**Humanitarian Politics in Indonesian Refugee Policy**

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**Abstract**

This paper tries to explore humanitarian practices carried out by developing countries in responding to the protracted refugee crisis. Humanitarian practices conducted by both humanitarian and state agents are always motivated by various forms of self-interest. Using Indonesia as a case study, I try to analyze its response to refugees as a transit country after the release of the Presidential Refugee Regulation. Even though Indonesia is not part of the refugee convention and its protocol, Indonesia is trying to be actively involved in solving global humanitarian crises by adopting international norms into its domestic policies. However, in its implementation, the government protection seems "half-hearted" and inconsistent with the adopted policies. Pressure from both internal and international actors affects the situation, thus the government should respond in any way to balance sovereignty and humanity while retaining its negotiating power in international affairs. Because of this, the actions, or policies that the Indonesian government has claimed to be taking in the name of humanity are fraught with political implications. The absence of political commitment to humanitarian issues demonstrates that refugees are merely a political tool used to acquire power and recognition on a regional and international level.

***Keywords: Humanitarian Politics, Non-State Actors, Refugee Policy, Indonesian Policy, Humanitarianism***

**Introduction**

The trend of rejection or reluctance to provide permanent protection to refugees occurs in several countries. The state, however, has authority over the application of international norms within its borders, therefore the refugee regime norms are not uniformly implemented (Betts & Milner, 2019; Frederico & Hess, 2021). Developed nations in particular frequently impose stringent regulations on refugees and place more emphasis on control and preventive measures than on humanitarianism. Anti-immigrant policy emerged as a response to the massive wave of refugees where the majority came from Middle Eastern countries. Refugee policies are no longer humanitarian-based but are filled with xenophobia, Islamophobia, and racist. For example, Scandinavian countries namely Sweden, Denmark, and Norway implement restriction policies such as limiting access to social rights for refugees (Hagelund, 2020), anti-immigrant policies in Italy (Campomori & Ambrosini, 2020), xenophobic refugee policies in the United States (Darrow, 2018; Wasem, 2020), the long-term detention policy for asylum seekers in Japan (Tarumoto, 2019; Akimoto, 2021), and the xenophobic policy which is also demonstrated by Australia (Minns, et al., 2018; Herrero, 2021 ; Afira, 2021). Another factor is economic considerations. In general, refugees will get maximum protection in developed countries only if the number of refugees is relatively small. When the number of refugees is large, they tend to be perceived as a threat to the economy (Ciger, 2019; Abdelaaty, 2021; Hanartner, et al., 2021). However, there are a small number of signatory countries that respond to this crisis by at least referring to the refugee regime principles and norms, as shown by Germany and Sweden which tend to be open to refugees (Kriesi, et al., 2021).

The restricted policy has resulted in more than 86% (unhcr.org) of the total refugees in the world being accommodated by developing and underdeveloped countries, most of are not ratified the international refugee regime. So, seeing how the response of non-signatory countries becomes more significant compared to signatory countries. One of the main reasons why non-signatory state responses are important is that they are not in a position to accept and allow refugees to enter the country's territory. In addition, the countries do not have adequate legal protection regarding entry and exit regulation and handling of refugees in their country. Some works of literature trying to analyze the non-signatory response (see Rajae, 2000; Vijayakumar, 2001; Kale, 2017; Kelberer, 2017; Coddington, 2018; Garnier, 2018; Moretti, 2018; Ostrand, 2018; Mencütek, 2019; Prabaningtyas, 2019; Tsourapas, 2019; Janmyr, 2021) show that protection is better provided by the non-signatory state. It cannot be denied that there are similarities in terms of limiting access to asylum including refugee rights in the two types of countries with different statuses. However, facilitating refugees to settle temporarily in dominant non-signatory countries indicates that this country has shown its adherence to the international regime even though it is not part of that regime. Ultimately, non-signatory states not only actively solve global problems but also participate in the evolution and interpretation of international refugee regimes (Janmyr, 2021).

However, the research mentioned above does not go into greater detail about how non-signatory States understand and apply humanity in relation to the refugee convention and its procedures. Therefore, it is crucial to consider whether the ways in which nations outside of the international refugee regime handle refugees are motivated by humanitarian concerns. What makes a state so hesitant to offer safety that it permits refugees to enter its borders while leaving management to outside parties? This essay demonstrates how humanitarian efforts are becoming troublesome when dealing with protracted refugee issues in nations that are not required to accept refugees but must yet manage a sizable influx. Using Indonesia as a case study, I try to analyze Indonesia's response to refugees considering that Indonesia has been acting as a transit country as a consequence of not ratifying the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. Even though it is not part of the conventions and protocols, Indonesia is trying to be actively involved in solving problems of global humanitarianism by adopting international norms into its domestic policies. However, in its implementation, the government's involvement in providing protection is not enough and seems "half-hearted" and inconsistent with the policies that have been adopted. I assume that the efforts or policies carried out by the Government of Indonesia even though they are claimed to be in the name of humanity are politically charged. The lack of political commitment to humanitarian issues shows that the refugee is only a political instrument to gain recognition or *'power'*. This is become reasonable due to the asymmetric power relations. On the one side, developing countries are under international pressure to open access for refugees to enter their territory (Betts & Collier, 2017) with limited legal frameworks related to refugees, finances, and the complexity of internal problems. Meanwhile, developed countries, which should have the obligation to guarantee protection because most of them have become part of the refugee convention, can easily abdicate responsibility. They even benefit from the contribution of developing countries which have accommodated 86% (UNHCR, 2020) of the total refugees while the rest stayed in underdeveloped countries. In this context, the convention is only a reflection of political interests or more specifically the powerof developed countries that then influence developing countries such as Indonesia to response the consequences of these dynamics politically.

**Refugee Protection in Indonesia: *Humanitarian Motive* or *Humanitarian Politics*?**

Fact Sheet (November 2020) shows that 13,754 refugees in Indonesia are under the International Organization of Migration (IOM) and UNHCR authority. The granting of supervision to these international organizations is a consequence of the government's reluctance to ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. Therefore, Indonesia is only a transit country for refugees before being placed in their destination country (resettlement) or returned to their country of origin (repatriation). However, expectations for resettlement have decreased in line with the increasing implementation of restrictions and refusal to accept refugees in various countries. For example, Australia has a “to turn back all boats” policy, the United States has a Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions, “Rejection of Refugee Quotas” in European countries, and restrictive immigration policies in Canada, Japan, India, and several other countries. On the other hand, although some countries implement an "open door policy", resettlement is difficult to be done due to the changing of political or economic conditions and Covid-19 pandemic also hampered the resettlement process.

The consequence of the restriction policy is seen in decreasing number of refugees placed in third countries. In 2019, only 4.8% (633) of the total refugees in Indonesia were successfully placed in destination countries, namely Australia, Canada, and the United States, while in 2020, the number was fewer at 391 (UNHCR Fact Sheet, 2020). Although efforts to be placed in third countries are still being carried out, refugees who get this opportunity have to wait 4-7 years, while others will not necessarily get the same opportunity. In addition to *Resettlement*, refugees can choose to return voluntarily to their home country. However, only 1.8% (252) of the total refugees in 2019 and 111 at the end of October 2020 chose this solution (UNHCR Fact Sheet, 2020). The data shows that the dominant refugees do not want to return to their home countries.

Resettlement and repatriation are two from three durable solutions offered by UNHCR. Another solution, local integration, is not a strategic choice for transit countries including Indonesia, although it can be the best solution to amid the complexity of current humanitarian issues. The government is still reluctant to choose this solution even though refugees have been in transit for years with various limitations and problems. The consequences of this reluctance can be seen in the government's inconsistency in implementing refugee policies. For instance, the government has issued presidential regulation (Perpres) 125/2016. This regulation shows a significant development of Indonesia's involvement in dealing with the protracted refugee situation. Unfortunately, the Perpres is considered not to solve the refugee problem because lack of an alternative to detention, political will and funding. In addition, the regulation only focuses on technical guidelines for government agents in dealing with refugees. Inconsistency also occurs when implementing Indonesian constitution 39/1999 on human rights and 37/1999 on foreign relationsand the implementation of the Declaration of Human Rights (HAM). This constitution affirms that everyone has the right to obtain asylum and political protection from other countries and also guarantee the rights of everyone without any distinction. However, the determination of asylum status in Indonesia in fact is still the authority of UNHCR and there are no international refugee rights listed in the regulation. Refugees remain unable in accessing right to work, to adequate health facilities, to education, and other basic rights.

Long-term restrictions have proven to have a bad effect on refugees in Indonesia who rely solely on donations managed by IOM and UNHCR. IOM is no longer assists refugees who arrived in Indonesia after 14 March 2018 (refugee council of Australia, 2018) because donors have reduced their assistance to refugees. The consequence of this condition is some refugees commit negative actions such as fraud, fights, infidelity, vandalism, domestic violence, and suicide. Protests are often undertaken by refugees against IOM and UNHCR to expedite the process of their placement in the destination country. Their condition is exacerbated during the COVID pandemic. Some refugees are reactiveto one of the viruses, namely Corona Virus Disease in several shelters managed by IOM and it could be worse considering that more than 8,200 refugees including children live in shelters that exceed their capacity and have inadequate sanitation (Dana, 2020). Dense environments increase the risk of transmission, where self-isolation and social distancingare difficult to be done.

By Looking at the practice of neighboring countries of Indonesia with the same status as transit countries, it appears that these countries have implemented clearer and stricter policies on refugee protection. The Philippines, Timor Leste, and Cambodia have even ratified the refugee convention (McConnahie, 2014) even though their political and economic situation are not better than Indonesia. The Malaysian government in early 2017, granted work access for Rohingya refugees (Prabandari & Adiputera, 2019) and allowed refugees from other countries to undertake informal jobs in the fields of horticulture and agriculture, construction, cleaning, food and retail, manufacturing, hospitality, and education (Todd et. al. 2019). Tanzania ultimately grants citizenship to refugees who have lived in the country for a long time (UNHCR, 2014). Thailand established a national screening mechanism to identify people in need of international protection (Wahab & Khalid, 2020). This mechanism is deemed to be able to increase access to wider protection, including social services for refugees. How about Indonesia? Instead of making regulations on technical handling for refugees arriving in Indonesia, why not consider making a similar policy?

Indonesia has shown its concern on accommodating refugees rights during transit in Indonesia. The government seeks to ensure refugees have access to health services, education, and opportunities for developing capacity. This can be seen in the Indonesian fact sheet reported by UNHCR (February 2021) where Indonesia in the *Global Refugee Forum* promised to support empowerment activities for refugees, issued a circular letter through the Ministry of Education and Culture ensuring access to basic education for refugee children and through the Ministry of Health providing access to the COVID-19 vaccine for refugees who have registered with UNHCR. However, this concern once again does not solve the main problem of refugees. Productivity development support does not contribute substantially due to the restrictions on finding job. It would be better to make refugees economically active and participate in the local economy rather than wasting their economic potential during transit in Indonesia (Olivia, Nizmi, Jamaan, Saeri, Iskandar, Deanty, 2021). Refugees, if empowered economically, can contribute to Indonesia because they potentially could create jobs (Adiputera & Prabandari, 2018). On education, although several refugee children (731 children) have attended state schools, there are still 1,900 children who do not have access to formal education due to limited funds and available quotas (UNHCR Factsheet, 2021). Limited ownership of devices or facilities including internet data adds refugee children’s problems especially during the pandemic where the learning process is done online. In the field of Health, UNHCR is actively advocating for refugees to continue having access to health services, which indicates that the government is still implementing limited access for refugees to health facilities.

Although the efforts above demonstrate the government's desire on responding global dynamics and implying opportunities for refugees gaining access to their basic rights, why seem half-hearted? Why does the government keep remaining active in responding humanitarian crises but with inconsistent practice? Is there any motive? In several kinds of literature, I identify differences in analyzing Indonesia's attitude towards refugees. Despite the inconsistency, some literature interprets Indonesia's response positively because Indonesia has shown its compliance to international laws and norms, commitment to the International Refugee Regime(Tan, 2016), and implement the second principle of Pancasila, namely a just and civilized humanity (Alunaza & Juani, 2017). Indonesia consistently adapts international minimum standards by applying the principle of non-refoulment, theprohibition against refusing or expelling refugees, and providing *shelter* for them (Syahrin, 2017). Accommodating and providing place for refugees is a form of respect and fulfillment of human rights (Kadaruddin, Noor, Irwansyah & Magassing, 2018). Even though in the case of Rohingya refugees, the government did not allow for entering Indonesian territory, the empathy of the local community pushed Indonesian government in collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), IOM and UNHCR to build *shelters* for refugees which were then considered as an act of humanitarian solidarity (Pratisti, Hidayat & Sari, 2018). Indonesia also conducts humanitarian diplomacy to take Rohingya refugees out of suffering (Hamka & Setiawan, 2019).

However, if Indonesia's response is purely humanitarian, why does the management of refugees often delegate to international organizations, NGOs, or local communities? Some policies even emphasize the government's reluctance to facilitate the basic needs and rights of refugees. For instance, as stated in Presidential Regulation 125/2016, where the needs for housing, clean water, food, clothing, and other needs are facilitated by international organizations (PERPPRES 125/2016 article 26), a circular letter from the ministry of education concerning on education access for refugee children is also managed by the relevant organizations ([www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org)), and the policy of determining refugee status or Refugee Status Determination (RSD) also under UNHCR supervision. The delegation of responsibilities as mentioned above is not a humanitarian practice but is more accurately referred to as burden-shifting/limitingfrom the government to the community or international organizations. The government's decision to give authority for processing refugee status and imposing all refugee needs to international organizations such as UNHCR indicates a reluctance to take care of refugees but at the same time tolerates their existence. As stated by Kneebone (2017;30) " *The creation of a processing center reflected the combination of reluctance and tolerance"*. This condition corresponds to Indonesian image as a high tolerance country that still consistent with temporary protection policy, and is not committed to guaranteeing asylum (Prabaningtyas, 2019).

*Burden shifting* performed by Indonesia is interpreted as an attempt to protect sovereignty. The Indonesian government prefers to focus on sovereignty as their rational choice rather than on humanity. They choose to use political power outside the state such as non-state actors to meet various humanitarian needs without weakening their sovereignty (Prabandari & Adiputera, 2019). So that the involvement of interest groups such as NGOs can also be a reason why Indonesia is willing to accept refugees (Sihombing, 2019). State sovereignty remains the main consideration when responding to the massive displacement of refugees. The state has the sovereignty to regulate its interests, including the issue of the entry and exit of foreigners (Johan, 2013). However, the issue of sovereignty is not entirely relevant when it comes to the refugee movement in the context of developing countries due to international law requires them to open their border for refugee. State sovereignty has unwittingly been weakened along with the granting of authority to non-state actors for taking care refugees in their territories. Moretti (2018) considers countries such in Southeast Asia only maintain the fiction of efforts to defend sovereignty while in fact mostly accept the limitations posed by international law. Possibly, the practice run by a country like Indonesia is an effort to reconcile sovereignty with the phenomenon of massive displacement of refugees (Dewansyah & Handayani, 2018). This reconciliation effort, though in practice will produce minimal legal certainty on refugee protection, does not necessarily result in losses for Indonesia. Actively supporting world peace by handling refugees is a determining factor on Indonesia election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the fourth time in 2019-2020 period (Theresia, 2020). Indonesia has received recognition, appreciation, and a positive response from the international community so that pressures which could trigger misrecognitioncan be muted and Indonesia's identity as a human rights defender can be maintained (Sirait, Rosyidin, Putranti, & Charlotte, 2019).

The explanation above shows that the efforts made by Indonesia are more dominantly interpreted as humanitarian actions. Despite the inconsistent realization and lack of protection for refugees, the government has demonstrated compliance with international laws and norms as well as activeness in solving global problems. However, it still need further analysis about Indonesian inconsistencies that not only because it is non-signatory of refugee conventions and protocols but also due to the assumption that the refugee convention is a European product which not appropriate in Asia context (Vijayakumar, 2001; Betts & Collier, 2017; McConnahie, 2019). The absence of Indonesia is aimed to avoid unwanted intervention (Acharya & Dewitt, 1997), and burden-shifting from refugee destination countries such as Australia (Sampson et al., 2016). It also indicates that Indonesia's policies or efforts to deal with refugees are political issues where humanity becomes an excuse to achieve political interests.

**The Problematization of Humanitarian Practices**

Humanity refers to the ICRC's humanitarian principles[[1]](#footnote-1) as a *humanitarian space* or limitations of an action to be claimed based on humanity. Humanity includes the desire to save lives, to respect the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, and to do more good (Barnett & Weiss, 2008). This scope implies that humanitarian practice is not based on any particular interest but on protecting life or alleviating human suffering, being neutral with the conflict, implementing the non-discrimination principle (assistance is based on need, not based onw nationality, race, religion, gender, or political opinion), and is not controlled (politically, economically, religiously, etc.) by parties that involved in the conflict or with the donors. Based on this principle, it is easier to state that humanity is apolitical, emerges as an attempt to confront power (Douglas, 2002; Donini, 2010), occurs where politics has failed or is in crisis(Orbinski, 1999), and an object of political organizations and voluntary humanitarian organizations as well (Saunders, 2018). Humanity is considered to have a different domain from political activity.

However, actions in the name of humanity often do not comply with the ethical principles of humanity because they are motivated by political interests (Vogel, 1996) or the political agenda of the donors (Abiew, 2012), then the scope of humanity becomes problematic. The problematization of humanitarian practice has been studied in several literature (Belgard & Nachmias, 1997; Weiss, 1999; Hyndman, 2000; Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Radice, 2010; Polly, 2015; De Lauri 2016; Saunders, 2018) where humanity at the certain level and contexts are associated with political action. In the literature, there are two perspectives on placing political issues in the realm of humanity.

First, politics is involved as a strategy to alleviate suffering and protect fundamental human rights. Weiss (1999) calls it *'political humanitarianism'* and specifically divides it into 4 political spectrums (*classicist, minimalist, maximalist, and solidarity)*. The level of political involvement in this spectrum varies depending on the level of adherence to fundamental humanitarian principles. Barnett and Snyder (2008), also uses 4 taxonomies of humanity that are classified as apolitical (*bed for the night, not harm*) and political (*peacebuilding, back at decent winner*) based on humanitarian goals. Meanwhile, Leader (2000) called the relationship between politics and humanity in three different contexts*,* namely neutrality elevated, neutrality abandoned, and third-way humanitarianism. This perspective shows that politics can contribute positively to humanitarian practice.

Second, politics is a moral pollutant*.* Humanitarian politics in this context is considered as the efforts of certain political units or countries to gain benefits or achieve interests in policies that are claimed to be based on humanity. This approach is more used to examine the reasons for military intervention in the name of humanity. An example of controversial humanitarian intervention is the decision of President George Bush Jr. with his military intervention in Iraq in 2003. The Iraqi government was alleged using poison gas to kill thousands of civilians and establish an axis of evil. The humanitarian intervention carried out by America is not based on humanitarian reasons (Roth, 2004), but as a form of American unilateralism to maintain its hegemony (Baylis, Smith, and Owens; 2017). America in this context sought to achieve political and economic interests (Nardin & Williams 2006; Bertschinger, 2016). Apart from Iraq, humanitarian motives were also seen in the interventions that took place in most countries in the Middle East such as Afghanistan and Libya. France, Britain, and the United States carried out a humanitarian intervention in Libya under the pretext that the Libyan government led by Qaddafi was considered as dictator who violating its civil society human rights even though there was no clear evidence (Winchester & Jones, 2013). Their motive is to control natural resources (Ahmad, 2011) such as oil by overthrowing an authoritarian government and replacing it with a more cooperative one.

Similar motives also occur in the realm of humanitarian organizations or NGOs which consistently claim that their activities are apolitical. This motive can be traced through their dependence on donor countries which are mostly the state. Included in this context UN humanitarian agencies such as UNHCR (*United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee*s) whose effectiveness depends on state donations which often regulate the use and determine the location where aid is distributed (Hyndman, 2000). This dependence is certainly a gap for donor countries to intervene in humanitarian activities carried out by humanitarian organizations. Consistency in becoming a donor making state easier to control and interpret humanity according to its interests. Moreover, if the practice of humanity is directly carried out by the state which is a self-interested actor, they cannot act on behalf of humanitarianism (Radice, 2010;44). For example, the United States is still the largest donor to many humanitarian actions (Belgard & Nachmias, 1997; Hyndman, 2000; De Lauri, 2016). The amount of donation affects the legitimacy of America to implement humanitarian intervention which is currently considered as "responsibility to protect ". In the case of refugees, Australia is known as a country that actively overcoming humanitarian crises by providing permanent protection to refugees who transited in Indonesia. However, this policy has changed making refugees trapped in a transit country such as Indonesia. The alteration does not trigger a negative response from global community due to Australia continues to financially assist Indonesian refugee.

**Politics of Humanity**

There are several terms to describe the relationship between politics and humanity. Weiss (1999) identifies 2 groups, namely classicistsas followers of the ICRC who emphasize that humanity must be separated from politics, although the ICRC is also considered tend to 'humanitarian politics', an attempt to apply human values as part of public policy (Forsythe, 1977). While those who believe political and humanitarian associations are called political humanitarians*.* Weiss scope is not much different from Forsythe's who defines political humanitariansas an effort to integrate humanity in policy to alleviate suffering, save more lives, and protect human rights with different levels of engagement. Classicistshave the lowest level on politics or purely concern on principles of humanitarianism. Classical humanitarian groups tend to be associated with the ICRC or dunantist paradigm (Hilhorst, 2018), in practice do not aim to interrupt the causes of humanitarian problems because they focus only to save lives and distribute aid. David Reff (2002) calls this effort 'A Bed for the Night’(Synder, 2011). This classical approach relies on the principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence as a provision in assisting victims of conflict. Humanitarian practices that fail to apply this principle are considered as humanitarianism's corruptionand are more likely to resemble the processes of colonialism and imperialism (Barnett & Weiss, 2008). Therefore, manipulation of humanitarian practices, including by political actors, can be minimized through operational rules such as the principles mentioned above. Leader (2000) uses the term neutrality elevatedto describe the classical view of humanity where humanitarian politicsis limited by impartiality and neutrality.

At the second and third levels, the political engagement is identified based on the humanitarian purposes, namely the minimalist "do no harm" and maximalist with more ambitious goals such as conflict transformation where humanity is part of the strategy. Minimalism or “tactical humanitarianism” (Synder, 2011) is the critique of classical humanitarianism which is considered difficult to be consistent with the principle of neutrality under certain conditions. Humanitarian practices are recognized having the potential to cause harm (Radice, 2010) so the humanity objectives is no longer just to deliver aid but also to consider the risks faced when distributing the aid. The risks of humanitarian assistance are worsening the conflict and creating dependency (Anderson, 1998). Although slightly more ambitious than classicists,humanitarian actors at this level still strive to be neutral and apolitical. The third level is maximalism or 'comprehensive peace building'*.* Proponents of this level argue that humanitarian practice is not just about ensuring aid reaches those in need, but is part of a strategy to eliminate the root causes of these humanitarian problems. This level has similarity with what Leader (2000) calls third way-humanitarianismwhich emphasizes the role of humanitarian development aid, and peace as part of political goals. Despite having political goals, followers of this level strive to be neutral so that the scope of humanitarian politics is increasingly unclear. Humanitarian politics in this context is also being questioned due to the frequent failure to prevent humanitarian crises.

Fourth, is solidarity, which I assume is the same as the Synder’s term (2011) as the fourth variant of humanity, namely 'back-a-decent-winner'. This level tends to ignore the main principles of humanity and has highest level involvement with politics in Weiss's humanitarian political spectrum. Humanitarian agents at this level are willing to negotiate and make deals with the government such as an authoritarian government in conflict with rebels by relying on resources both political power and economic power. It aims to encourage conflicting factions to be interested in engaging in the negotiation process. Substantially, this level aims to eliminate the causes of conflict as well as maximalists. This process involves actors who are willing to support stability without any desire to radically change the political, economic, and cultural structure and does not exist at any other level of humanity.

The types of humanity as mentioned previously with their various terms has political involvement with different levels of adherence to fundamental humanitarian principles, but the main goal is still based on humanity. This political involvement not only ensuring political actions based on humanity and humanitarian practices run more effectively (Radice, 2010) but also showing that politics is not killing humanitarianism but humanizing the world of politics. However, does this political involvement have proven in making a positive and effective contribution to humanitarian practice? I'm not going to answer this question, but I'm trying to show why it's important to be questioned. Coyne (2013) argues that the belief in short-term humanitarian assistance which I assume tends to be carried out by humanitarian organizations will not work effectively if it does not involve the state as a political unit who capable on providing long-term assistance. This belief is considered erroneous by Coyne because dependence on the state to reduce the impact or resolve humanitarian crises only exacerbates the crisis itself. This is because the humanitarian intervention is motivated by interest not by morality (Vogel, 1996). Political units will not intervene if the humanitarian crisis does not pose a threat to interests and security and if the benefits are minimal (Watts, 2017). Therefore, humanitarian practice is often used as an excuse (De Lauri, 2016) to eliminate threats or to control the natural resources of certain countries (Ahmad, 2011). That makes the implementation of humanitarian practices often applies double standards (Posen, 1996). If a weak country commits a humanitarian violation, then intervention becomes the main agenda but if the country is strong then the international response will be different. Vogel (1996) then equates the politics of humanity with the politics of hegemony. The perspective and how humanity is interpreted are strongly influenced by hegemonic countries (read; western countries) (Binder & Meier, 2012). For example, the phenomenon of western countries has begun to limit and hinder humanitarian practices for a large number of asylum seekers. They define humanity as limited to providing food and medical assistance so they can easily disentangle the responsibility for asylum seekers (every, 2008). This definition of humanity is used to undermine the fundamental tenets of refugee protection and maintain the global domination of western countries (Chimni (2000), Dauvergne (1999, 2000, 2005), Jenkins (2004) and Taylor (2001). Polly Pallister-Wilkins (2015) calls it as humanitarian motivations.

The influence of hegemon is also appeared from the centralization of ideas, discussions, and the initiation of humanitarian practices that are dominantly carried out in western countries such as Switzerland, England, America, and Italy. Even though the ICRC is the most influential traditional humanitarian institution, the majority of international government organizations (IGOs) and NGOs were born in western countries. The largest donors in humanitarian practice are dominated by the United States and Europe. That is why their legitimacy in conducting humanitarian interventions is rarely questioned even though they ignore humanitarian principles and the objectives of the practice are not achieved even exacerbate the humanitarian crisis. Therefore, humanity is no longer associated with either protection or solutions, but rather a political tool for showing power (Whittall, 2015) driven by donor countries (Hyndman, 2000). Politics in humanity or the practice of political humanity in the end becomes very political.

Although the approach above can help us to understand why there are inconsistencies in the application of humanitarian principles and interventions and how politics is involved both as a strategy and as a pretext to alleviate suffering and protect fundamental human rights. However, this approach only tends to be used in conflict zones whether the conflict is still ongoing or has ended. This is mainly because in conflict zones, humanitarian agents have to deal with warring parties and victims who are not only from civil society but also from combatants or belligerents, so they are required to be neutral, non-discriminatory, and independent. In addition, indicators of political involvement are only limited to humanitarian principles and their objectives where politics is seen as a positive dimension that can affect the effectiveness of humanitarian practice. These limitations and paradigms seem to deny a very broad political dimension (Suski, 2009). Finally, the level of analysis of this approach is dominated by countries that are economically or militarily established or more popular than developing countries. The question how if the humanitarian action is carried out by developing countries in a free war zone context? Is the practice of humanity also inseparable from political motives? By seeing what Indonesia has been done in terms of refugee handling management, humanitarian practices carried out by both state agents are always motivated by various forms of *self-interest.*

**Conclusion**

The government's reluctance not to be involved in solving the main problems of refugees and only providing accommodation is a mutual aid principle. The government in this situation has a moral obligation to help when the assistance provided has minimal consequences, and conversely when the burden increases then the moral obligation is reduced. However, considering Indonesia's efforts that seem adaptive to the dynamics of refugees, minimal protection is no longer appropriate to describe the current government's response. Even though the protection is charged to the non – state actors, at least the government has begun to show a desire to accommodate the basic rights of refugees taking into account Indonesia's internal conditions are not better than others. In conclusion, I identify two views on the politics of humanity. Although they both believe that humanity cannot be separated from politics, there are different interpretations regarding the output of this practice. The first humanitarian policy should provide change for the needy regardless of the non-fulfillment of the fundamental principles of humanity, on the other hand, it is the realization of the interests or motives of certain political units. Using only one of these approaches will not explain the complex humanitarian crises comprehensively. So the combination of the two approaches is more relevant in explaining the refugee crisis intricacy.

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