

# Sipping Soft Power : Coffee as Indonesia's Nation Branding Strategy in the US

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**Abstract:** “Sipping soft power” describes how simple activities such as brewing and enjoying coffee can be a subtle way to convey cultural values, strengthen international relations, and build a positive image of Indonesia in the eyes of the world. In the context of bilateral relations that have been established for over 75 years, coffee has transformed into a cultural symbol reflecting Indonesia's national identity. Using a qualitative case study approach with Nation Branding theory (Anholt) and soft power theory (Nye), this study utilizes data from official reports, scientific literature, and documentation of coffee diplomacy activities. The research findings indicate that the diversity of coffee flavors from various regions in Indonesia, born from tropical geographical conditions, fertile volcanic soil, and sustainable agricultural practices, makes coffee a representation of Indonesia's cultural and natural wealth. Coffee-drinking traditions such as tubruk coffee and klotok coffee are part of social life and offer authentic narratives that strengthen Indonesia's cultural appeal in the eyes of the American public. Through active promotion involving businesses, the diaspora, and state diplomacy, coffee has successfully created cross-cultural emotional experiences that bring foreign consumers closer to Indonesia's local values. This makes coffee not only an economic commodity but also a symbol of national identity that strengthens Indonesia's positive image in bilateral relations with the United States.

**Keywords:** Indonesian Coffee; Nation Branding; National Identity; Public Diplomacy; Soft Power

## 1. Introduction

Nation branding is a strategic effort by a country to build and promote a positive image that reflects its identity, values and advantages to the international community (Anholt, 2007). The main objective of nation branding is to create a favorable perception of the country, which in turn can increase its competitiveness in sectors such as tourism, investment, and exports. The main function of nation branding is to strengthen national identity, affirm the country's values, and the goal is not only to attract investors or tourists, but also to foster a sense of pride among its own population. This strategy is particularly important in the era of globalization and a country's image often plays an important role in international diplomacy and trade. Soft power is the ability of a country to influence other countries without the use of coercion or threats through cultural appeals, political principles, and attractive foreign policies. Soft power creates a strong appeal to aspects of culture and national identity, which are then used in a country's branding strategy. For example, a country can increase its appeal to the world by utilizing local arts, culture, traditions or commodities. Nation Branding and soft

Power work together to build a strong international reputation, soft power reinforces the message and image to be conveyed, while nation branding provides a platform to promote

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cultural appeal. Conversely, nation branding efforts can lose traction and be perceived as non-genuine if not done with a strong soft power approach. A distinctive commodity, such as coffee, is one example of effective soft power in nation branding. Coffee is a leading export product and a strong cultural symbol in Indonesia. Indonesia's natural wealth, local traditions and product quality are introduced to the world through coffee. Coffee diplomacy thus allows Indonesia to build cultural relationships with other countries, including the United States, which is the world's largest coffee market. Coffee and soft power are linked because of their ability to attract attention, strengthen international relations, and create a good image of Indonesia. Coffee is then considered as both an economic commodity and a strategic tool to increase Indonesia's power in the international world.

Sipping soft power explains or describes how coffee can be used as a strategic tool to talk about culture and build the nation's brand. The term indicates a subtle and continuous way to build influence through the cultural component represented by coffee, which makes it one of Indonesia's strong identities and shows the uniqueness of local culture, natural wealth and traditions. Through the idea of "sipping soft power" through coffee, brewing coffee during coffee time is often a moment of social interaction that can be used as a platform for informal diplomacy. The tradition of sharing a cup of coffee is not only a relaxing activity it also allows people to get together, talk about future issues, and promote cultural values. This phenomenon is becoming increasingly important in contemporary diplomacy that emphasizes soft power approaches and culture-based interactions. coffee can also serve as a cultural diplomacy tool that strengthens Indonesia's position as a country with high-quality products and cultural values. If Indonesian coffee is promoted through festivals and exhibitions that showcase the superior products of arabic and robusta coffee in the United States, this can increase public confidence in Indonesia as a country that is friendly, rich in culture, and has high-quality products. With a cup of coffee, complex diplomatic messages can be delivered easily and effectively to various levels of society around the world and support the country's marketing efforts. This research aims to look at how coffee functions as a soft power tool in Indonesia's nation branding strategy in the United States, especially with 75 years of Indonesia-America bilateral relations (Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Washington, D.C., n.d.). Indonesia has great potential to use coffee as a symbol of culture and national identity in addition to an export commodity. The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Washington,

D.C. takes part in various annual activities that aim to enhance Indonesia's reputation, such as Summer Fancy Food 2024, Legacy of Java "Coffee Gathering", WOW Indonesia! Festival 2024, and Business Forum. These activities bring Indonesian cultural values to the United States and promote Indonesian coffee as a product high quality. It is hoped that this

research enhances our understanding of the role of public diplomacy in supporting Indonesia-United States bilateral relations, including trade, culture, and bilateral relations.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Theoretical Study**

#### **2.2.1 Nation Branding Theory**

"Nation Branding" is a method to create a favorable image of a country through various aspects, such as tourism, culture, exports, government, society, and immigration proposed by Simon Anholt. This theory emphasizes that global perceptions affect a country's perception of the international community. Country branding means promoting the country and creating value through sustainable policies. Economic, political, and social benefits, such as increased investment, exports, and diplomatic power, can result from a positive image of the country. To build a good reputation, this strategy combines marketing, international relations, and communications. This method can be used to utilize coffee as a cultural symbol in the Indonesian context to create a positive image in the eyes of the world. This framework becomes an understanding of how cultural elements can be used as a tool of public diplomacy, this basis is very important.

In its application, national branding theory also emphasizes the importance of sectoral cooperation and public participation to support the national image. Governments typically work with the private sector, local communities and the media to create consistent and broad branding messages. Indonesia, for example, engages various parties in coffee diplomacy to promote coffee as a superior product and an important part of its culture. As stated by Simon Anholt (2007), the success of national branding depends on the country's ability to demonstrate its true nature through concrete actions, not just marketing campaigns. Indonesia seeks to promote its local coffee in the international market through coffee festivals such as the Specialty Coffee Expo and the New York Coffee Festival. This method demonstrates cooperation between the government, coffee producers, and the Indonesian diaspora. As a result, Indonesian coffee has the ability to serve as a diplomatic tool that strengthens both cultural identity and global competitiveness.

This research investigates how coffee can serve as a soft power tool to build a positive image of Indonesia in the United States by using Nation Branding theory. This method enhances the cultural, export, and tourism aspects of Simon Anholt's Nation Brands Hexagon. According to Simon Anholt's theory of the "Nation Brands Hexagon", Indonesian coffee can be an indicator of exports and culture. As a leading export commodity, Indonesian coffee demonstrates competitive product quality and the richness of nature and local traditions. Coffee is a symbol of national identity that supports sustainability, social justice, and cultural diversity as a cultural indicator. The perception of Indonesia as a country with a

rich cultural heritage is reinforced by the promotion of Indonesian coffee through international festivals and trade shows. Coffee not only has economic value, but also helps enhance Indonesia's reputation around the world.

This research analyzes Indonesia's soft power efforts to strengthen the national image of the United States by using coffee diplomacy as a cultural instrument. Nation branding theory is used to do this. Cultural promotion, especially through participation in coffee festivals such as the Specialty Coffee Expo and the New York Coffee Festival, becomes a tangible form of public diplomacy that aims to increase the American public's understanding of Indonesian coffee and strengthen Indonesia's cultural identity in the eyes of the world. This strategy is in line with the concept of Nation Branding, which emphasizes the importance of using cultural, tourism and export elements to build a good reputation for the country. This research will investigate how Indonesia utilized various communication platforms and direct interactions within the festival to reach a wider audience through public diplomacy. The research will also investigate how the methods used to promote Indonesian coffee can influence the US public's perception of Indonesia. These methods will relate to cultural values and national identity through authentic and consistent stories. Through the theory of nation branding, the message a country conveys can correlate with the real experiences felt by the global public (Anholt, 2010). This approach also shows how local culture can be a strategic tool in public diplomacy. So this research is not only relevant for nation branding but also for cultural diplomacy in general that tells the origin and characteristics of Indonesian coffee.

## **2.2 Previous Research**

The first study, Anisa Dwi Nuraini and Ni Made Wismaya Yanti (2021). *Gastrodiplomacy of Indonesian Coffee through Specialty Coffee a strategy to improve Nation Branding* the result research on Indonesian Coffee Gastrodiplomacy through Specialty Coffee a strategy to improve Nation Branding shows that the coffee gastrodiplomacy strategy has successfully increased awareness of the quality of Indonesian specialty coffee at the international level. The second study, Denny Triawan (2020) *Coffee Diplomacy as a Soft Power Instrument: Cooperation Indonesia-New Zealand Cooperation in Promoting Local Coffee 2018-2019 Period* This research shows that coffee diplomacy can help people New Zealand better understand the quality and diversity of Indonesian coffee. The campaign increased coffee exports and enhanced Indonesia's reputation as a country with a rich cultural heritage. The third study, Hikmat Budiman (2019) *Coffee and Ngopi: From a Symbol of Cultural Identity to a Way of Enjoying Life*. This research shows that coffee is not only a economic commodity but also a symbol of cultural identity that reflects Indonesia's geographical and social diversity. Coffee has high social value as a way to interact and unite with others. In addition, coffee play an important role in Indonesia's cultural

diplomacy, reinforcing the belief that Indonesia is a country rich in tradition, history, and unique culture.

### **3. Proposed Method**

This study employs a qualitative approach is used to understand how a person or group understands social phenomena. This method emphasizes in-depth exploration through observation, documents, or interviews. It aligns with approaches such as phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative, and case studies. It is interpretive and inductive, making it suitable for studying complex phenomena (Creswell, 2013). To elaborate on the concepts of "soft power", "nation branding", and "public diplomacy", these are then linked with empirical data on Indonesian coffee in the United States. The purpose of this approach is to see how coffee serves as an instrument of "soft power" to promote Indonesia in the international market, as well as how it impacts competitiveness and bilateral trade relations.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1. Coffee as Indonesia's National Identity**

In Indonesia's ideal climate and geographical location, it is also known as one of the largest coffee producing countries in the world. This diversity shows how Indonesia can utilize its natural wealth to produce high-quality coffee that is in demand by the international market. In addition, this geographical factor allows farmers to develop sustainable farming methods, which are increasingly required by international trade. Indonesian coffee is still showing an edge in the global market with the right strategy both as a commodity and as a culture, coffee has become an integral part of Indonesian life. Most Indonesians lead a hard and difficult work pattern as a developing country, so coffee is often an additional source of energy in daily life. Enjoying coffee such as kopi tubruk or kopi klotok has become part of the daily routine, especially in cities and rural areas where the tradition of "ngopi bersama" connects coffee with people beyond just being consumed as a beverage. Both traditional and modern coffee shops reflect how coffee has become part of people's culture and has become part of their lives. Indonesian coffee consumption has become one of the most dynamic and continues to grow due to this influence but the potential of Indonesian coffee in the international market is not free from challenges. Research shows that Indonesia's share of coffee exports is still inferior compared to Vietnam, Brazil, and other coffee-producing countries (Jamil, 2020). One of the biggest obstacles is low productivity, especially at the smallholder level that dominates the coffee industry. In addition, unavailable financing and worldwide price changes pose another challenge to the stability of Indonesia's coffee industry (Jamil, 2020). Important solutions to these problems are improved cultivation technologies and product diversification strategies. Farmers receive training, market access, and technical

support from the government, private sector, and associations such as the Indonesian Specialty Coffee Association. It is hoped that this cooperation will increase the competitiveness of Indonesian coffee in the international market.

Creative marketing and branding strategies are key to the success of Indonesian coffee in the international market. Certifications such as Geographical Indication, Fair Trade, and Rainforest Alliance increase international consumers' confidence in Indonesian coffee. These certifications ensure product quality and sustainability and protect coffee's reputation from counterfeiting. By highlighting the cultural stories and geographical uniqueness behind each cup of coffee, Indonesian products are becoming increasingly popular in the global premium market. This shows that coffee is not only a product but also a strong symbol of Indonesian identity. In addition, coffee serves as an important tool in international diplomacy to promote Indonesian culture to the rest of the world. Coffee tasting events at international forums, such as trade shows or diplomatic meetings, are often a way to share stories about Indonesia's origins, customs and cultural values. These activities enhance Indonesia's image in the eyes of the world by providing a memorable experience for participants. Combining contemporary innovations with coffee traditions, such as Yogyakarta's kopi klotok or Java's kopi tubruk, can capture the attention of customers around the world. Coffee can be used for cultural and diplomatic promotion in this way. Indonesia's diverse coffee varieties and flavors make it one of the largest coffee producers in the world. Indonesia is the perfect place for high-quality coffee cultivation as it is in the tropics with fertile volcanic soil, stable rainfall throughout the year, and vast mountainous areas. Due to these advantages, Indonesian coffee has a unique flavor that no other country can replicate, strengthening its position in the global specialty coffee market. Gayo Arabica coffee, for example, has been recognized as a specialty coffee due to its flavor complexity and consistency. However, keep in mind that specialty coffee has strict freshness standards. Ideally, coffee should be consumed less than 14 days after roasting, as after that, the flavor will be reduced and can no longer meet cupping standards (Damayanti, 2021). Post-harvest distribution and management are critical to maintaining the quality of Indonesian coffee and its competitiveness in the global market. For Indonesian coffee to survive in the competition of premium products, it is crucial to understand these basic quality principles. Natural conditions that allow the growth of various coffee varieties, both Arabica and Robusta, make Indonesian coffee very diverse and the different climates throughout Indonesia, from the highlands of Sumatra to the mountains of Papua, create unique flavors for each place. Land mineral-rich soil, relatively stable temperatures, and high humidity levels are all components that greatly aid coffee plant growth. This is a comparative advantage that other coffee-producing countries rarely have. The Geographical Indication (GI) protection system utilizes the unique flavor and geographical origin of the product to prevent counterfeiting and increase the value of the product in the global market. Because of local

identity, farmers are motivated to maintain production standards consistent with the presence of geographical indications (Suryana, 2019).

One of the largest coffee producers in the world, Indonesia provides a variety of coffee varieties with different flavors. Indonesia is located along the equator, making it a tropical country with fertile volcanic soil, high rainfall, and stable temperatures throughout the year. This is an ideal environment for the growth of coffee plants. Provinces such as Sumatra, Sulawesi, Java, and Papua have mountainous soils suitable for different types of coffee, especially Arabica and Robusta. Indonesia has a natural advantage in coffee production due to its tropical climate and mineral-rich soil. For example, Aceh's Gayo coffee has been globally recognized for its floral flavor and balanced acidity, making it one of the best specialty coffees in the world. This shows that Indonesia's geography affects the quality and diversity of coffee in the country (Saputra et al., 2022). Indonesian coffee excels due to its quality and diversity. Post-harvest approaches such as honey, full wash, and natural processes provide diverse flavor characters, which influence this quality. Indonesia has many flavors, from Toraja coffee which has an earthy and spicy taste to Kintamani coffee which has a fresh citrus taste. This gives it an advantage over other coffee-producing countries that usually concentrate on one variety or flavor. But Indonesia still faces issues such as climate change disrupting cropping cycles, and dependence on price-sensitive global markets. This potential could be hampered if not handled properly. So to keep the national coffee industry sustainable, a flexible strategy is needed. Geographical Indication (GI) is one approach that has proven effective. GI provides legal recognition of the origin and quality of coffee originating from specific locations, such as Gayo Arabica Coffee and Bali Kintamani Coffee. This certification increases the selling value and guarantees the authenticity of coffee for international customers. Farmers are required to maintain consistent production standards while products are protected from counterfeiting. In addition, GI development in other parts of Indonesia is feasible, opening up new export opportunities based on quality and local identity. However, there are significant barriers in the midst of these opportunities. Small coffee farmers face two major constraints: low productivity and limited financing. Data shows that Indonesia's share of coffee exports still lags behind major producing countries such as Brazil and Vietnam. To achieve better results, better training, adoption of post-harvest technologies, and product diversification are essential. Integrated and sustainable farmer empowerment programs should be encouraged by the government and private sector. Indonesia's coffee competitiveness in the global market can be improved through a collective and coordinated approach (Jamil, 2020). In terms of cultural diplomacy, Indonesian coffee also has strategic benefits. In international forums, the culture of drinking coffee in some places, such as tubruk coffee in Java and klotok coffee in Yogyakarta, can be introduced as part of culinary diplomacy.

In diplomatic events, coffee tasting activities provide an opportunity to convey cultural stories, independence, and local principles, creating an emotional connection between foreign consumers and Indonesian culture. How coffee is served has changed, reflecting changes in local preferences and cultures around the world. With its unique characteristics, Indonesian coffee has been used in many different ways around the world. For example, Javanese tubruk coffee packaged in a more contemporary style is now often found in cafés overseas. Innovations in presentation, such as the use of manual brewing methods, make Indonesian coffee more appealing in the global market. This demonstrates the ability of Indonesian coffee to cater to the diverse tastes of its customers. Indonesian coffee can continue to compete in the international market with the right presentation. Professional coffee brewers play an important role in promoting Indonesian coffee on the international stage. International coffee brewing competitions serve as a platform to showcase the uniqueness and quality of Indonesian coffee. They also act as cultural ambassadors, conveying the story of Indonesia's coffee traditions and origins to international consumers. Training and certification of coffee brewers is important to ensure consistency and quality of coffee presentation. Their responsibilities become even more important when dealing directly with customers, providing a positive experience and increasing the value of Indonesian coffee. Indonesian coffee brewers can continue to bring local coffee to the international stage with the support of ongoing training. Enriching the way Indonesian coffee is served is greatly aided by local culture. For example, Yogyakarta's klotok coffee offers an authentic experience that attracts customers from all over the world. A study conducted by Wardani in 2022 found that this traditional presentation is what sets Indonesian coffee apart from its competitors. This culture is often used to attract customers abroad. By incorporating local cultural values into the presentation of Indonesian coffee, it is not only selling the product but also providing cultural value. It also adds an emotional dimension that makes the coffee more memorable in the hearts of customers. Local culture is invaluable to coffee marketing with the advancement of technology, coffee serving has become more innovative, which allows you to explore flavors more deeply. Modern tools such as advanced coffee brewing machines and digital technology have made the customer experience more enjoyable especially technology also plays an important role in ensuring sustainability for example, green initiatives that encourage sustainable coffee cultivation is one example. To ensure traceability and transparency of coffee origin, block chain technology is also being used. With these innovations, Indonesian coffee can strengthen its position as a modern product that meets the demands of the global market, reflecting the Indonesian coffee industry's commitment to quality and sustainability. Coffee can also be used for diplomacy and building relationships between nations. Coffee tastings at international events can be a way to share Indonesia's coffee story. In addition to introducing the product, this process triggers discussions about the values, customs and



culture that coffee represents. Coffee helps strengthen diplomatic relations and enhance understanding of each other in an informal setting. It has been used in various forums to forge partnerships and promote Indonesian coffee. By using coffee as a diplomatic tool, Indonesia expands its market and strengthens its reputation internationally.

#### **4.2. Coffee as an Instrument of Indonesia's Soft Power in the United States**

Soft power is a concept that utilizes the appeal of culture, values, and institutions as tools to influence international perceptions without the use of physical force. In this case, coffee is one of the soft power elements that Indonesia can play on the international stage, especially in the United States. Unique coffee traditions, such as traditional brewing methods using tubruk or saring methods, can be an attraction for global consumers. US consumers, who have an appreciation for handicrafts and authenticity, may feel drawn to explore the coffee traditions of the archipelago. This shows how modernity can blend with traditional cultural values through coffee. Coffee can also help raise awareness about the importance of sustainability. Many coffee-producing places in Indonesia use environmentally friendly farming methods. This is in line with the global trend that increasingly prioritizes long-lasting products, as farmers in West Java have been using organic farming methods to produce high-quality coffee with little environmental impact. This kind of promotional process can help attract the attention of international customers and increase the strategic value of Indonesian coffee as a symbol of gentle strength. Coffee can also help promote local heritage and historical aspects. Stories about the use of coffee as part of the social customs of people in a particular area can be used in advertisements. These real-life experiences enhance the emotional connection between goods and customers, resulting in a deep appreciation of Indonesian culture. The United States market, which is one of the largest coffee consumers in the world, provides a great opportunity for Indonesia to use coffee as a tool to communicate their country's cultural values and identity. One additional effort that can be made is to organize art or cultural events in the United States that focus on Indonesia's coffee drinking habits. Coffee becomes more than just a beverage in such events as it becomes a symbol of cultural warmth and hospitality. A study conducted by Saputra et al. (2024) shows that a culture-based coffee marketing approach increases consumer appreciation of the product and strengthens diplomatic relations between the destination market and the product's country of origin. With strategic innovation and promotion, Indonesian coffee can be transformed into a modern cultural bridge that connects the international community with the traditions of the archipelago but also in building a positive image of the country in the international world.

The ability to get what one wants through cultural appeal and positive values is known as soft power (Nye, 1990). Coffee is one of Indonesia's cultural assets, it has great potential to be used as a tool of power without the use of force. Indonesia can have a positive impact

in the global market, especially the United States, by building on this story. Coffee diplomacy is not only marketing the product it is also spreading cultural values and sustainability principles. Consumers in the United States are more likely to favor goods that have a story and positive social impact. In this case, Indonesian coffee farmers are capitalizing on sustainability practices with the use of the application of agroforestry systems in East Sumatra that help preserve the environment and improve coffee quality. Stories like this can attract international consumers who are concerned with environmental issues from here using coffee as soft power requires education and knowledge. In addition, participating in international coffee festivals and festivals that showcase Indonesia's cultural diversity can also be a place to showcase Indonesian coffee to the world. By organizing or participating in events like these, Indonesia can showcase its various products as well as build networks with industry players from around the world in the agenda of events like this that can be used to talk about global issues such as sustainability and innovation in coffee production. Finally, the success of soft power through coffee depends on consistency in building and maintaining cultural narratives. By prioritizing innovation, tradition, and sustainability, coffee can be a strategic element in increasing Indonesia's cultural influence in the United States. This method shows that soft power is a cultural appeal and long-term impact through upheld values.

Indonesian culture can use the symbol of coffee, which has traditional values and is rich and relevant to the modern era, as a component of cultural support, and coffee also shows the ethnic and geographical diversity of Indonesia through the unique flavors and aromas of each type of coffee from various regions. West Papua coffee is famous for its complex fruity flavors, while Nusa Tenggara coffee has a softer flavor profile. Because of this diversity, people can discover a variety of unique flavors and cultures, which attracts people around the world. When viewed from a cultural standpoint, coffee is often an important component of social events and local traditions. In some places, drinking coffee together is a symbolic way to honor and receive guests. Through marketing narratives that portray coffee as more than just a beverage, social values such as these can be promoted internationally. This narrative can include stories about coffee's connection to local people's lives, such as how coffee serves to strengthen social relations in rural communities due to its commitment to sustainability. In coffee-producing areas such as Flores and Bali, organic farming practices are widely used, showing that Indonesian coffee is not only a high-quality product but also environmentally friendly. Products that support sustainability principles tend to be favored by international consumers, especially in developed countries such as the United States. Promoting Indonesian coffee as a product that supports environmental preservation can make it more attractive in the international market. Coffee marketing

Indonesia also has the ability to utilize strong story elements to attract customers from around the world. For example, consumers can gain emotional value by including the long

process from coffee cultivation to serving, which involves farmers, processors, and baristas. Such narratives foster a stronger connection between consumers and Indonesian culture in addition to increasing product value. Consumers tend to value products that have a rich cultural connection more.

#### **4.3. Public Diplomacy & the State's Role in Indonesian Coffee Promotion**

One important tool in international relations is public diplomacy, which allows a country to build a good reputation abroad through direct communication with other countries. Public diplomacy conducted through coffee in Indonesia aims to introduce local culture and principles while building influence around the world. Indonesia's flagship product, coffee, is a symbol of cultural identity that attracts the attention of the international community. Coffee can be used as a tool to improve relations between Indonesia and export destination countries through planned public diplomacy strategies. The organization of an international coffee festival is one concrete example of public diplomacy. Indonesia has the opportunity to show the world the diversity of the archipelago's coffee products through events like this. Festivals can also be a place of cultural interaction where people from other countries can learn about Indonesian coffee traditions and history. Cultural events such as coffee festivals enhance international diplomacy and increase the global community's interest in the product (Rachman et al., 2020). Taking an active part in festivals such as this is an important part of the public diplomacy approach as cultural exchange programs involving Indonesian baristas, coffee farmers, and coffee entrepreneurs can also use coffee. Indonesian delegates have the opportunity to share their expertise and experience of the coffee industry with the international community through this program. This step not only introduces Indonesian coffee by building stronger relationships through direct interaction but also from community-based programs increases the international community's appreciation of the product's culture of origin and enhances the reputation of the producing country (Wibowo, 2021). Coffee can also be used for public diplomacy by incorporating it into broader cultural diplomacy initiatives. The Indonesian government, for example, could organize art and cultural exhibitions that focus on coffee as a commodity and a symbol of its rich culture.

Social and historical value. These efforts enhance the value of coffee in the lives of Indonesians and increase its appeal in the international market. In addition, for successful public diplomacy, there needs to be collaboration between the government, businesses and civil society. The government can help by creating regulations that facilitate coffee exports, while businesses can concentrate on innovation and marketing their products. On the other hand, civil society can help by promoting Indonesian coffee in social media or the international community. With this synergy, public diplomacy can run more effectively and Indonesia can also utilize digital technology to promote coffee around the world as part of its public diplomacy strategy. To reach more international customers, platforms such as social

media and online stores can be used. Content that showcases the uniqueness of Indonesian coffee from cultivation to serving can attract the attention of people around the world. Culture-based digital campaigns increase international consumers' interest in local products, such as coffee, coffee methods in public diplomacy can be a very useful tool to build fair and beneficial relationships around the world. Coffee is arguably one of the leading commodities in the international market, promoted strategically by the Indonesian government. The government can support various initiatives to promote coffee abroad through the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This includes participating in exhibitions of state actors internationally and organizing cultural activities with a coffee theme or as an example as well as the author's observations in several activities of trade attachés, hosting Dua DC Coffee and introducing the coffee menu during coffee breaks provided by baristas directly with the taste of delicious coffee trends from Indonesia, namely palm sugar coffee. So the success of Indonesian products in the global market depends on the government's efforts to gain global market access. In addition, diplomatic representatives such as consulates and embassies play an important role in promoting Indonesian coffee. They can organize special events, such as Indonesian Coffee Promotion Day, where the public and local business community in the destination country can see different types of Indonesian coffee. In addition, diplomatic missions can work with local businesses to identify new market opportunities for Indonesian coffee. These processes support a better understanding of Indonesian coffee as a premium product that has cultural value and a unique taste. Governments and diplomatic missions do much more than promote coffee—they also create policies to support coffee exports. Governments can help coffee exporters with incentives and support favorable trade agreements with partner countries. Meanwhile, diplomatic missions can help overcome trade barriers.

Such as high tariffs or burdensome technical regulations. Indonesian coffee has a greater chance of competing in the global market as domestic policies and international diplomacy work together. Coordination of diplomacy and domestic policies is essential to increase the number of Indonesia's top export items and the government and diplomats can utilize digital technology to support the promotion of Indonesian coffee. Effectively, Indonesian coffee can be promoted more widely to a global audience through digital platforms such as social media, websites, and e-commerce. One of the things that can be included in this initiative is the creation of educational content about the characteristics of Indonesian coffee, such as how it is made, traditional serving methods, and the socioeconomic impact of coffee on local communities. Utilizing digital media to promote local products has the ability to increase international customers' awareness and interest in the products offered.

Marketing Indonesian coffee relies heavily on cooperation with non-state actors such as coffee communities, trade associations, and local and international entrepreneurs. Through

events such as barista competitions or educational tours about coffee, coffee communities often help introduce Indonesian coffee to international markets. These communities can expand the marketing of Indonesian coffee in many countries with extensive networks through trade associations such as the Specialty Coffee Association of Indonesia (SCAI) play an important role in marketing Indonesian coffee. They not only connect coffee farmers with buyers around the world, but they also encourage innovation in the coffee industry, such as the creation of new varieties that are more suitable for the global market. International and local entrepreneurs are instrumental in expanding the Indonesian coffee market. They often work together to create coffee brands that appeal to customers around the world by combining traditional Indonesian elements with contemporary marketing approaches. Visible cultural values inherent in Indonesian coffee are highlighted through attractive packaging and collaborative storytelling techniques. Non-state actors also use digital platforms and social media as tools to reach audiences spread across the globe. Coffee industry actors, from farmers to entrepreneurs, can use these platforms to sell their goods directly to consumers around the world. Digital audiences are often attracted to content such as short videos about the coffee-making process or inspiring stories from coffee farmers.

#### **4.4. Strategy Implementation**

To promote Indonesian coffee, there needs to be a holistic approach that involves many parties, such as the government, non-state organizations, and the public. Creating a unique story about Indonesian coffee that can attract the attention of international customers is the first step in implementation. This can be a story about coffee's social role in the local community, environmental sustainability during the production process, or traditional values inherent to Indonesian coffee culture. Specialty coffee itself has high standards for flavor, quality, and freshness as the time since the beans were roasted is one of the factors that determine its quality. Specialty coffee beans should ideally be consumed within 7-14 days after roasting to maintain their freshness and flavor complexity. After 14 days, the flavor quality tends to decline as the beans begin to lose carbon dioxide gas, which is necessary for the flavor extraction process. In addition, the beans are exposed to oxygen, which accelerates the degradation of aroma and flavor. If stored for too long, coffee beans will lose the volatile components that give them their unique flavors and aromas, such as floral, chocolate, or fruity notes and the taste of the coffee can become flat and sometimes bitter and to ensure the best taste experience, keeping specialty coffee beans within the ideal timeframe is essential, especially for customers who value premium quality.

Therefore, the strategy offered is not only narrative-based, which helps increase international customers' interest in certain products through the provision of emotional appeals but also related to the specialty or taste of coffee, which can generate a form of soft power. Training on sustainable agricultural practices, post-harvest management, and coffee

processing can be provided by the government and trade associations. To build consumer trust, coffee marketing in the US market should concentrate on production quality, ingredient transparency, health benefits, and food safety certification. Coffee production should use environmentally friendly growing techniques, high-quality beans, and meticulous post-harvest processes to meet international standards. Consumers should be provided with complete information on ingredients, including coffee variety, roast level, and nutritional information. Coffee's antioxidant content, which supports metabolism and improves concentration, can be promoted as a health benefit. Food safety certification granted by agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) increases consumer confidence in the product. The aim of these efforts is to ensure that Indonesian coffee meets international requirements. Expanding the distribution network of Indonesian coffee to more countries is an additional strategy, and this can be achieved by working together with the FDA.

This can be achieved by working with local partners in the destination country to increase market penetration. One effective way to widely introduce Indonesian coffee is by working with cafes, hotels and retail chains abroad. Coffee industry players can directly reach customers around the world by using social media, websites, and e-commerce. Engaging content, such as videos showing the coffee-making process or interviews with farmers, can help audiences around the world become more brand-aware. MSME businesses can compete in the global market without huge costs by using digital marketing.

Through supportive policies, the government can also play an important role in helping coffee exports. A promotion strategy can be implemented faster with export-friendly laws and incentives for coffee exporters. In addition, economic diplomacy through bilateral trade agreements can help reduce trade barriers and increase the competitiveness of Indonesian coffee. Consistent regulations are important to help export growth of Indonesia's leading products. In implementation, international events such as coffee exhibitions or barista competitions as well as inviting influencers to participate in festivals created by the Indonesian Embassy can be a good platform to introduce Indonesian coffee. These events created by the Indonesian Embassy not only introduce culture but also have an element of Nation branding on offer during the activities. This involves assessing how effectively the plan has been implemented and adapting it to market changes. Thus, strategies that match the needs of the market have a greater long-term impact.

## 5. Conclusions

This research shows that Indonesian coffee is not only an economic commodity, but also a strategic instrument in shaping the national image through a soft power approach in the United States. The best solution to improve the effectiveness of coffee diplomacy is to strengthen collaboration between the government, private sector, and coffee communities, especially in expanding Geographical Indication certification and sustainable agricultural

practices. This strategy needs to be supported by cultural narrative-based marketing, as well as active involvement in international coffee festivals as a means of introducing local values. Digitalization through social media and e-commerce is an important tool in expanding the reach of Indonesian coffee products to the global market, so the government also needs to provide policies and ease export regulations so that coffee businesses can compete optimally. Farmer training, post-harvest support, and providing access to financing are also crucial factors in improving Indonesia's coffee competitiveness. With an integrated strategy and responsive to market dynamics, coffee diplomacy can further strengthen Indonesia's role in the global economic and cultural arena.

One of the main benefits of this research is the increased awareness that brewing coffee is not only a function of drinking but also a conversation that shapes public diplomacy and promotes products from Indonesian coffee, through Sipping coffee also serves as a cultural bridge that strengthens the relationship between Indonesia and the United States. The promotion of traditional elements such as kopi tubruk and klotok can also compete to create a stronger relationship between Indonesia and the United States on social values, national identity, and environmental sustainability. The author also provides a theoretical basis for international relations research in the context of economic diplomacy based on culture through coffee diplomacy in a subtle way, namely using Soft power to significantly expand Indonesia's influence in the world.

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