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The Construction of the Reality of Indonesian Diplomacy in the Iran-Israel-United States Conflict in 2026 on National Online Media: Robert N. Entman's Framing Analysis of Detik.com, Kompas.com, and CNNIndonesia.com

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Abstract

Online media construct distinct interpretations of diplomatic initiatives through selective reporting, making Indonesia's response to the 2026 Iran–Israel–United States conflict an important case for examining foreign policy narratives. This study aimed to compare how Detik.com, Kompas.com, and CNNIndonesia.com framed Indonesia's diplomatic position, mediation proposals, and recommendations for conflict resolution. A descriptive qualitative design within a constructivist paradigm was employed using Robert N. Entman's framing model, which encompasses problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. Nine articles, comprising three from each outlet, were purposively selected from coverage published between February 28 and April 30, 2026. Data were collected through documentation and a literature review, while source triangulation and repeated textual analysis were employed to enhance the credibility of the findings. The findings revealed that Detik.com emphasized cautious realism, technical requirements for mediation, and structural capacity. Kompas.com shifted from affirming official diplomatic narratives to critically scrutinizing national interests and the legitimacy of mediation. CNNIndonesia.com highlighted external validation, contradictions surrounding Indonesia's participation in the Board of Peace, and strategic ambiguity. Across the three outlets, mediation was framed in terms of feasibility, acceptance, and unequal international power relations. These differences suggest that source selection and editorial emphasis contribute to the construction of competing diplomatic realities. The study concludes that national online media actively negotiate the legitimacy of diplomatic initiatives, underscoring the need for clearer government communication and greater critical media literacy.

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, people no longer understand international political events solely through direct experience but increasingly through representations constructed by the mass media. Online media do not simply convey facts as they are; rather, they select, emphasize, and reinterpret events, thereby producing particular versions of reality that are subsequently consumed by the public (Hadiwijaya, 2023). As Perloff (2021) emphasizes, international conflicts never unfold entirely within the military arena; their development is also shaped by statements from state leaders, negotiations, diplomatic pressure, and political communication aimed at gaining public support. This perspective explains why conflicts geographically distant from Indonesia can nevertheless become domestic public issues that are intensively constructed by national online media.

The conflict examined in this study represents the culmination of long-standing tensions between Iran and the United States, which escalated again when the United States and Israel launched joint military operations against several targets in Iran on February 28, 2026, including nuclear facilities that have long been the subject of international disputes (Kompaspedia, 2026). The attacks triggered a multilayered escalation, ranging from Iran's counterattacks (Antara Sulawesi Tengah, 2026) and disruptions to energy distribution routes in the Strait of Hormuz, which contributed to soaring global oil prices, to condemnation from the United Nations because the attacks occurred amid nuclear negotiations in Geneva (ANTARA News, 2026a). As of August 2026, the resolution of this conflict remained uncertain and continued to have the potential for long-term implications for the global security order (Djoyonegoro, 2026).

In response to the escalation, the Indonesian government took active diplomatic steps. The Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasized that the conflict threatened global security and stability (Kompas.com, 2026a), while President Prabowo Subianto expressed his readiness to facilitate dialogue by visiting Tehran, in line with Foreign Minister Sugiono's assertion that dialogue and diplomacy were the only paths toward regional stability (InfoPublik, 2026). This offer was welcomed by the Iranian Embassy in Indonesia, although its potential effectiveness was questioned by several parties.

This series of diplomatic developments is not simply received by the public as a single, objective reality. In a democratic country, the mass media play an important role in shaping how people understand government policies, including foreign policy (Setiawan, 2019). This role operates through two mechanisms, namely priming, whereby issues repeatedly emphasized by the media become criteria that the public uses to evaluate government performance (Perloff, 2021), and framing, whereby the media guide audiences in interpreting an issue by selecting and emphasizing particular aspects of an event. Both mechanisms can be understood within the broader process of the social construction of reality, as conceptualized by Berger and Luckmann (1966). In the context of this study, the term "construction of the reality of Indonesian diplomacy" refers to the process through which the positions, attitudes, and diplomatic actions of the Indonesian government are selected, interpreted, and presented differently by each media outlet, resulting in distinct versions of the "reality of Indonesian diplomacy," even when they originate from the same factual events. This construction is operationalized using Robert N. Entman's (1993) framing analysis model.

Detik.com, Kompas.com, and CNNIndonesia.com occupy strategic positions in shaping national public discourse on international issues. A Reuters Institute survey shows that Detik.com is accessed by approximately 50 percent of Indonesian respondents each week, followed by Kompas.com at 39 percent (GoodStats, 2025b; Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2025), while CNNIndonesia.com consistently ranks among the top ten national news portals and is known for actively selecting and recontextualizing international issues (Laoh, 2025). The three outlets also exhibit distinct journalistic characteristics: Detik.com adopts a fast-paced style oriented toward general audiences, Kompas.com has a strong tradition of interpretive journalism, and CNNIndonesia.com tends to incorporate international and comparative perspectives. Indonesia also maintains different relationships with the three parties involved in the conflict: official diplomatic relations with Iran, no formal diplomatic relations with Israel, and strategic relations with the United States characterized by power imbalances.

Initial observations during the February–March 2026 escalation period reinforced this assumption. Of the 47 Detik.com articles monitored, more than 60 percent of the headlines positioned rising fuel prices and the threat of inflation as the dominant frame. Of the 38 Kompas.com articles examined, more than 55 percent linked Indonesia's diplomatic response to the free and active foreign policy principle and the mandate of the Preamble to the 1945

Constitution. Meanwhile, of the 29 articles and videos published by CNNIndonesia.com, more than 65 percent presented an international comparative perspective that questioned Indonesia's capacity to act as a mediator.

Studies of media framing in relation to diplomacy and international conflicts are not new. Herman and Nurdiansa (2010) examined the framing of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in the Kompas and Radar Central Sulawesi newspapers; Nuraini et al. (2024) examined the framing of the 2024 Iran–Israel conflict on Kompas.id, Aljazeera.com, and NYTimes.com; and Nurdyansa et al. (2025) investigated the comparative framing of the Iran–Israel conflict by Al Jazeera and CNN International. Studies examining the framing of Indonesian diplomacy have also begun to emerge, including research on President Prabowo Subianto's first foreign visit as represented in international media (Siadari, 2025) and Indonesia's decision to join the Board of Peace as framed by Republika and Kompas (Mahengke & Ashaf, 2026). However, no comparative framing study has been identified that examines how three national online media outlets construct Indonesian diplomacy in the 2026 Iran–Israel–United States conflict, particularly regarding Indonesia's proposed role as a mediator. Therefore, this study offers novelty in four respects: thematically, because the 2026 Iran–Israel–United States conflict remains relatively understudied compared with the Israeli–Palestinian conflict (Ainani & Yudiansyah, 2025); in terms of its object of analysis, because the framing of Indonesian diplomacy across national online media has rarely been examined comparatively (Setiawan, 2019); theoretically, because it integrates Entman's framing model with the perspective of the social construction of reality; and substantively, because it examines Indonesia's foreign policy position in a global conflict as a reflection of its free and active foreign policy principle (ANTARA News, 2026b).

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze how Detik.com, Kompas.com, and CNNIndonesia.com frame the causes of the conflict and the Indonesian government's position in responding to the Iran–Israel–United States conflict; how the three media outlets frame proposed solutions or recommendations for conflict resolution in relation to Indonesia's diplomatic role; and how the construction of Indonesian diplomacy differs across the three media outlets during the 2026 escalation of the conflict. The findings are expected to enrich scholarship on political communication and media framing while providing practical insights for the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, media practitioners, and the public.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach within a constructivist paradigm (Sugiyono, 2019). Robert N. Entman's (1993) framing analysis model was used as the analytical framework to examine how Indonesian diplomacy was constructed and represented by national online media (Eriyanto, 2012). The analysis focused on Entman's four framing elements: problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation.

This study relied exclusively on textual data without interviews with journalists or readers. Data were collected through documentation and textual analysis, supplemented by a literature review of relevant theoretical and empirical sources (Sugiyono, 2019). The data corpus included headlines, leads, news bodies, source selections, and diction relevant to the construction of Indonesian diplomacy. Articles were retrieved from Detik.com, Kompas.com, and CNNIndonesia.com and limited to coverage published between February 28 and April 30, 2026. The search used combinations of relevant keywords, including "Indonesian diplomacy," "Iran–Israel conflict," "Prabowo mediation," and "Iran Israel US." Articles were included if they directly addressed the Indonesian government's diplomatic response, were published within the specified period, and constituted original journalistic content. The initial search identified 47 articles from Detik.com, 38 from Kompas.com, and 29 articles or videos from

CNNIndonesia.com. These materials were subsequently narrowed to three news items from each outlet, resulting in a final corpus of nine news items selected based on their representation of different stages of the conflict, relevance to Entman's framing elements, and depth of information.

The three media outlets and the final news corpus were selected through purposive sampling using a maximum-variation approach. The selection considered audience reach and influence (GoodStats, 2025a), differences in media ownership and business models (Lestari & Faizah, 2023), journalistic orientation and audience segmentation, and the intensity of coverage related to the conflict and Indonesian diplomacy. The data were analyzed by systematically applying Entman's four framing elements to each news item and examining explicit and implicit meanings reflected in word choice, narrative structure, source selection, and information placement. Data credibility was strengthened through source triangulation by comparing framing patterns across the three media outlets (Sugiyono, 2019) and through repeated textual analysis to ensure consistency in the categorization and interpretation of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Media Overview

Detik.com officially aired with a complete news presentation on July 9, 1998 and became a pioneer of online journalism in Indonesia with *a breaking news* format. Since 2011, Detik.com has been under Chairul Tanjung's Trans Corp/CT Corp after the acquisition of 100 percent of its shares. Its business model relies on *traffic* volume and digital ad monetization, so its editorial orientation tends to be speed and direct impact. During the coverage period analyzed (March 2026), the position of Content Director and Editor-in-Chief was held by Alfito Deannova Gintings before switching to Ardhi Suryadhi on April 28, 2026 (Asatunews, 2026).

Kompas.com has its roots in Kompas Daily, which was first published on June 28, 1965 by P.K. Ojong and Jakob Oetama (Kompas Corporation, 2026). The online version became PT Kompas Cyber Media on August 6, 1998 and was renamed Kompas.com on May 29, 2008 (Inside Kompas.com, 2026). Kompas Gramedia Group's business model relies on the reputation and trust of educated segment readers, thus providing an incentive to maintain in-depth interpretive journalism. CNNIndonesia.com was launched on October 20, 2014 as a result of a partnership between Trans Media and Turner Broadcasting System (now Warner Bros. Discovery), the licensee of the CNN brand. CNN Indonesia and CNN International are separate organizations, and editorial policy CNNIndonesia.com entirely in the hands of Trans Media's management. International brand affiliation provides an incentive for CNNIndonesia.com to present a global perspective as a differentiator from domestic competitors (Laoh, 2025).

The Construction of the Reality of Indonesian Diplomacy in Detik.com

The object of Detik.com analysis consists of three articles published on March 1-4, 2026, namely two direct news and one opinion column (Figure 2). This combination shows a variety of viewpoints, ranging from support for Indonesia's role as a mediator to a more careful, reflective, and critical perspective.

Table 1. Framing News Detik.com "Prabowo Ready to Leave for Iran to Become a Mediator, JK Wanti-wanti This" (Detik.com, 2026a)

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Define Problems (Pendefinisian Masalah)	Prabowo's mediation intentions are considered "good" in principle, but faced with the scale of the conflict that is said to be much larger than Indonesia's	Detik.com defines the problem not on the legitimacy of Prabowo's intentions, but on the gap between goodwill and the scale of real geopolitical complexity. This framing shifts the reader's attention

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
	capacity; even the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that has long been known to the world has not been successfully reconciled.	from the celebration of diplomatic initiatives to the need for realistic expectations.
Diagnose Causes (Memperkirakan Penyebab)	The source of the difficulty is placed on the unilateral dominance of the United States in the world order, aggravated by the Indonesia-US trade agreement which is considered unequal and detrimental to Indonesia.	The cause of the problem is personalized in the structural inequality of Indonesia-US relations, not in Indonesia's internal capacity. Detik.com construct the cause as an external factor beyond the government's control, so that JK's doubts cannot be read as an attack on the President.
Make Moral Judgments (Penilaian Moral)	"Yes, intention, plan, it's fine"	JK does not blame Prabowo's intentions morally, but implies realistic concerns. The government is described as having good ethics but needs to be balanced with caution from senior figures who have a long history of diplomacy with Iran.
Treatment Recommendation (Rekomendasi Penyelesaian)	No concrete solution is offered; the article closes with an appeal for caution against economic impacts such as rising oil prices and disruption of export routes if the conflict is prolonged.	The solution hinted at is economically defensive (impact mitigation), not a diplomatic solution. Detik.com frame domestic vigilance as a more realistic response than full optimism about the success of mediation.

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

The first news highlighted the "good *intention vs. harsh reality frame*". Detik.com chose Jusuf Kalla as the main speaker, a figure with strong credibility and diplomatic experience, as a counterweight to the official narrative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs without making it an open rejection of the president's policies.



(a)



(b)



(c)

Figure 1. Screenshot of Detik.com News Analyzed: (a) March 1, 2026; (b) March 3–4, 2026; (c) Column, March 2, 2026
Source: detik.com, 2026

Table 2. Framing News Detik.com "Conditions If Indonesia Wants to Become a Mediator of the US-Israel vs Iran Conflict" (Detik.com, 2026c)

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Define Problems (Pendefinisian Masalah)	The problem is defined not by Indonesia's capacity, but by the lack of ulfilment of the basic	Detik.com defines the problem technically diplomatic, not politically normative. This shift

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
	condition of mediation: acceptance from both parties in conflict with the presence of a third party.	shifts the location of the problem from "whether Indonesia is capable" to "whether Indonesia is accepted", a criterion that is much more difficult for governments to control themselves.
Diagnose Causes (Memperkirakan Penyebab)	The conflict situation that is still active and colored by violence is considered to make each side still believe that they can win the battle, so that the space for dialogue has not yet opened.	The cause is placed on the psychological dynamics of the conflicting parties (confidence to win), not on Indonesia's shortcomings. This framing subtly releases the responsibility for failure from the Indonesian government to external parties.
Make Moral Judgments (Penilaian Moral)	"The main condition is that Indonesia must be accepted by the two parties to the conflict"	The assessment was delivered in a technocratic tone, not blaming, but implicitly questioning the realistic basis of the optimism of Foreign Minister Sugiono, who previously emphasized Indonesia's readiness to become a mediator.
Treatment Recommendation (Rekomendasi Penyelesaian)	Indonesia is advised to wait for a signal of acceptance from both sides; dialogue usually arises when each side realizes that it is unable to win the war, not when military ambitions are still high.	The solution offered is wait-and-see, in contrast to the proactive impression built by the government through a statement of readiness to leave for Tehran.

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

The second news highlights the technical *evaluation frame*. By presenting the former Minister of Foreign Affairs in a forum initiated by the President himself, Detik.com provides expertise-based legitimacy to doubts about official government policies without displaying opposing attitudes.

Table 3 Framing Column Detik.com "Gulf Geopolitics and Indonesian Diplomacy Exam" (Detik.com, 2026b)

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Define Problems (Pendefinisian Masalah)	The Iran-Israel-US escalation is defined as a test of the credibility of Indonesian diplomacy, with concrete risks in the form of narrowing the neutral space amid the re-strengthening of the logic of the global power bloc.	Different from Ngabalin's column, this column defines the situation as a test, not a mere opportunity, in a more reflective framing and demands policy introspection.
Diagnose Causes (Memperkirakan Penyebab)	The weakening of global collective mechanisms such as the United Nations and the strengthening of ad hoc coalitions and unilateral measures are explained as systemic causes of the narrowing of space for countries that want to be neutral.	The cause is placed on changes in the structure of the international system itself, not on the specific mistakes of Indonesia's domestic policies, but still demands an adaptive response from Indonesia.
Make Moral Judgments (Penilaian Moral)	"Diplomacy without concrete instruments will only be heard in the briefroom"	A reflective-critical assessment: Indonesia is recognized as having the moral capital of the free and

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
		active tradition, but it risks being wasted if its diplomacy steps are read ambiguously and without real instruments.
Treatment Recommendation (Rekomendasi Penyelesaian)	Indonesia needs a clear and measurable independent agenda as well as concrete instruments such as energy policy and strategic sea routes, so that it is not just present without determining direction.	The recommendations are structural and long-term, different from the symbolic recommendations (optimize the multilateral forum) in the Ngabalin column and the defensive recommendations (maintain the status quo) in the DPR article.

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

This opinion column highlights a critical *self-examination frame* and explicitly fulfills all four elements of Entman. The columnist's proximity to the palace circle makes criticism of Indonesia's structural readiness more easily accepted as a constructive evaluation, rather than a delegitimization of the President's move. Overall, the three articles Detik.com show a consistent pattern: the mediation offer is constructed as a goodwill that still needs to be tested through technical prerequisites and structural capacity, by presenting a senior authoritative figure as a counterweight to the government's optimistic narrative. The constructed reality Detik.com thus falls on the spectrum of "cautious realists".

The Construction of the Reality of Indonesian Diplomacy in Kompas.com

The three Kompas.com articles analyzed were published on March 1-3, 2026 (Figure 3). In general, all three show a real development of framing patterns: at the beginning of the period, this media represented the government's official narrative in an informative manner, then developed by presenting various more critical speakers, until it reached its peak in analytical articles on the opportunities, challenges, and legitimacy of Indonesia as a mediator.



(a) (b) (c)

Figure 3. Screenshots of Kompas.com News Analyzed: (a) March 1, 2026; (b) March 2, 2026; (c) March 3, 2026
Source: kompas.com, 2026

Table 4. Framing News Kompas.com "Indonesia Responds to Israel-Iran Conflict, Prabowo Ready to Mediate and Beware of Impact" (Kompas.com, 2026a)

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Define Problems (Pendefinisian Masalah)	"The Indonesian government is responding to the escalating conflict between Israel and Iran by increasing its vigilance of the various impacts that may arise, both on regional security and Indonesia's national interests."	Kompas.com defines the Israeli-Iranian conflict as an international issue that has direct consequences for Indonesia. The problem is focused on its impact on regional stability, the security of Indonesian citizens, and national interests, so that the reader's

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
		attention shifts from military conflict to the urgency of the Indonesian government's response.
Diagnose Causes (Memperkirakan Penyebab)	"It is feared that the escalation of the conflict can expand and affect the stability of the Middle East region and have an impact on the global economy, including Indonesia."	Causes are framed as escalating escalations that have the potential to develop into regional conflicts and threats to international security and the global economy. Causes are not personalized to one party, but are constructed as a result of the deteriorating geopolitical situation.
Make Moral Judgments (Penilaian Moral)	"President Prabowo stated that Indonesia is ready to act as a mediator if requested by the parties to the conflict."	Kompas.com gives a moral assessment that conflict resolution should be pursued through diplomacy. The President's statement is positioned as a representation of Indonesia's commitment to world peace; the government is portrayed as prioritizing dialogue, not military confrontation.
Treatment Recommendation (Rekomendasi Penyelesaian)	"The government continues to monitor the development of the situation, prepare mitigation measures, protect Indonesian citizens, and support conflict resolution through diplomacy."	The solutions offered are to strengthen international diplomacy, increase national preparedness, protect Indonesian citizens, and encourage peaceful settlements through mediation. The government is framed as a party that has taken concrete and responsible steps.

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

The first news highlights the diplomatic *frame* rather than the *conflict frame*. By placing the President as the only main speaker without a comparative voice, Kompas.com gives full authority to the government to define the problem, causes, assessment, and solution. This construction builds the image of Indonesia that consistently runs free and active politics as *a middle power* (Putra et al., 2024).

Table 5. Framing News Kompas.com "Highlighting Prabowo's Intention to Become a Mediator After the US-Israel Attack on Iran" (Kompas.com, 2026b)

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Define Problems (Pendefinisian Masalah)	Prabowo's mediation intention was shifted from the question of "can be done or not" to a fundamental question about Indonesia's national interests and strategic calculations behind the move.	Kompas.com defines the problem at a higher level than Table 5: not just the impact of the conflict on Indonesia, but the rationality of foreign policy itself that the public is beginning to question.
Diagnose Causes (Memperkirakan Penyebab)	The structural imbalance in Indonesia-US relations and the absence of a clear calculation of national interests are placed as the main source of public doubt about mediation measures.	Two different causes were presented from two elite speakers in order, namely global power inequality (JK) and the absence of interest calculation (TB Hasanuddin), but both boiled down to similar skeptical conclusions.

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Make Moral Judgments (Penilaian Moral)	"Every major diplomatic step must be clear in its benefits for the national interest"	The pattern of "good intentions, but questionable feasibility" is maintained: JK appreciates Prabowo's intentions while doubting his success due to Indonesia's inequality with the US as a superpower.
Treatment Recommendation (Rekomendasi Penyelesaian)	TB Hasanuddin suggested that Indonesia be more realistic in facilitating conflicts that are directly related to national interests, such as the Thailand-Cambodia border dispute in the ASEAN region.	This alternative recommendation serves as an implicit critique: Iran's choice as a target of mediation is implied to be a less measured decision than a regional issue closer to Indonesia's direct interests.

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

The second article highlights the *national interest scrutiny frame*. The combination of Jusuf Kalla (the executive experience authority) and TB Hasanuddin (the legislative oversight authority) reinforces the legitimacy of the doubt because the similarity of views from two independent sources tends to be judged by the reader as an indication of objectivity.

Table 6. Framing News Kompas.com "A Series of Notes After Indonesia Wants to Be a Peacemaker of Iran vs Israel-US" (Kompas.com, 2026c)

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Define Problems (Pendefinisian Masalah)	The framing offer to be a peacemaker comes at a momentum far from ideal, as the real negotiation path in Geneva was dead long before the attack took place.	The problem is defined as a matter of timing and technical readiness, assembled from the point of view of various actors (Iran, MUI, academics) so that it feels more comprehensive than the previous single-source article.
Diagnose Causes (Memperkirakan Penyebab)	The three prerequisites for peacekeepers (acceptance by both sides, OIC/UN support for Iran, global antiwar campaign) have not been met, with Indonesia-US inequality as a major structural barrier.	The causes are systematically formulated in three points by members of the House of Representatives, giving a more coherent structure of arguments than the loose criticism in the previous articles.
Make Moral Judgments (Penilaian Moral)	"That's all we are not equal to America"	The moral assessment is multivocal: the Iranian Ambassador is grateful but pessimistic; The Vice Chairman of the MUI supports it on the condition that it is free to actively be maintained; The UI Professor considers this step far from ideal.
Treatment Recommendation (Rekomendasi Penyelesaian)	Indonesia is advised to have a real bargaining value from the Geneva process, rally the support of the OIC and the United Nations for Iran, and carry out a concrete anti-war campaign, not just a symbolic offer.	Recommendations are cumulative from multiple sources, resulting in a more complete list of prerequisites than the single recommendations in Table 5.

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

The third article highlights the *multi-source skepticism frame* by bringing together diplomatic (Iranian Ambassador), religious (Vice Chairman of MUI), and academic (Middle East history professors) to produce a consensus effect of skepticism that is more difficult to refute. Overall, Kompas.com shows a progressive framing shift: from an affirmative official

frame to an increasingly skeptical frame. Indonesian diplomacy is constructed as a process whose legitimacy is gradually questioned.

The Construction of the Reality of Indonesian Diplomacy in CNNIndonesia.com

The three CNNIndonesia.com articles analyzed were published on March 1-7, 2026 (Figure 4) and show a pattern that develops chronologically, ranging from the debate over Indonesia's position on the *Board of Peace* (BoP), strengthening its image through the spotlight of the international media, to the delay in discussing the BoP which shows the uncertainty of the implementation of Indonesia's diplomacy initiatives.



(a) (b) (c)

Figure 4. Screenshots of CNNIndonesia.com News Analyzed: (a) March 1 & 3, 2026; (b) March 2, 2026; (c) March 7, 2026
Source: cnnindonesia.com, 2026

Table 7. Framing News CNNIndonesia.com "Notes of Commission I of the House of Representatives on the Position of the Republic of Indonesia Between Iran and the Board of Peace" (CNNIndonesia.com, 2026a)

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Define Problems (Pendefinisian Masalah)	Indonesia's position in the BoP is framed as a direct structural barrier to Indonesia's credibility as a facilitator because it is perceived to be leaning towards the US-Israel axis.	CNN Indonesia defines the problem most directly among the three media: the membership of the BoP is not just a context, but the main reason that makes the mediation offer difficult for the Iranian side to believe.
Diagnose Causes (Memperkirakan Penyebab)	The BoP is considered more inclined to the axis of the US and Israel, two countries that are actually the perpetrators of attacks on Iran, so Indonesia's participation in the forum is considered to hurt the principle of free and active freedom from the beginning.	The cause was formulated as an inherent defect since the decision to join the BoP, not simply a situational consequence of the US-Israeli attack on Iran.
Make Moral Judgments (Penilaian Moral)	"It's hard to imagine Iran being able to accept it so easily"	The moral judgment puts Indonesia at risk of being perceived as a supporter of U.S.-Israeli interests, an indirect indictment of government neutrality that is sharper than similar criticism in the other two media.
Treatment Recommendation (Rekomendasi Penyelesaian)	Careful consideration is needed before stepping as a facilitator of Iran; the suggested alternative is to facilitate the Thai-Cambodia conflict which is considered more relevant to Indonesia's direct national interests.	This same recommendation as Table 6 shows that TB Hasanuddin's argument is consistently reproduced across media, reinforcing the reach of such critical framing to a wider audience.

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

The first article highlights the *structural contradiction frame* that strengthened from the March 1 edition to the March 3 edition, from simply "needing careful consideration" to an explicit insistence out of the BoP. TB Hasanuddin's authority as a member of Commission I of the House of Representatives made criticism appear as *a legitimate function of checks and balances*.

Table 8. Framing News CNNIndonesia.com "Foreign Media Highlights Prabowo's Willingness to Mediate Iran with the US-Israel" (CNNIndonesia.com, 2026b)

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Define Problems (Pendefinisian Masalah)	The focus of the news shifted from the question of the feasibility of mediation to a meta-question of how Prabowo's bid is seen by the world, through re-quotes of media coverage in Singapore, Malaysia, and international news agencies.	In contrast to previous tables that dwell on the substantive feasibility of mediation, this article defines the problem at the level of perception/image: how Indonesia performs in the eyes of the international media.
Diagnose Causes (Memperkirakan Penyebab)	The international attention is explained to have arisen because of the scale of the crisis itself, namely the death of a country's supreme leader and the broad regional escalation, not because of the peculiarity of Indonesia's diplomatic moves.	The cause of the foreign media spotlight is placed on external factors (the scale of the global crisis), but the framing effect of the article actually leads readers to associate it with the peculiarities of Indonesia's steps.
Make Moral Judgments (Penilaian Moral)	"We're ready to talk"	The assessment is neutral-descriptive at the level of the original quote, but the selection and preparation of foreign media quotes functionally produces an indirect legitimacy effect on the President's initiative.
Treatment Recommendation (Rekomendasi Penyelesaian)	There are no policy recommendations; the article is documentary, reassembling foreign media reporting without adding its own editorial stance.	The absence of recommendations emphasizes the function of articles as an image-building instrument, not as a policy evaluation instrument like other articles in news data.

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

The second article highlights the legitimacy frame through an external *validation frame* in two layers: the domestic media constructs the image of "Indonesia is watched by the world" by quoting the way foreign media reports on Prabowo. Foreign coverage that is actually factual and neutral is re-functioned as indirect validation.

Table 9. Framing News CNNIndonesia.com "Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia: Discussion of the Board of Peace Postponed" (CNNIndonesia.com, 2026c)

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
Define Problems (Pendefinisian Masalah)	Public pressure demanding a firm stance out of the BoP is faced with the government's desire to maintain the option of involvement in the forum, without taking a final decision in either direction.	Different from Table 8 which places the BoP as a contradiction that must be resolved decisively, this article defines the problem at the institutional level: how governments can delay decisions without visibly ignoring widespread public urging.
Diagnose Causes (Memperkirakan Penyebab)	The postponement of the discussion was attributed to the insistence of more than 60 figures	The cause is placed on the accumulation of domestic socio-political pressures, rather than on the government's

Framing Elements	News Text Quotes	Analysis Results
	and 70 civil society organizations, including MUI and Muhammadiyah, who asked Indonesia to withdraw from the BoP after the US-Israeli attack on Iran that killed Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.	independent evaluation of the structural contradictions of the BoP, a different pattern from Table 8 which places the cause on the inherent defects since the decision to join the BoP.
Make Moral Judgments (Penilaian Moral)	"any decision regarding Indonesia's participation in any international mechanism shall be based on the principles of Indonesia's foreign policy and… our national interests"	The moral assessment was delivered in a neutral-procedural tone, avoiding direct acknowledgment of the allegation that the BoP contradicted the mediator's position, while affirming Indonesia's commitment to the stabilization of Palestine as an implicit moral defense of membership.
Treatment Recommendation (Rekomendasi Penyelesaian)	Indonesia's discussion and participation in the BoP has been temporarily suspended, with no certainty on whether membership will be resumed or withdrawn, while the government reiterates its commitment to Palestinian reconstruction.	The implied recommendations are strategically ambiguous; in contrast to Table 8 which recommends decisive action (review/exit from the BoP), this article shows the government choosing a middle ground that keeps both options open.

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

The third article highlights the *strategic ambiguity frame*. The choice of the word "suspended", rather than "cancelled" or "retained", is a significant framing device because it allows the media to report official responses to public pressure without confirming the success or failure of the urging. Overall, CNNIndonesia.com shows the framing that is most influenced by external actors and structural considerations, and constructs Indonesian diplomacy as an incomplete contest of credibility in the midst of domestic pressure, external actors' expectations, and attachment to certain multilateral forums.

Comparison of the Third Media Sources

The selection of sources is not just a technical element to complement the news, but the framing instrument itself. The sources in the nine articles can be grouped into nine categories of actors as summarized in Table 10.

Table 10. Comparison of News Resource Categories in Detik.com, Kompas.com, and CNNIndonesia.com

No.	Resource Person Category	Detik.com	Kompas.com	CNNIndonesia.com
1.	Executive Office (President/Ministry of Foreign Affairs)	–	President Prabowo (Table 5)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (Table 10)
2.	Senior/Retired Elite Figures	Jusuf Kalla (Table 2)	Jusuf Kalla (Table 6)	–
3.	Legislator (Commission I of the House of Representatives)	–	TB Hasanuddin and other members of the House of Representatives (Tables 6–7)	TB Hasanuddin, reproduction of Kompas.com excerpt (Table 8)
4.	Former Official/Technocrat	Former Foreign Ministers (Table 3)	–	–
5.	Observer/Columnist near the Palace Circle	Geopolitical columnist (Table 4)	–	–

No.	Resource Person Category	Detik.com	Kompas.com	CNNIndonesia.com
6.	Academics/Professors	–	UI Professor, Middle East History (Table 7)	–
7.	Islamic Religious Leaders/Organizations	–	Vice Chairman of MUI (Table 7)	MUI & Muhammadiyah, part of 60 figures/70 organizations (Table 10)
8.	Foreign Actors/Officials (Iran)	–	Ambassador of Iran (Table 7)	Embassy of Iran (Table 9)
9.	Foreign Media (re-quote)	–	–	Media Singapore, Malaysia, international news agencies (Table 9)

Source: Researcher Analysis Results, 2026

Detik.com stands out in presenting skeptical senior figures, former technocratic officials, and columnists close to the palace, but does not involve academics, religious leaders, or foreign actors, so that the debate revolves around the dynamics of the domestic political elite. Kompas.com displays the most multivocal pattern because it is the only media that directly quotes President Prabowo while presenting legislators, academics, religious leaders, and Iranian ambassadors. CNNIndonesia.com tends to involve external actors, both the Iranian Embassy and foreign media re-quotes, and is the only media that quantitatively measures the scale of social pressure (60 figures and 70 civil society organizations). Thus, Detik.com represents the arena of domestic political elites, Kompas.com multivocal forums, and CNNIndonesia.com an arena where validation and external expectations help shape the narrative of Indonesia's role.

The news of Indonesia's diplomacy in the Iran-Israel-United States conflict can be understood as part of the dynamics of political communication that brings together the government, the media, and the public. Political communication involves the language and symbols of political leaders, the media, and citizens (Perloff, 2021). The findings of the study show that the official statement of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and President Prabowo's mediation offer did not reach the public as a single fact. Detik.com selects aspects of domestic economic impact, Kompas.com selects aspects of constitutional responsibility, while CNNIndonesia.com selects aspects of capacity and external acceptance. The choice of diction reinforces this pattern: "threatened to rise" and "skyrocket" in Detik.com, "freely active" and "constitutional mandate" in Kompas.com, and "suspended" in CNNIndonesia.com. This study does not claim that framing necessarily changes public attitudes; proving it requires an audience study.

The three media have a number of fundamental similarities. First, the three do not question the legitimacy of Indonesia's intention to mediate, but rather divert the question to structural feasibility: whether Indonesia is accepted by the conflicting party, whether its national interests are clear, and whether its position in certain multilateral forums actually harms its neutrality. This shift is in line with Entman (1993) that the definition of the problem determines the direction of the next framing element. Second, the three media use senior authoritative sources as counterbalances to the government's official narrative so that it can give credibility weight to critical attitudes without appearing as direct opposition. Third, structural inequalities in Indonesia-United States relations appear repeatedly as *diagnostic causes*, both explicitly in Detik.com and Kompas.com and implicitly through criticism of Indonesia's position in the BoP in CNNIndonesia.com.

Behind the equation, the three media outlets show different emphasises. Detik.com most prominently on the technical evaluation of mediation procedures and resulting in technocratic and cautious framing; this pattern is consistent with Trans Media Group's business model that

relies on *traffic volumes* so that editors choose editorial safe framing. Kompas.com stands out on the framing shift from affirmative to critical, reflecting reputation-based interpretive journalism. CNNIndonesia.com stands out on the involvement of external actors and the structural contradictions of BoP membership, and being the only media that ends up in a frame of strategic ambiguity. Interestingly, despite being in the same business group as Detik.com, CNNIndonesia.com produce different framing patterns because CNN's brand affiliation incentivizes to build differentiation (Laoh, 2025). Within the framework of Herman and Chomsky's (1988) "propaganda filter", this variation in business orientation explains why the three media produce different framing of the issue of diplomacy that is identical. Differences are also evident in the narrative of nationalism: constitutional in Kompas.com, pragmatic economics in Detik.com, and conditional in CNNIndonesia.com.

Theoretically, these findings strengthen the proposition that the mass media in a democratic system is increasingly playing a role in foreign policy (Setiawan, 2019). Third, the media is not positioned as a passive distributor of government statements, but as political communication actors who actively select, highlight, and evaluate diplomatic steps: technical evaluation in Detik.com, skepticism in Kompas.com, and structural contradictions in CNNIndonesia.com. The media performs an ambivalent legitimacy function, namely affirming Indonesia's moral rights as a mediator as well as testing it, so that the media becomes an arena for legitimacy contestation itself. The CNNIndonesia.com citation of foreign media spotlight shows the dual function of news as a shaping of domestic opinion as well as an international image, in line with the concept *of second track diplomacy*. However, the role of the media in supporting Indonesia's claim as a *middle power* (Putra et al., 2024) has proven to be limited, because the normative claims of free and active foreign policy (Akbar et al., 2022) must always be negotiated and retested through the media (Sari et al., 2020). Within the framework of social construction (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Hadiwijaya, 2023), "Indonesia as a mediator" is not a single neutral fact, but a reality that is objectified differently by the three media. These findings expand on Martha et al. (2022) because media support is provided through active evaluation, not passive replication, and shows that the framing contestation found by Nurdyansa et al. (2025) among international media also occurs among Indonesian national media.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that news coverage of Indonesian diplomacy in the 2026 Iran–Israel–United States conflict by Detik.com, Kompas.com, and CNNIndonesia.com constituted part of the dynamics of political communication involving the government, the media, and the public. Official statements from the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and President Prabowo Subianto’s mediation proposal did not reach the public as a single, objective reality; rather, they were selectively presented, emphasized, and reinterpreted by each media outlet. The three media outlets framed Indonesian diplomacy primarily in terms of feasibility and capacity rather than solely as an expression of the government’s goodwill, while positioning the asymmetry in Indonesia–United States relations as an important underlying factor. Their moral evaluations also differed: Detik.com adopted a cautious stance, Kompas.com shifted from an affirmative to a more critical position, and CNNIndonesia.com displayed the greatest degree of ambiguity. Furthermore, the three outlets generally offered conditional recommendations rather than definitive diplomatic solutions. Differences in emphasis on pragmatic and economic considerations in Detik.com, normative and constitutional considerations in Kompas.com, and structural and comparative perspectives in CNNIndonesia.com reflected distinct editorial orientations and demonstrated that the reality of “Indonesia as a mediator” was constructed through a process of objectification, whereby editorial selections crystallized into particular representations of reality for audiences. Based

on these findings, future research should examine a broader range of media outlets, integrate framing analysis with critical discourse analysis, and extend the observation period. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia should strengthen its public communication by presenting clearer and more measurable arguments concerning national interests rather than relying primarily on normative claims regarding Indonesia's free and active foreign policy. Media practitioners should provide greater transparency regarding the positions, capacities, and interests of the sources they cite, while the public should compare coverage across multiple media outlets to avoid reliance on a single frame and strengthen critical media literacy.

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