC, Indonesia-Pacific Alliance, WTO, and G-20 from which both could share common interests. The world is changing rapidly, and new regional and global issues and challenges have emerged. The world needs to foster renewed and innovative partnerships to provide pragmatic, creative, and constructive solutions to address the challenges.

Indonesia and Mexico could work together and can play an active and constructive role in the international agenda and exert greater influence to address the regional and global challenges and strengthening the global governance in major international fora. Despite both coming from different cultures and regions, the states share core values and similarities. Strengthening the political relations could support the elevation of their relations into a so-called Comprehensive Partnership. In an interview, Prof. Juan José Ramírez Bonilla suggested the Indonesian government to also bring the Pacific Alliance members to become observers for Regional

Cont. note 27

to the limited available funds, thus, in this space the Korean Pagoda was built. In the early 1980s, the Mexican government requested again to build the Soekarno statue in the Paseo de la Reforma, and due to no response from the Indonesian government, finally, in the space the statue of the Yugoslavian Non-Alignment Movement leader, Joseph Broz Tito, was built. It is also believed that the Mexican government request was inopportune, as Soeharto in fact considered Soekarno as his rival.

Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Mexican government should make full use of the Pacific Alliance with its Asian-orientation agenda. Further, with a very clear agenda, Mexico could also attempt to become an integral player in the Asia Pacific region, for instance, by participating in the political and security dialogue with ASEAN. The current Mexican president expects Mexico to be able to act as a country with an increasing role in the world as a middle power state. But to achieve this objective, for instance, in the Asia Pacific and ASEAN region, Mexico should come up with a very clear agenda and needs to have strong political willingness complemented with stronger efforts.

Conclusion

Over the years, the bilateral relations between both countries have been generally positive, good, and cordial. For Indonesia, Mexico is the second oldest Latin American partner after Brazil in which the diplomatic relation was established in April 1953. During the Soekarno administration, Indonesia and Mexico enjoyed the peak momentum of the political relations. But during the Soeharto regime, the relations deteriorated from used to be a 'very close friend' to become simply a 'friend'. Soeharto's foreign policy priorities were to support national economic development and enhancing people's prosperity. Thus, from

this national interest, Mexico was viewed not a priority partner. At least this was clearly seen in his earlier period of administration, despite some invigoration to strengthen economic relations was visible in the later period starting in the late 1980s until the mid-1990s. Post Soeharto regime, the bilateral relations strengthened, particularly after the Indonesian transition period, and these bilateral relations, particularly within the economic sphere, have accelerated, when the U.S. recession and the global economic crisis emerged.

Both countries have exchanged official visits at the highest level over the years. The paper pointed out that there is plenty space that both countries could take advantage of to increase the collaboration between the governments, strengthen economic ties, and promote connection among people. But to achieve this mission, both countries need to have strong political willingness, work hard, and address the inherent matters and issues in an innovative and creative manner. There are lingering issues that need to be tackled out, including the assumed conventional perceptions of long geographical distance which leads to high transportation costs, similar economic and export structures leading the trade patterns to be perceived more as rivals than as complementary partners, language barriers, lack of infrastructures, and low people-to-people contact; these have ultimately caused the bilateral relations to be below their potentialities over the years. Taking into accou-

nt the constraints and opportunities to strengthen the bilateral relations, the current Indonesian and Mexican foreign policy orientations, and the lessons learned from the Sino and Indian relations with Mexico, several policy recommendations were formulated in this paper.

For the economic relationship which is the core of the current bilateral relations, both states need to find creative ways on how to evolve from rival countries (competitors) to become an emerging collaborative partnership. Despite historically being the bilateral economic relationship more a rivalry, with strong political will and implementing the appropriate economic diplomacy measures, the Indonesia-Mexico bilateral economic relationship could evolve from being competitors to be emerging collaborative partners, ultimately achieving a so-called 'comprehensive partnership' as agreed by both Heads of State in the Joint Statement 2013.

Several policy recommendations to strengthen the bilateral economic relations are, among others: Indonesia should make use of the Mexican strategic geoFigure position *vis-a-vis* the United States through investing in the Maquiladora sector which provides opportunities to reap virtually tariff-free exported products to the U.S. market and also opportunities to benefit from lower production costs, acquire new technologies, and improve production processes through partnership with the Mexican firms. And as a reciproci-

ty, Mexico should invest in the MP3EI sectors. Second, Indonesia should strengthen its marketing program and market intelligence. Indonesia should promote and sell the Indonesian brands to an expanding and increasingly affluent Mexican middle class that is developing a taste for a broad variety of foreign goods. Further, Indonesia must leverage a product's Indonesian identity to appeal to the Mexican consumers' growing interest in foreign goods. Quality and uniqueness are the keys to penetrate the Mexican market, two things that are owned by Indonesia.

The paper suggested three potential businesses to promote Indonesian identity: the culinary business, the creative and the entertainment industry. Further, in the textile and footwear industries, both countries could also potentially be complementary rather than rivals as long as both states focus on brands, product uniqueness, and quality. Third, to smoothen the Indonesian business activities in Mexico, the Indonesian business people need to work with local Mexican partners to build sales and distribution networks in Mexico. Further, to facilitate business cooperation and people-to-people contact, Indonesia and Mexico should open a direct transportation link in the future.

Acknowledging both countries have a booming number of middle class groups but characterized as 'price and cost sensitive' groups, thus, a faster and cheaper transportation link is essentially needed. The direct transportation

link ultimately reduces transportation cost, thus, making both countries' commodities cheaper and help to facilitate business-to-business contact, and people-to-people interaction as a whole. Further, both countries need to establish a roadmap to build the maritime cooperation, not only for the transportation and tourism sectors, but also to make use of its potentialities for instance, for sea-lanes communications and aqua-cultures.

To support the Indonesian economic diplomacy program in Mexico, the socio-cultural programs should be strengthened, particularly in order to promote awareness and a positive image about Indonesia. One suggested approach is to establish a center of excellence to learn about Indonesia-Mexico studies, a so called Center for Indonesia-Mexico Studies (Cindomex). Given the available resources, one potential location would be at the El Colmex. But, El Colmex alone would not be effectively able to make this Center viable in the long-run and a strong support from the Indonesian government and the relevant Indonesian and Mexican stakeholders is crucially needed. To further strengthen the diplomatic relations, a symbolic President Soekarno statue should be built in Mexico City, one which was requested by the Mexican government but refused during the Soeharto regime. Other potential socio-cultural cooperation includes sport cooperation sharing best practices in low profile cooperation such as natural disaster management and human trafficking issues.

Finally, in the political realm, both countries could build a value-added partnership by establishing more dynamic, progressive, and mutually beneficial relations through working closely on common interests in the regional and international fora. The international fora among others are the United Nations, APEC, MIKTA, FEALAC, Indonesia-Pacific Alliance, WTO, and G-20. Both sides acknowledge the potentialities that both states could benefit from strengthening the bilateral relations. Currently, both are secular and democratic countries with open and fast-growing economies and complemented with a cordial and friendly relations; then, to achieve more dynamic, progressive, and mutually cordial ties between the two states, and ultimately to elevate the diplomatic relations into Comprehensive Partnership seems to be a visible goal to be achieved.

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