

## The Dilemma of Particular Ethics: an Analysis of The Rejection of Israeli Athletes at A Gymnastics Tournament in Indonesia

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### Abstract

The rejection of Israeli athletes' participation in several international sporting events held in Indonesia has given rise to a complex ethical debate between the universal principles of international sport and the particular values embraced by the Indonesian nation. This study aims to analyze the particular ethical dimensions in the policy of rejecting Israeli athletes from international gymnastics tournaments in Indonesia and its implications for national resilience. The study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design through the analysis of documents, policies, media reports, and academic literature on sports ethics, deontology, Olympism, and national resilience. The results show that the policy of rejecting Israeli athletes cannot be understood solely as a discriminatory act in sport but rather as a manifestation of particular ethics rooted in constitutional values, humanitarian solidarity with Palestine, and Indonesia's foreign policy orientation. However, the policy creates tension with the universal principles of international sport, which emphasize non-discrimination, political neutrality, and equal participation of athletes. The research findings indicate that this dilemma reflects a struggle between domestic moral legitimacy and global normative legitimacy. From a national resilience perspective, this case demonstrates the importance of maintaining a balance between the nation's moral identity, humanitarian commitment, and the demands of international sporting governance. This research confirms that moral resilience at the national level is an important factor in facing increasingly complex global dynamics.

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## INTRODUCTION

Modern sport is no longer understood solely as a competitive activity but rather as a social and political arena that reflects power relations, national identity, international diplomacy, and the construction of moral values in global society (Boykoff, 2020; Grix & James, 2024; Humphreys & Zhou, 2022). The development of international sports governance demonstrates that sport has become a crucial arena for the formation of national identity, international diplomacy, and the articulation of a nation's moral values (Humphreys & Zhou, 2022). In this context, decisions made by states and sports organizations often have not only technical consequences for the organization of competitions but also broader political, ethical, and strategic implications (Grix & James, 2024).

The basic principles of international sport normatively place sportsmanship, non-discrimination, equality, and respect for human dignity as universal values that must be upheld by all sporting stakeholders. These values are explicitly stated in the Olympic Charter, which affirms that every individual should have the opportunity to participate in sport without

discrimination based on race, religion, gender, or political affiliation (International Olympic Committee [IOC], 2023). Within the framework of Olympism, sport is positioned as a means of building peace, solidarity, and friendship among nations through respect for human dignity and cultural diversity.

However, the reality of international sporting practice shows that the application of these universal principles often confronts complex global political dynamics. Various studies have shown that international sporting organizations are not entirely free from the influence of geopolitics, power relations, and the strategic interests of particular countries (Boykoff, 2020; Reiche, 2019). This situation raises questions about the extent to which sporting neutrality can be maintained in practice and whether universal principles are truly applied consistently to all countries and athletes.

The rejection of Israeli athletes from participating in various international tournaments held in Indonesia is a contemporary example that demonstrates the complex relationship between sports ethics, international politics, and national identity. The controversy gained international attention when Indonesia faced pressure from international sports federations and the IOC regarding restrictions on the participation of Israeli athletes in championships held in Indonesia. This incident sparked debate not only regarding compliance with international sporting regulations but also concerning the moral, constitutional, and humanitarian principles that are integral to Indonesia's national identity.

From Indonesia's perspective, the controversy surrounding the participation of Israeli athletes cannot be separated from the country's historical and constitutional stance toward the Palestinian struggle. This stance is rooted in the mandate of the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, which rejects all forms of colonialism, and has been consistently reflected in Indonesia's foreign policy orientation since the early days of independence (Anwar, 2020) and (Sukma, 2011; the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia). Since independence, Indonesia has consistently supported the right to self-determination for nations still experiencing colonialism and occupation. This normative position has developed into one of the foundations of Indonesia's foreign policy, which places support for Palestine as part of a relatively consistent moral and political commitment in international relations.

This consistency has its own consequences when Indonesia hosts various international sporting competitions involving Israeli athletes. On the one hand, international sports federations and the IOC require host countries to guarantee equal access to all eligible athletes without discrimination based on nationality or political affiliation. On the other hand, some community groups, social organizations, and domestic political actors view the presence of the Israeli delegation as contradicting Indonesia's moral commitment to the Palestinian cause. This situation creates a dilemma between two distinct value systems: universal ethics underpinning international sports governance and particular ethics rooted in historical experience, national identity, and humanitarian solidarity within Indonesian society.

The debate over the relationship between universal ethics and particular ethics has become an important theme in contemporary moral philosophy. The universalist approach emphasizes that certain moral principles apply to all human beings regardless of social, cultural, or political context. Within this framework, values such as non-discrimination, justice, and respect for human dignity are considered universally valid. In contrast, the particularist approach argues that moral judgments cannot be separated from historical context, collective

identity, traditions, and social relationships that constitute a moral community. Therefore, an action considered right in one context may not hold the same meaning in another.

In the context of international sport, the dominance of the universal paradigm is clearly visible through various regulations developed by the IOC and international sports federations. Principles such as fair play, equality, neutrality, and non-discrimination are positioned as universal norms that must be applied to all sports participants without exception. McNamee (2019) explains that modern sports ethics are built on the assumption that every athlete has equal moral status and therefore deserves equal opportunity to participate in competition. Loland (2019) adds that sportsmanship is not only related to compliance with the rules of the game but also to respect for the moral rights of each participant as an individual with equal dignity.

However, several studies have shown that the implementation of these universal principles is not always consistent in international sporting practice. Boykoff (2020) points out that various mega-sporting events often become arenas for political and diplomatic contestation, demonstrating tension between the ideals of Olympism and the realities of global geopolitics. Similarly, Reiche (2019) asserts that international sport is never completely free from the influence of state political interests; thus, claims of neutrality often face implementation challenges.

Criticism of sporting neutrality has intensified following various decisions by international sports organizations deemed inconsistent in their responses to international conflicts. Russia's response to the invasion of Ukraine, for example, has raised discussions about possible double standards in the application of non-discrimination and political neutrality principles. Some have questioned why sanctions against certain countries are strictly enforced while other cases with similar humanitarian complexities are treated differently. This discourse on double standards becomes relevant when discussing the controversy surrounding the participation of Israeli athletes in international competitions held in countries with differing political positions on the Palestinian conflict.

From the perspective of humanistic ethics, this issue cannot be reduced to mere administrative compliance with international sports regulations. Humanistic ethics places human dignity at the center of moral consideration. In the Kantian tradition, humans must always be treated as ends in themselves and never merely as means to other ends. This principle requires a deeper evaluation of how sports policies affect individuals as moral subjects with rights and dignity. Thus, the central question is not only whether a policy complies with formal rules but also whether it respects human dignity and reflects ethically justifiable principles.

Immanuel Kant's deontological perspective is relevant because it offers a normative framework for assessing the consistency of moral actions. According to Kant, an action is moral if it is grounded in duty that can be universalized without contradiction. In the context of this research, a deontological approach is used to evaluate whether the principle of non-discrimination in international sport is consistently applied to all states and athletes, and whether exclusion or rejection of athletes can be justified based on broader moral principles. This approach enables analysis that focuses not only on political consequences but also on the moral legitimacy of actions taken by states and international sporting organizations.

On the other hand, the particular ethics approach offers a different perspective by placing solidarity, collective identity, and moral responsibility toward a specific community as the

basis for ethical consideration. Within this framework, Indonesia's support for Palestine is seen not merely as a political preference but as part of the nation's moral identity shaped by historical experience and constitutional values. Therefore, policies restricting the participation of Israeli athletes can be understood as expressions of moral solidarity with a group perceived to experience structural injustice within the international system.

This dilemma between universal and particular ethics has broader implications for national resilience. In the literature on national resilience, moral and ideological dimensions are crucial components determining a nation's ability to maintain its identity, values, and integrity amid changing strategic environments. National resilience is not solely concerned with military or economic capability but also encompasses the nation's capacity to uphold the value system that underpins national life. Therefore, the value conflict in the case of Israeli athletes' exclusion relates not only to international sports governance but also to how Indonesia defines its moral identity amid globalization pressures.

Although studies on sports diplomacy, Olympism, international sports governance, and Indonesia's support for Palestine have developed quite extensively (Boykoff, 2020; Grix & James, 2024; Reiche, 2019), most research still focuses on foreign policy dimensions, sports diplomacy, or the implementation of neutrality principles in international sport. Research specifically analyzing the exclusion of Israeli athletes in Indonesia through a particular ethical perspective remains limited. Furthermore, few studies connect this moral dilemma to national resilience as a framework for understanding the relationship between moral identity, public policy, and global sports governance. This gap provides an opportunity for further contribution.

This study makes two novel contributions. First, it uses particular ethics as the primary framework to explain the exclusion of Israeli athletes, differing from previous studies that mainly employ sports diplomacy, international relations, or foreign policy approaches. Second, it argues that the case represents a conflict of moral legitimacy between universal norms of international sport and Indonesia's national moral identity rooted in its constitutional mandate.

Thus, this research expands the discourse on sport governance by integrating ethical, foreign policy, and national resilience perspectives into a single analytical framework.

In this context, the study begins with the assumption that the controversy surrounding the exclusion of Israeli athletes reflects a clash between two ethical paradigms. Studies on international sports ethics are generally dominated by a universalistic approach emphasizing non-discrimination and political neutrality within Olympism (Loland, 2019; McNamee, 2019). Meanwhile, studies on Indonesia's support for Palestine focus more on foreign policy, diplomacy, or humanitarian solidarity (Anwar, 2020; Sukma, 2011). To date, limited research integrates sports ethics, particular ethics, and national resilience to explain how states negotiate conflicts between universal norms and domestic moral-constitutional commitments. Consequently, the dynamics of moral legitimacy underlying such policies have not yet received a fully comprehensive theoretical explanation.

On the one hand, there are demands to comply with universal norms of international sport that emphasize non-discrimination and political neutrality. On the other hand, there is pressure to maintain consistency with particular values rooted in humanitarian solidarity, national identity, and Indonesia's foreign policy orientation. The clash between these paradigms is crucial to analyze because it has direct implications for policy legitimacy, Indonesia's

international reputation, and the quality of national resilience in an increasingly complex global environment.

Based on the above description, this study aims to analyze the particular ethical dimension in the exclusion of Israeli athletes in an international gymnastics tournament in Indonesia and its implications for national resilience. This study offers conceptual novelty through the integration of particular ethics, Kantian deontology, Olympism, and national resilience in explaining moral legitimacy conflicts in international sports governance. In contrast to previous studies that tend to separate sports ethics from political and resilience dimensions, this study shows that state decisions in international sport emerge from interactions between domestic moral legitimacy, global norms, and national resilience considerations.

The analysis is conducted through sports ethics, humanistic ethics, Kantian deontology, Olympism, and national resilience theory to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between morality, politics, and international sports governance.

This study proposes a conceptual model of “moral legitimacy conflict in international sports governance.” This model explains that state decisions in international sport are shaped not only by compliance with universal norms but also by interactions between domestic moral legitimacy, global institutional pressures, and national resilience considerations. In contrast to previous studies that separate sports ethics from political and security dimensions, this study argues that these elements form an interconnected legitimacy system influencing public policymaking.

Studies on international sports ethics are generally dominated by a universalistic approach emphasizing non-discrimination and political neutrality within Olympism (Loland, 2019; McNamee, 2019). However, these studies have not adequately explained how states with strong particular moral identities negotiate tensions between global obligations and domestic constitutional commitments in mega-sport events. The lack of integration between sports ethics, political legitimacy theory, and national resilience has resulted in partial analyses of controversial cases in sports governance.

## **METHOD**

This research used a qualitative-interpretive approach with a case study design to analyze the refusal of Israeli athletes from a particular ethical perspective. The case study was selected because it enabled an in-depth examination of a contemporary phenomenon within a specific socio-political context. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with informants selected using purposive sampling based on their relevance to political ethics, international sports policy, and foreign relations.

Secondary data included the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Minister of Foreign Affairs Regulation No. 3 of 2019, media coverage of the refusal of Israeli athletes, and official decisions issued by the tournament committee. Data validity was ensured through source and theory triangulation by comparing interview data, official documents, and media reports. Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, with particular ethics used as the primary analytical framework.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## **The Case of Israeli Athletes' Rejection in the 2025 World Artistic Gymnastics Championships**

The 2025 World Artistic Gymnastics Championships, held in Jakarta, drew international attention after the Indonesian government and the Indonesian Gymnastics Federation (FGI) decided not to grant entry to six Israeli athletes previously registered to compete. This decision sparked debate about the boundary between the principle of universality of international sport and a country's right to uphold its political policies and moral values (International Olympic Committee/IOC, 2023).

In various explanations presented to the public, the decision was attributed to several considerations, including Indonesia's consistent foreign policy commitment to support the Palestinian struggle, the absence of official diplomatic relations with Israel, and national security and public order concerns amidst growing public sensitivity to the ongoing conflict in Gaza (Medina et al., 2025; Fajriyah & Setiawati, 2025). Furthermore, the issue of special security requirements for the Israeli delegation was also seen as potentially creating additional challenges in organizing international competitions.

This case demonstrates that sport is not always entirely separate from political and humanitarian dynamics. On the one hand, international sports organizations emphasize the principle of non-discrimination and equal rights for athletes. On the other hand, states may face moral and political demands stemming from history, national identity, and constitutional commitments that have long been part of their public policies. Therefore, the case of the rejection of Israeli athletes is relevant to analyze through a particular ethical perspective that places social, historical, and community identity contexts as the basis for moral considerations.

### **Universal Ethics in International Sports**

Universal ethics in international sport are based on the principle that every individual has an equal right to participate in sporting competition without discrimination based on nationality, religion, race, or political opinion. This principle is reflected in *the Olympic Charter*, which affirms that sport must be conducted on the basis of respect for human dignity, equality, and international solidarity (IOC, 2023).

Within this framework, sport is viewed as a neutral space that should be free from political conflict between nations. Therefore, international sports organizations such as the IOC and FIG place universality, political neutrality, and non-discrimination as key principles in global sports governance (Loland, 2019). Athletes are viewed as individuals who cannot be held accountable for the political policies of the countries they represent, and therefore their right to compete must be protected.

However, the application of universal ethics often faces challenges when dealing with humanitarian conflicts, national identities, and historical experiences that hold strong moral significance for a country. In certain situations, demands for universal standards can clash with local values deemed more relevant by certain political communities. This situation is the starting point for the debate between universal ethics and particular ethics in understanding controversial public policies (McNamee, 2019).

### **Particular Ethics as an Analytical Framework**

Particular ethics is an approach that emphasizes that moral judgments cannot be separated from the social context, history, and identity of the community in which an action takes place. Unlike universal ethics, which seeks to apply the same moral principles to all situations,

particular ethics views each case as having characteristics that must be understood contextually before an action can be judged right or wrong (Dancy, 2004).

This view is reinforced by MacIntyre (2007), who states that the moral identity of individuals and communities is shaped by the traditions, history, and shared values that develop within a society. Thus, moral obligations are determined not only by universal rules but also by commitments to the community and the values that are part of its collective identity. In the context of international relations, this approach explains why a state may adopt policies that differ from global norms when those policies are deemed more in line with the historical experience and moral principles held by its society.

In the Indonesian context, particular ethics is a relevant analytical framework because it allows for a deeper understanding of the relationship between the constitutional mandate of anti-colonialism, solidarity with Palestine, and an independent and active foreign policy. Through this perspective, the rejection of Israeli athletes is not understood merely as a form of restriction on sports participation, but as a manifestation of moral identity and historical commitments that have long been part of Indonesian political life. Therefore, particular ethics is used in this study to explain the moral rationality underlying this policy and to analyze the tensions that arise when particular values confront universal norms in international sports governance.

### **Analysis Case Through Ethics Particular**

From a particular ethical perspective, moral actions cannot be adequately assessed solely through abstract, universal principles. Moral judgments must consider historical context, collective identity, social experience, and the values embedded within a particular political community (Dancy, 2004; MacIntyre, 2007). Therefore, Indonesia's policy of rejecting the participation of Israeli athletes in international gymnastics tournaments cannot be understood solely as a violation of the universal principles of international sport, but rather as an expression of the value system that has developed within the Indonesian moral community.

Indonesia's rejection of Israeli athletes is justified in particular morality through three main pillars, namely:

#### **1. Pillar Constitutional And Mandate Historical**

One of the main reasons explaining the rejection of Israeli athletes from a particular ethical perspective is the constitutional mandate and historical experience that shape the moral identity of the Indonesian nation. The preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia explicitly states that "colonialism in this world must be abolished because it is incompatible with humanity and justice." This principle not only serves as the legal basis for the state but also serves as a source of moral orientation in the implementation of Indonesian foreign policy, including a consistent stance on the Palestinian issue (Fajriyah & Setiawati, 2025; Medina et al., 2025).

From a particular ethical perspective, moral obligations do not arise from abstract, universal principles, but rather from the values, traditions, and historical commitments inherent within a particular political community (MacIntyre, 2007; Walzer, 1983). Therefore, Indonesia's support for Palestine can be understood as a form of moral responsibility rooted in the Indonesian nation's own historical experience as a nation that experienced colonialism. This position subsequently developed into a part of the

national identity that continues to be reproduced in Indonesian foreign policy to this day (Anwar, 2020; Fajriyah & Setiawati, 2025).

In the context of the Israeli athletes' rejection, this constitutional mandate is seen as having stronger moral legitimacy than obligations stemming from international sports organizations. For Indonesia, its commitment to the principle of anti-colonialism and support for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination are moral obligations stemming from the constitution and national history. Therefore, decisions deemed in line with this mandate are morally justified within a particular ethical framework, despite the potential for tension with the universal principle of non-discrimination adopted in international sports governance (Medina et al., 2025; Prabandari & Darmawan, 2026).

These findings indicate that the rejection of Israeli athletes is not merely a response to the contemporary political situation, but rather a reflection of Indonesia's consistency in maintaining an anti-colonial moral identity that has been an integral part of the constitution, history of national struggle, and foreign policy orientation since independence (Aswar & Widyrianto, 2025; Fajriyah & Setiawati, 2025).

Thus, from a particular ethical perspective, the moral legitimacy of an action is determined not only by its conformity to universal norms, but also by its adherence to constitutional mandates and the historical memory that shape the identity of a political community. In the Indonesian context, these two factors are the primary foundations explaining the rejection of Israeli athletes' participation in international competitions held in Indonesia.

## **2. Solidarity Community And Identity Collective**

Beyond constitutional factors, the rejection of Israeli athletes can also be understood through the dimensions of community solidarity and collective identity that have developed within Indonesian society. Support for Palestine is not solely based on religious factors, despite the majority of Indonesia's population being Muslim, but is also shaped by historical relationships, humanitarian empathy, and emotional bonds that have developed over decades. This solidarity is reflected in various forms of humanitarian assistance provided by civil society organizations, religious institutions, and the Indonesian government, including humanitarian aid campaigns, diplomatic support, and the construction of health facilities such as the Indonesian Hospital in Gaza (Fajriyah & Setiawati, 2025; Prabandari & Darmawan, 2026).

From a particular ethical perspective, the moral obligations of individuals and communities cannot be separated from the social relations and collective identities that shape them. MacIntyre (2007) explains that a person understands their moral obligations through membership in a particular community with shared history, traditions, and values. Therefore, Indonesia's solidarity with Palestine can be understood as an expression of moral loyalty born of the nation's collective identity, not merely a response to contemporary political dynamics.

This bond also has strong historical roots. The spirit of anti-colonial solidarity that developed after the Asian-African Conference positioned the struggles of nations still experiencing colonialism as part of the shared moral responsibility of Asian and African nations. The values of solidarity born from the conference later became one of

the foundations of Indonesian foreign policy, supporting the Palestinian struggle for independence and rejecting various forms of colonialism and international discrimination (Aswar & Widyrianto, 2025; Medina et al., 2025).

Within the framework of particular ethics, rejecting the presence of representatives of a country perceived by most Indonesians as oppressing Palestinians can be understood as a manifestation of moral loyalty to a community perceived as experiencing injustice. This action is not positioned as a form of discrimination against individual athletes, but rather as an expression of solidarity with a group seen as victims of a protracted conflict. Thus, maintaining community solidarity and preserving historical alliances that have been formed since the era of the anti-colonial struggle are actions that gain moral legitimacy from a particular ethical perspective (Walzer, 1983; Sandel, 2009).

These findings suggest that collective identity and historical solidarity play a significant role in shaping Indonesian society's moral perception of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Therefore, the rejection of Israeli athletes cannot be understood solely as a political or administrative decision, but also as a reflection of the values of solidarity that have become part of the Indonesian nation's moral identity and are consistently upheld in the public sphere and in the country's foreign policy (Prabandari & Darmawan, 2026; Fajriyah & Setiawati, 2025).

### **Moral Sovereignty versus Global Institutional Pressure**

Indonesia's rejection of Israeli athletes can also be understood as an affirmation of the country's moral sovereignty when faced with global institutional norms and pressures. In international sports governance, organizations such as the International Olympic Committee and the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique prioritize the principles of political neutrality, non-discrimination, and the universality of sport as the primary foundations for organizing international competitions. However, the application of these principles often sparks debate when confronted with political and humanitarian conflicts that have strong historical and moral dimensions (International Olympic Committee, 2023; Grix & Lee, 2024).

From a particular ethical perspective, criticism of universalism arises when global standards are applied uniformly without considering the social context, history, and moral experiences lived within a particular community (Dancy, 2004; Walzer, 1983). Therefore, some believe that the demands for neutrality put forward by international sports institutions have the potential to ignore the reality of injustice, historical wounds, and human suffering that underlie a nation's moral judgments. In this context, resistance to global standards is not always interpreted as a rejection of international cooperation, but rather as an effort to maintain moral autonomy in determining actions deemed in accordance with national values.

For Indonesia, support for Palestine has become part of its foreign policy orientation, which is based on the principles of freedom and independence, respect for the right to self-determination, and rejection of all forms of colonialism (Anwar, 2020; Medina et al., 2025). Therefore, when the principle of sporting neutrality is perceived as contradicting long-held moral and political commitments, the state tends to prioritize consistency with values considered more fundamental. Within a particular ethical framework, loyalty to a community's moral identity is held higher than adherence to external norms that do not fully consider the underlying historical and social context (MacIntyre, 2007).

Indonesia's decision to maintain its position despite potential diplomatic and organizational consequences demonstrates an effort to maintain the moral integrity of its foreign policy. This choice reflects the belief that the legitimacy of an action is determined not only by international acceptance but also by its alignment with the values believed in and inherited within the national political community. Therefore, from a particular ethical perspective, the rejection of Israeli athletes can be understood as a manifestation of Indonesia's moral sovereignty in upholding the principles of anti-colonialism, humanitarian solidarity, and consistency in foreign policy, despite facing pressure from global sporting institutions and the risk of losing various advantages as hosts of international competitions (Prabandari & Darmawan, 2026; Forst, 2020).

These findings suggest that the conflict that arose was not solely related to athletes' participation in a sporting competition, but reflected a clash between the moral sovereignty of the state and universal norms developed in global governance. Therefore, this case serves as an example of how particular ethics helps explain why a state chooses to uphold values considered fundamental even though such decisions do not always align with the expectations of international institutions.

### **Manifestation of Particular Ethics in the Decision to Reject Israeli Athletes**

The particular ethics perspective explains that moral values do not stop at the level of normative beliefs, but are manifested in concrete actions that reflect the identity and commitment of a political community (MacIntyre, 2007; Dancy, 2004). In the case of Indonesia, the principles of anti-colonialism, solidarity with Palestine, and the moral sovereignty of the state are not only present as a political narrative, but are manifested in the policy of rejecting the participation of the Israeli delegation in the 2025 World Artistic Gymnastics Championships. This decision shows how the values that live in the national community are translated into public policy when the state faces a dilemma between the demands of international norms and loyalty to the principles it believes in.

### **National Security and Public Order Considerations**

Besides moral and foreign policy considerations, the rejection of the Israeli delegation also relates to national security and public order concerns. The ongoing conflict in Gaza has heightened public sensitivity to various symbols associated with the state of Israel, making the presence of Israeli athletes potentially triggering protests and social tensions that could disrupt the organization of international competitions. In this context, states have an obligation to maintain security stability and prevent disturbances to public order during international events (Collins, 2022).

Several reports also indicated concerns regarding the security arrangements for the Israeli delegation, which required special protection. This situation was seen as potentially creating additional security complications for both organizers and state officials. Therefore, the decision to cancel visas cannot be understood simply as an expression of political stance, but also as an effort to mitigate security risks that could impact national stability and the smooth running of the championships. From a particular ethical perspective, protecting the security of the political community itself is a high-priority moral obligation because it is directly related to the welfare and safety of society (Walzer, 1983; Forst, 2020).

Thus, national security considerations demonstrate that Indonesia's decision was not solely based on solidarity with Palestine, but also on the state's responsibility to maintain public order and protect national interests. This security factor strengthens the argument that the policy resulted from the interplay of interrelated ethical, political, and practical considerations.

Beyond physical security, the potential for disruption to public order is also related to the strong solidarity of the Indonesian people with the Palestinian people. The ongoing humanitarian conflict in Gaza has generated widespread empathy and support from various community groups, religious organizations, and humanitarian agencies in Indonesia. Under these circumstances, the presence of the Israeli delegation has the potential to trigger a social backlash that could disrupt the competition. Therefore, security considerations in this case concern not only the physical protection of participants but also the state's efforts to maintain social stability and public order overall (Bourbeau, 2018; Collins, 2022).

### **Absence of Diplomatic Relations between Indonesia and Israel**

Another manifestation of particular ethics in this case is seen in Indonesia's current position of not having official diplomatic relations with Israel. This policy is part of Indonesia's consistent foreign policy, which since its independence has placed support for the Palestinian struggle as one of the country's moral and diplomatic commitments (Anwar, 2020; Medina et al., 2025).

The absence of formal diplomatic relations creates administrative and political consequences that distinguish Indonesia from many other countries in hosting international events. In the context of sporting events, the issue of granting visas to Israeli delegates is inextricably linked to Indonesia's foreign policy stance, which has historically rejected normalizing relations with Israel until a just settlement for Palestine is reached. Therefore, decisions regarding the participation of Israeli athletes are influenced not only by technical considerations regarding the organization of competitions but also by the country's obligation to maintain consistency in its foreign policy.

Within the framework of particular ethics, fidelity to a community's historical commitments and political identity is an important source of moral legitimacy (MacIntyre, 2007). Thus, Indonesia's policies reflect an effort to maintain consistency between the values espoused in foreign policy and the actions taken in the context of international sport. This demonstrates that state decisions cannot be separated from the moral identity and political history that shape them.

### **National Moral Loyalty as an Ethical Priority**

The denial and cancellation of visas for six Israeli athletes participating in the 2025 World Artistic Gymnastics Championships cannot be understood as merely an administrative immigration decision or a sports policy. This decision is a result of considerations of national security, foreign policy consistency, and long-standing social solidarity within Indonesian society. In this context, the state places domestic security stability, constitutional mandates, and commitment to the Palestinian cause as considerations with significant moral and political relevance (Fajriyah & Setiawati, 2025; Medina et al., 2025).

From a particular ethical perspective, moral obligations are not only determined by

universal principles that apply in general, but also by the values, history, and identity that exist within a particular political community (Dancy, 2004; MacIntyre, 2007). Therefore, Indonesia's decision can be understood as a form of moral loyalty to values that have long been part of its national identity, namely anti-colonialism, human solidarity, and support for the right to self-determination for nations still in conflict and occupation.

Within this framework, national security considerations and the absence of formal diplomatic relations with Israel are not merely isolated technical factors, but rather manifestations of a broader moral commitment. Indonesia views maintaining consistency between constitutional mandates, foreign policy, and public aspirations as part of the state's moral responsibility to the political community it represents. Thus, the actions taken are legitimated not only by practical considerations but also by their alignment with the values entrenched and recognized within Indonesian society (Walzer, 1983; Forst, 2020).

These findings suggest that the Israeli athletes' rejection is more accurately understood as a prioritization of internal moral loyalty stemming from constitutional nationalism, historical solidarity, and the nation's collective identity. From a particular ethical perspective, these sources of legitimacy can be viewed as more pressing than the demands of universal ethics that emphasize the neutrality of international sport. Therefore, this case demonstrates how a state strives to maintain moral integrity and the consistency of its values when confronted with global norms that do not always align with its historical experience and national identity.

### **Implications for National Resilience**

Indonesia's decision to reject Israeli athletes' participation in the 2025 World Artistic Gymnastics Championships not only has consequences for international sports governance but also relates to the dimension of national resilience. From a national resilience perspective, a nation's ability to maintain its values, identity, and socio-political stability is a crucial component of its resilience in the face of the dynamics of the global strategic environment (Bourbeau, 2018; Collins, 2022).

#### **1. Ideological Resilience**

From the aspect of ideological resilience, this policy reflects an effort to uphold the fundamental values contained in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, particularly the principle of rejecting all forms of colonialism and supporting the independence of nations still experiencing oppression. In this context, Indonesia's support for Palestine is not only a foreign policy choice, but also part of ideological consistency rooted in national identity and constitutional values (Anwar, 2020; 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia). Therefore, the policy adopted can be seen as a form of strengthening ideological resilience by maintaining consistency between the nation's fundamental values and government actions in the international arena.

#### **2. Political Resilience**

In terms of political resilience, this decision demonstrates the country's efforts to maintain the consistency of the independent and active foreign policy that has long been the guiding principle of Indonesian diplomacy. Support for the right to self-determination for the Palestinian people has been a relatively stable political position in Indonesia's international relations since independence (Anwar, 2020; Sukma, 2011). This consistency contributes to the government's political legitimacy in the eyes of the

domestic public while strengthening Indonesia's identity as a nation that supports anti-colonialism and international justice. While potentially subject to pressure from global sporting institutions, this policy demonstrates the country's ability to maintain a political orientation deemed in line with the national interest.

### **3. Social Resilience**

From a social resilience perspective, the policy of rejecting Israeli athletes is related to efforts to maintain social cohesion and societal stability amidst high public solidarity with Palestine. Various surveys and social responses indicate that support for the Palestinian struggle enjoys strong legitimacy in Indonesian society, both through religious organizations, humanitarian agencies, and civil society groups (Aswar & Widyrianto, 2025; Fajriyah & Setiawati, 2025). Under these conditions, policies perceived as aligned with the values and aspirations of the majority of society have the potential to strengthen social solidarity and reduce the potential for horizontal conflict that could arise due to the sensitivity of the Israel-Palestine issue. Thus, the aspect of social resilience in this case is not only related to physical security, but also to the community's ability to maintain social integration and collective identity amidst global dynamics.

Overall, these findings suggest that the rejection of Israeli athletes is not only a matter of international sporting ethics but also has implications for Indonesia's ideological, political, and social resilience. Therefore, this policy can be understood as part of the state's efforts to maintain its moral identity and national stability while confronting the demands of universal norms in global sporting governance.

### **4. Particular Ethical Dilemmas in Global Sports Governance**

The rejection of Israeli athletes from the 2025 World Artistic Gymnastics Championships demonstrates a clash between two different sources of moral legitimacy. On the one hand, Indonesia bases its policy on constitutional values, historical solidarity with Palestine, and national moral identity. On the other hand, international sporting institutions emphasize the principles of universality, non-discrimination, and political neutrality as the foundation of global sporting governance (International Olympic Committee, 2023; Loland, 2019).

From a universal ethical perspective, all athletes should have an equal opportunity to participate in competitions without being influenced by political conflicts involving their home countries. This principle aims to maintain sport as an inclusive and discrimination-free space. However, a particular ethical perspective holds that moral decisions cannot be separated from the social context, history, and community identity that underlie them (Dancy, 2004; Walzer, 1983). Therefore, actions deemed appropriate in one community may not be considered appropriate in another community with a different historical experience.

The findings of this study indicate that the conflict that emerged was not one between moral and immoral actions, but rather one between two moral frameworks that both share a legitimate basis. Indonesia derives its legitimacy from its constitutional mandate, humanitarian solidarity, and consistent foreign policy, while the IOC and FIG derive their legitimacy from the universal principles that underpin the international sports system. This explains why resolving such conflicts cannot be achieved through

legal or administrative approaches alone.

The main contribution of this study is to demonstrate that particular ethics provides an important perspective in understanding state decisions that cannot be fully explained by the universalist approach dominant in the international sport governance literature. This study demonstrates that national moral identity can be as powerful a source of legitimacy as global norms. Therefore, the analysis of international sport conflicts needs to consider the interaction between universal norms and particular values that exist within specific political communities in order to explain the more complex dynamics in the relationship between sport, politics, and national resilience (Forst, 2020; Bourbeau, 2018).

##### **5. A Model of Moral Legitimacy Conflict in Global Sports Governance**

Based on the research findings, the conflict that occurred in the case of the rejection of Israeli athletes can be understood as a conflict of moral legitimacy between two different sources of norms. On the one hand, the Olympic Charter represents a universal ethic that emphasizes the principles of non-discrimination, equality, and political neutrality in international sport. On the other hand, Indonesia bases its policies on a particular ethic rooted in the constitutional mandate of anti-colonialism, solidarity with Palestine, and national moral identity. The interaction of these two sources of legitimacy creates a policy dilemma that places the state in a choice between adherence to global norms and consistency with the values vibrant within the national community. In this context, Indonesia's decision demonstrates that particular ethics serves as a basis for moral legitimacy, which then has implications for strengthening national resilience, especially in ideological, political, and social aspects. Thus, this case demonstrates that global sports governance cannot always be understood solely through universal principles, but also needs to consider the historical context, collective identity, and moral values adopted by each country.

This model emphasizes the dynamic nature of the relationship between sports governance and national resilience, where the legitimacy of public policy is shaped through ongoing negotiations between global universal norms and the particular values entrenched within national political communities. The moral legitimacy conflict model demonstrates that international sports policy is the result of the interaction of three key variables: universal sporting norms (the Olympic Charter), domestic moral legitimacy (the constitution and national identity), and national resilience interests. When these three elements are in harmony, international sports governance can proceed without conflict. However, when universal norms conflict with national moral identity, states tend to prioritize sources of legitimacy deemed most fundamental to the sustainability of their political and social systems. In the Indonesian context, legitimacy stemming from constitutional mandates and solidarity with Palestine holds a more dominant position than demands for the universality of international sports.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research demonstrated that the refusal of Israeli athletes from the 2025 World Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Indonesia could not be understood solely as a sporting or administrative policy issue. From a particular ethical perspective, the decision was a

manifestation of moral values embedded within the Indonesian political community, rooted in the constitutional mandate of anti-colonialism, historical solidarity with Palestine, and consistent foreign policy commitments.

The findings indicated that the moral legitimacy of this policy rested on three main pillars: the constitutional mandate and the nation's historical heritage, community solidarity and collective identity, and the state's moral sovereignty in upholding its values when faced with pressure from global institutions. In addition, national security considerations and the absence of formal diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Israel also reinforced this decision.

From a universal ethical perspective, the refusal could be seen as a limitation on the principle of non-discrimination in international sport. However, from a particular ethical perspective, Indonesia's action was a consistent and contextually grounded moral position, and could be understood as an effort to uphold the national social contract, constitutional mandate, and historical solidarity that formed part of the nation's moral identity. Thus, this case reflected a tension between the universal norms of international sport and the particular values embedded within the Indonesian political community.

This study emphasized that the analysis of international sports conflicts required consideration of the historical, social, and moral contexts underlying a country's policies. Theoretically, it demonstrated that particular ethics could serve as an alternative framework for explaining state decisions that could not be fully captured through the dominant universal paradigm in international sports governance. The findings further showed that national moral identity, constitutional mandates, and historical solidarity could function as sources of legitimacy comparable to global norms in public policy formation. Thus, this study enriched the discourse on sports governance by integrating ethical, foreign policy, and national resilience perspectives within a comprehensive analytical framework.

Therefore, international sports organizations were encouraged to develop a more dialogical and context-sensitive approach to local moral considerations, so that universal principles of sport could coexist with the diversity of values present in international society.

Further research is recommended to test this moral legitimacy conflict model in other cases within international sports governance, such as sports boycotts, sanctions against participating countries, and the hosting of mega-sporting events in countries facing political and human rights controversies.

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