

"STREET" DIPLOMACY, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY COLLABORATION

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Abstract

Jakarta is a megapolitan city which is the most exposed to globalization in Indonesia. Just like other world's megapolitan cities, it has a role as a center of national economy and culture. However, the city also contributes to causing climate crisis thanks to the carbon emission it has been producing for many years. The municipal government has been pursuing its ambition to be an environmentally friendly city by, one of the strategies, transforming long-existing mobility culture to sustainable urban mobility. This paper describes the innovation the municipal government has taken in diplomacy practice towards its British counterparts to pursue its interest. In addition, this paper describes the implications caused by regional development to the city's para-diplomacy. This paper argues that Jakarta can be the forefront in leading "green" campaign by exploiting what it has achieved in both domestic and international level in addition to the leaders' strong and continued commitment.

Key words: Jakarta, para-diplomacy, regional development, sustainable urban mobility, climate crisis.

"Street" Diplomacy: An Innovation in City Diplomacy (Para-diplomacy)?

On Wednesday, February 23, 2022, Governor of Jakarta Anies Rasyid Baswedan and municipal officials welcomed the British Secretary of State for International Trade, Rt. Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan on the pavement near the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) station of Bundaran Hotel Indonesia, Sudirman-

Thamrin. Warmly welcomed, the minister had a small conversation while looking around the area which were already equipped with bike lanes. As if there had had nothing happened between the municipal officials and their British guests, pedestrians were walking on the wide and comfy pavement as they routinely did. The small tour continued by the MRT riding to the transit area of BNI Dukuh

Atas – the first modern, designated transit-oriented area in Jakarta. Short walking and coffee sipping purchased at a diffable coffee shop completed the tour before they headed to the PT MRT’s office for a more serious discussion about collaborative projects.

The way the Governor of Jakarta welcomed his international guests might not have been a common practice as many government officials welcome their guests at the places other than streets such as airports, hotels, or governmental offices. Chit-chats during the short tour could be a starter of what they would mainly talk over in addition to creating intimacy between the two sides. Diplomacy as a tool of introducing and negotiating interests is such communication that people can do in many forms. “Cycling” diplomacy, “dining” or “food” diplomacy, “seminar” or “dialogue” diplomacy and others – depending on the events and places – have been common phrases in diplomacy studies. As a practice, according to Vincent Pouliot and Jérémie Cornut¹, diplomacy is “socially organized and meaningful ways of doing things.” The author introduces the phrase of “street” diplomacy since the events engaging

the interaction between them took place along the street of Sudirman-Thamrin. Regardless the various names, diplomacy always brings reciprocal message from one to the other side.

The “street” diplomacy by the Jakarta municipal government attempted to provide a real example of development in the city to their British counterparts. The area of Sudirman-Thamrin is a pilot project of the city’s “complete street” within the Transit-Oriented Development program in order to realize eco-friendly urban mobility. The Transit-Oriented Development is the city’s new mindset replacing the previously Car-Oriented Development which is deemed to have had contribution to social and environmental problem such as traffic congestion and air pollution. The Transit-Oriented Development not only leads to eco-friendly mobility but also creates just environment. As Rt. Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan may have seen during her short tour with her host municipal officials, pedestrians, cyclists, public transport riders, and private vehicle users including disable people can have equal right in the same environment. The sustainable urban mobility which is eco-

¹ Vincent Pouliot and Jérémie Cornut, “Practice Theory and the Study of Diplomacy: A Research Agenda,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 50, no. 3 (2015):

297-315,
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836715574913>.

friendly and just is the goal that the city has been pursuing since last few years. In other words, what is seen in the area of Sudirman-Thamrin is the expected picture of all Jakarta's protocol roads in the future whose public transport modes are integrated and equitable addition to safe environment.

As many national and global issues emerge from cities, it has been becoming more important for them to play active role to address the issues. Furthermore, Zeraoui and Castillo Villar² argues cities have become important agents in international arena while countries have been losing monopoly in diplomacy along with globalization process. Hardly do cities, especially those which are much exposed to globalization, prevent themselves from international interactions through which solutions can actually be found. Thus, innovations in interaction as well as policy find the relevance and leaders should be capable of capitalizing their cities' potentials and recent developments.

This paper argues that "street" diplomacy conducted by the Jakarta municipal government is an innovation in its city diplomacy (para-diplomacy) practice. The

² Eika Auschner, Liliana Lotero Álvarez, and Laura Álvarez Pérez, "Paradiplomacy and City Branding: The Case of Medellín, Colombia (2004–2019)," in *City Diplomacy: Current Trends and Future Prospects*, ed.

municipal government attempted to exploit the recent development to pursue its interest – sustainable urban mobility. Just like other world's cities, the pursuit of interests can hardly be done unless collaborations with international stake holders exist due to their shortages in term of resources and technologies. However, this paper suggests more studies on current city diplomacy (para-diplomacy) practices especially "street" diplomacy as well as possibility for its conceptual framework development and how the municipal governments utilize the recent developments in their areas to smoothen their diplomatic efforts. The new practices and frameworks of city diplomacy will definitely enrich the studies of para-diplomacy.

Regional Development and Implications to Para-diplomacy

Jakarta is not only the biggest city in Indonesia but also in the south of the globe. Just like other megapolitan cities, Jakarta has been suffering from stressful congestion and air pollution due to the fact that the majority of dwellers' mobility relies on private carbon emission transports. Realizing the long-lasting

Sohaela Amiri Sevin and Efe Sevin (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 279–303, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-45615-3_13.

problem has been caused by the Car-Oriented Development prioritizing private emission vehicle users, the municipal government shifts the policy to Transit-Oriented Development which places pedestrians, cyclists, public transport riders ahead of private vehicle users in an order concern. Based on the new concept, the construction and revitalization of pavements, bike lanes, and transit areas should be the municipal government's priorities.

Furthermore, such facilities support the city's public transport integration policy which is known the "Jak Linko" system. The system has not only integrated the various regional transport modes such as MRTs, Bus Rapid Transits (BRTs), and micro-busses but it has also integrated the payment which encourages more people to use public transport modes instead of their private vehicles. The even availability of public transport is necessary to support the policy. As claimed by the municipal government, the public transport availability has covered 82

percent of Jakarta in May 2022 and the municipal government targets to reach 95 percent of coverage by the end of 2022.³ The municipal government has, too, gradually implemented electrification of public transport modes and targeted to electrify all types of modes incorporated in the "Jak Linko" system in 2030.⁴

Such urban mobility policy is the municipal government's effort to make Jakarta be a sustainable city which prevents human activities harmful to environment. The municipal government has decided to reduce emission to 30 percent in 2030 and make Jakarta a free-emission city in 2050.⁵ In addition, the municipal government has issued the Gubernatorial Regulation No.90/2021 on Low Carbon Action Plan which is a middle-term policy to mitigate the climate change in the city. The latter has been claimed to be the first regional middle-term action plan on low carbon development issued by regional government in Indonesia.⁶

³ Antara, "DKI Targetkan Cakupan Transportasi Umum Capai 95 Persen Akhir 2022," May 20, 2022, <https://www.antaraneews.com/berita/2891577/dki-targetkan-cakupan-transportasi-umum-capai-95-persen-akhir-2022>.

⁴ Jakarta Municipal Government, "Innovations To Develop The Transportation," *Media Jaya: Information Media of The Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta* (Jakarta, November 2020),

https://jakita.jakarta.go.id/media/download/eng/edisi_11_2020.pdf.

⁵ Jakarta Municipal Government, "Jakarta Climate Resilient City: Best Practices Compilation 2021" (Jakarta, 2021), <https://rendahemisi.jakarta.go.id/page/downloadContentFile/166>.

⁶ iNews, "Terbitkan Pergub Nomor 90 Tahun 2021, Anies Targetkan Jakarta Jadi Kota Berketahanan

Thanks to the public transport restructuration policy, Jakarta has shown some improvement in term of urban mobility. While the MRTs are still the backbone of mass transport in the city, Jakarta's BRTs reached a million daily riders in 2019.⁷ The increase of such public transport modes cannot be separated from the role of integrated system and better pavements and transit areas. Jakarta has no longer been included as one of ten world's worst traffic jam cities since 2020 based on TomTom Traffic Index report.⁸ Furthermore, Jakarta won the first position in the Sustainable Transport Award (STA) held by the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) in 2021 for its innovation in urban mobility and its commitment to providing decent bike lanes for cyclists.⁹ In the previous year, the city only got "honorable mention" or runner up position at the prestigious event. The

Iklim," October 15, 2021, <https://www.inews.id/news/megapolitan/terbitkan-pergub-nomor-90-tahun-2021-anies-targetkan-jakarta-jadi-kota-berketahanan-iklim>.

⁷ Jemilah Magnusson and Fani Rachmita, "Jakarta Is What Resiliency Looks Like," *Sustainable Transport Magazine*, January 2021, https://www.itdp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ITDP_ST32_web.pdf.

⁸ Kompas, "Jakarta Removed from the 10 World's Worst Cities for Traffic Jams in 2020," January 18, 2021, <https://go.kompas.com/read/2021/01/18/221652474/jakarta-removed-from-the-10-worlds-worst-cities-for-traffic-jams-in-2020?page=all>.

Governor of Jakarta was crowned among 21 Heroes 2021 for the city's work toward a shared goal of creating fair, affordable, and inclusive transportation for all in the time global challenge of COVID-19 by the Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI) - Germany-based non-governmental organization - which initiated the policy implementation of sustainable urban mobility.¹⁰

Jakarta's development in term of urban mobility policy has brought some implications especially to its para-diplomacy. What the city has achieved helps the municipal government to continuously create city branding among the world's megapolitan cities. As stated by Jakarta Governor Anies Rasyid Baswedan, the city has ambition to lead in sustainable transportation¹¹ and be one of the world's greenest cities.¹² Thanks to the current international network of cities,

⁹ ITDP, "2021: Jakarta, Indonesia," 2021, <https://www.staward.org/past-winners/njn8kpckm7tdulhfuregut19pv2tg>.

¹⁰ TUMI, "21Heroes2021," 2021, <https://www.transformative-mobility.org/publications/21heroes2021>.

¹¹ Antara, "Jakarta Aims to Lead in Sustainable Transportation: Governor," February 17, 2022, <https://en.antaranews.com/news/215889/jakarta-aims-to-lead-in-sustainable-transportation-governor>.

¹² Modern Diplomacy, "World's Largest Public Bus System Begins Transition to Electric Vehicles," 2019, <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2019/06/01/worlds-largest-public-bus-system-begins-transition-to-electric-vehicles/>.

Jakarta is able to exchange ideas and best practices in public transport management.

Jakarta is one of the members of C40 Cities and has been showing its active engagement within the organization. By the end of 2020 Jakarta was elected as the C40 Steering Committee a long with Tokyo leading the organization to provide strategic directions in addressing climate crisis among the city members.¹³ As Indonesia will be hosting the G20 forum in October 2022, Jakarta a long with West Java is leading the U20 which is one of the G20 pillars formulating recommendation related to clean energy transition and climate change adaptation needed by cities to the national governments of G20 member countries. In addition to “credit” gained from the regional development, international recognition such as awards and leaderships contribute to helping the city to project its para-diplomacy in order to pursue more ambitious interests such as creating more development at home by having intense bilateral collaboration with other international stake holders.

¹³ C40 Cities, “Governors of Tokyo and Jakarta Elected to C40 Cities Steering Committee,” 2020, <https://www.c40.org/news/tokyo-jakarta-steering-committee/#:~:text=Governor of Tokyo%2C Yuriko Koike,to addressing the climate crisis.>

Towards “Green” Collaboration: Jakarta – the UK’s Sustainable Urban Mobility Initiatives

During her visit to the MRT’s office, Rt. Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan discussed some possible B to B partnership between the Jakarta-owned and the British enterprises in developing the “green” transportation system in Jakarta. The UK is well-known for its transport industry and its transport enterprises have long contributed to assisting the municipal governments to have modern urban transport system within the country and beyond. In addition, the capital city of London has been inserting its role as global “green” leader.¹⁴

Following the “street” diplomacy, on Friday, May 13, 2022, Governor of Jakarta Anies Rasyid Baswedan and the city’s transport enterprise officials visited London to follow up the partnership plan. During the round table discussion attended by eight British transport enterprises facilitated by Rt. Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan, the municipal government delivered the progress Jakarta has made in term of transit-oriented mobility and

¹⁴ Michele Acuto, “World Politics by Other Means? London, City Diplomacy and the Olympics,” *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 8, no. 3–4 (2013): 287–311, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1871191X-12341255>.

offered some collaborations on the city's future projects. Memoranda of understanding on transport cooperation were signed between PT MRT Jakarta and Crossrail International on the MRT investment and development, and PT Transjakarta and Switch Mobility Limited on busses electrification.¹⁵ In addition to the UK, the municipal government visited two other European countries for other potential "green" collaborations.

The collaborations aim to succeed the integration of public transport in Jakarta. The massive transport modes such as the MRTs are the backbone in Jakarta's "Jak Linko" system. The city has planned a few of strategic projects of the MRT construction which will be able to connect distant areas and transport people massively in the city, which the British enterprises are expected to take part. In addition to connectivity, electrification of public transports is needed to support the city's low carbon emission commitment. The initiatives are the part of Jakarta's long-term ambition to transform itself towards sustainable urban mobility and achieve long-term's net zero emission. Once such agreed

¹⁵ Kumparan, "Ke Inggris, Anies Jajaki Kerja Sama Pengembangan Kendaraan Listrik," May 14, 2022, <https://kumparan.com/kumparanbisnis/ke-inggris->

collaborations come into effect following the regional legislature's approval, there will be possible wider collaborations in the future as the city is dynamic which consequently affects its needs.

Final Remark

Many argue that the future is in the cities as most of the world's populations inhabit the cities and most of the world's GDP is generated in the cities. The cities have, however, contributed to the world's problems such as green-house emission causing climate crisis. As one of the megapolitan cities and part of global communities, Jakarta has taken its role to address climate crisis through regional actions which are often sounded in international fora. In addition to air pollution, Jakarta is also facing the threat of sinking due to climate crisis. One of the regional actions conducted by the municipal government is creating sustainable urban mobility as a responsibility to fight the climate crisis as well as providing good service to city's dwellers through para-diplomacy. This is in line with the idea that para-diplomacy is a strategy of sustainable development.¹⁶

[anies-jajaki-kerja-sama-pengembangan-kendaraan-listrik-1y4c3sNEFbC/2](https://kumparan.com/kumparanbisnis/ke-inggris-anies-jajaki-kerja-sama-pengembangan-kendaraan-listrik-1y4c3sNEFbC/2).

¹⁶ Alexander Sergunin and Pertti Joenniemi, "Paradiplomacy as a Sustainable Development

Jakarta has been attempting to position itself as a “towards” global city. It means that not only does the city need to provide excellent facilities and services to its dwellers but it also needs to play its international role in global politics such as environmental issues. The city has shown such effort by utilizing the current international opportunity structures such as C40, U20, UCLG, and other networks. For example, at the forum between C40 Mayors and UN Secretary General, the Jakarta governor talked about advancing carbon neutrality and resilient recovery for cities and suggested some initiatives to anticipate climate crisis, which resonated well to the global organization.¹⁷ This paper argues that regional development should bolden Jakarta’s confidence to project its city diplomacy (para-diplomacy) in order to pursue its domestic oriented interest as well as improving its city branding as the forefront among the world’s cities in leading the “green” campaign. So are the leaders’ strong and continued commitments as well as knowledge

capacity on the issue required as a fundamental support.

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¹⁷ Kompas, “Sekjen PBB Setujui Usul Anies Terkait Antisipasi Perubahan Iklim,” April 17, 2021, <https://megapolitan.kompas.com/read/2021/04/17/19413521/sekjen-pbb-setujui-usul-anies-terkait-antisipasi-perubahan-iklim?page=all>.

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