

# PARA- DIPLOMACY

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COVID-19 AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS'  
RESPONSES

LUERDI, 12 DECEMBER 2022





# This presentation will cover ...

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International Relations Development

Para-Diplomacy in Time of Covid-19



Para-Diplomacy

Para-Diplomacy: Jakarta Case

# (I) Development of IR

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**Issues:** From high politics ‘security politics’ to low politics ‘economy and non-mainstream issues’



**Actors:** From ‘nation-states’ to ‘non-states’ and ‘sub-states’



**Theories:** From ‘realism’ to ‘pluralism’

## (II) Para-Diplomacy

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Para-diplomacy is now “the part of broadening of the universe of international affairs” (Keating, 2013).

The **absence of consensus** about the definition of para-diplomacy **despite its normalcy** in international relations.

**Various foci of research** regarding the actors, motives, and para-diplomatic activities.

# What is para-diplomacy?

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Para-diplomacy is as “a form of **political communication** for reaching economic, cultural, political, or any other **types of benefits**, the core of which consists in **self-sustained actions** of regional governments with foreign governmental and non-governmental actors” (Kuznetsov, 2015).

Kuznetsov uses the term of ‘**region**’ and ‘**regional government**’ in para-diplomacy.

Region is defined as “the territorial and administrative unit on **the first level of authority after the central government** in both federal and unitary state systems” (Kuznetsov, 2015). Meanwhile, **the sub-national government** acts as the actor in para-diplomatic activity.



In other words, para-diplomacy is **the external relation of a sub-national government** with foreign governmental and non-governmental actors **to pursue** economic, cultural, political, or any other **interest**.

Such activities are **independent** from its national government thanks to **its competence** and **opportunities** given by domestic and international **structure**.

Para-diplomacy includes a number of sub-national government's actions starting **from attending ceremonial activities** of international events to **signing international treaties** or **struggling for secession**.

# What drives para-diplomacy?

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Both **internal and external institutions** called opportunity structure are **the common determinants** for a sub-national government to pursue its interest through para-diplomacy (Keating, 2013; Lecours, 2002).

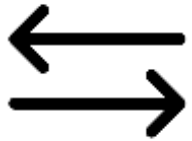
Meanwhile, the **para-diplomacy strategy** is the result of **the existing opportunity structure and motivations** generated by the sub-national government (Keating, 2013).

Opportunity structure is any internal and external institution which the regions are exposed to, either **allowing or encouraging them** to conduct para-diplomatic activities.



# Perceptions on para-diplomacy

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Para-diplomacy as a **challenge** for the whole nation.

Para-diplomacy as an **opportunity** for the whole nation.

# Para-diplomacy and state diplomacy

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Rarely is para-diplomacy seen **as opposition** to national interests and foreign policy, especially in the unitary state system, like Indonesia.

Para-diplomacy differs from conventional diplomacy or state diplomacy since the former is more “**functionally specific and targeted**” and often “**opportunistic and experimental**” (Keating, 2013).

Sub-national governments can project para-diplomacy driven by their distinctive motives as well as opportunity structure to pursue regional interests either **without harming national interests** or **in addition to supporting state diplomacy**.

# Para-diplomacy actors

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Only sub-national governments?

Some studies have shown that para-diplomacy is **not the only privilege of regional governments** but also the participating area of non-governmental actors within a sovereign country (Añorve et al., 2022; Meissner & Warner, 2021).

# Other terms refer to para-diplomacy

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Proto-diplomacy

Sub-national diplomacy

Constituent diplomacy

## (III) Para-Diplomacy in Time of COVID-19

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More literature on para-diplomacy during the COVID-19 pandemic driven by globalization and decentralization.

Kurniawati et al., (2022) group the literature on the sub-national government efforts to tackle COVID-19 to several categories:



- (1) Sister city schemes, for example, West Java – Sichuan (Suhendrik et al., 2021).
- (2) Global city networks, for examples, Jakarta (Luerdi, 2021) and Seoul (Shon, 2021).
- (3) Partnerships with NGOs, for example, Canadian provinces / cities – Red Cross (Canadian Red Cross, n.d.)
- (4) Partnerships with IGOs, for example, Caribbean regions – regional organizations like the Caribbean Medical Doctors Association (CDA), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), etc (Resiere et al., 2021).



(5) Promote dialogue in diplomatic tensions, for example, the US, Chinese and Taiwanese cities (Rudakowska & Simon, 2020).

(6) Partnerships with foreign military forces, for example, Daegu – US Army Force (Kurniawati et al., 2022).

(7) Conducting foreign missions, for example, Indonesian local governments – foreign embassies (Kurniawati et al., 2022).

# (IV) The Case of Jakarta

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The case of Jakarta: **global city networks**.

The use of **digital technology and internet**.

The use of **international networks of cities** to coordinate and share best practices in handling the pandemic.





What has the Jakarta regional government done in responding to the COVID-19?

Digital diplomacy.

# Jakarta's para-diplomacy: digital diplomacy

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Providing reliable information in “corona.jakarta.go.id” platform to international communities.

Collaborating with foreign communities in response to COVID-19 impacts.

Participating in cities against COVID-19 global summit 2020.



Releasing gubernatorial message for international communities in Jakarta.

Improving COVID-19 data platform capability.

Initiating Jakarta Development Collaboration Network Forum 2020.

(Luerdi, 2021)



The purpose?

Sharing experience, collaborating, and providing transparency and openness to international communities.

In return to reserve trust to the regional government in handling the crisis and present a positive image to the region as a crisis-proof city as well as the part of global community (Luerdi, 2021).

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