

How security is conceived by key decision makers in Indonesia

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This paper aims to examine how security is conceived by key decision makers in Indonesia.¹ In order to achieve the aim, the concept of security is highlighted and the security perceptions that are being conceived are identified and examined. The approach adopted focuses on major internal security issues² based on the perspective of the key decision makers of the governments of Sukarno, Suharto, Habibie, Wahid and Megawati.

It may be argued that all the five Presidents of Indonesia, past and present have been trying to solve the same internal security issues related to multiple crises in economic, political, social and cultural affecting national integration and nation building. These crises are not only compounded by the country's vast and fragmented geography, but also by a very large population and diversity in ethnicity, social, cultures and religion. The resources to govern the country effectively are tightly limited.

The population of the country is about 230 million people, spread across an archipelago of over 17,000 islands (only 6,000 inhabited) with an area of 1,950,000 square kilometres.³ The population is composed of over 400 different ethnic groups with distinct cultures and languages.⁴ They are further divided into five major religious groups: Muslim (89 per cent), Protestant (5 per cent), Roman Catholic (3 per cent), Hindu (2 per cent), and Buddhist (1 per cent).⁵ While, Islam is the most predominant religion; there are areas in which other religions are dominant (for example, Hindu in Bali) or where two religions (for example, Islam and Christian in Sulawesi) are equally represented.

Concept of security: internal and external

The basic concept of security is the 'absence of threats to basic values'.⁶ Traditionally, analyses of security in the international relations context is concentrated on the military dimension. However, a number of contemporary writers have argued for a more comprehensive conception of security. Lippmann considers a nation is not in danger if basic values are not being threatened and can be maintained when it is being challenged.⁷ Booth and Wheeler view security as encompassing all issues at the domestic and international levels that affect the emancipation or interests of the people.⁸ Both of them would go beyond the military threat to encompass threats and dangers affecting the nation. However, according to Buzan, security includes also a range of conditions of existence affected by military, political, economic, societal, and environmental factors.⁹

In summary, the concept of security is not only equated with a nation's capability to defend against external threats but encompasses the concept of internal security. From Indonesia's perspective, based on its experience since independence, security denotes and connotes all aspects of security (internal and external) including ideology, politics, the economy, society, culture and military.

Internal security perspectives

The Indonesian assessment in 1993 was that there would be 'no external threat of major invasion in the next ten to fifteen years' (2003–2008).¹⁰ This security perspective assessed in 1993 is appropriate and consistent with the White Paper, Defence of Indonesia in the 21st Century.¹¹ Presently, the

immediate internal security threats are in the form of transnational terrorism, separatist movements of Aceh and Papua, Islamic radical groups, communal and ethnic conflicts.¹²

During the tenure of Indonesia's first president,¹³ Sukarno, a series of rebellions broke out in the Moluccas (1950), Sulawesi (1957) and West Sumatra (1958).¹⁴ To suppress them, the central government surrendered much of its power to the armed forces. This led President Sukarno to proclaim 'guided democracy'¹⁵ in 1959 and gave the military substantial representation in the cabinet, civil service, and parliament. Hence, during the tenure of Sukarno (eight years), he set about restoring order and embarked on developing the economy, but failed to address the core problems.¹⁶ On 30 September 1965, an attempted coup by the Communist Party of Indonesia failed and General Suharto seized power and forced Sukarno to step down. A new political system known as the New Order emerged in which the military, particularly the Army played the dominant role, which developed into the doctrine of *dwi fungsi* (dual function).¹⁷ The New Order Government¹⁸ or *Pancasila Democracy* was determined to uphold the 1945 Constitution¹⁹ and respect *Pancasila*²⁰ as the state philosophy and ideology.

Under Suharto's New Order, the government had three major imperatives;²¹ first, 'to maintain the sovereignty and unity of the country',²² second, 'to provide political stability as the basis for economic development'; and third, 'to ensure the survival of the New Order Government'. All three are 'interdependent and a threat to any one is considered a threat to others'. The country realised an extraordinary period of economic development²³ and dynamic economic growth rate (GDP) averaging 6 to 8 per cent per annum.²⁴

President Suharto was forced to step down in March 1998, after 32 years of autocratic and unchallenged rule.²⁵ His downfall led to a process of reformation and democratisation. He too failed to address the problem of national integration and nation building. Since then Indonesia has had three consecutive presidents. Suharto's predecessor, B. J. Habibie, was installed in 1998, but soon was removed in an election in 1999. The most significant decision of the entire Habibie presidency was the independence of East Timor.²⁶ It is believed that the decision by President Habibie was without consultation with either the Foreign Minister or the Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief and was then implemented in spite of strong opposition by the armed forces (*Tentera Nasional Indonesia-TNI*).²⁷

President Abdulrahman Wahid stayed in office only for 22 months and was ousted by Parliament in August 2001.²⁸ During his tenure he pushed forward the process of increased democratisation and liberalism. The government of President Wahid, failed to curb the violence (legacy of Suharto's New Order) between ethnic groups, social and religious groups, which posed a serious security threat to national integration and nation building. The clashes between Ambonese Muslims and Christians, between Dayaks and Madurese (in Kalimantan),²⁹ between Sumatran Bataks and Flores Catholics destabilised and embarrassed the democratic government.³⁰ The government has always regarded ethnic, social and religious diversity, (*SARA*: Indonesian acronym — Suku, Antara Ras dan Agama (ethnic group, social group and religion) as one of the major internal security threats.³¹ This threat could lead to the 'balkanisation' of Indonesia. During the Suharto era, *SARA* conflicts were dealt with quickly and ruthlessly. The violence was never allowed to spread.

Now Megawati Soekarnoputri heads a fractious and deeply troubled country. She started her presidency with the announcement of six objectives: 'maintaining national security, continuing reform and democratisation, normalising economic life, upholding law, restoring security and peace, and eradicating corruption, collusion and nepotism, restoring Indonesia's international credibility and preparing for the 2004 general election'.³² Based on the six objectives, the approach adopted is

the same as President Suharto's three imperatives involving the issues of national integration and nation building. Currently, the government of President Megawati is failing to show a strong sense of urgency in dealing with internal security issues.³³

The question is whether Indonesia under Megawati's leadership is heading to an even worsening crisis, in respect to solving the internal security issues. One may argue that it is likely to be 'yes' based on two main indicators. The first is the failure of government in developing policy and the second is the escalation of conflicts in Aceh and Papua.³⁴ Other indicators include 'the continuation of corruption, collusion and nepotism and failure in the state's capacity to uphold basic law and order and internal security'.³⁵ However, looking on the positive aspect on the economy, the efforts exerted by the Megawati's Government has begun to show some encouraging developments. The economic growth (GDP) reached 4 per cent (2003) compared to 2.2 per cent in 2002.³⁶

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, all five presidents, past and present have tried to solve the same problem, but with different approaches. Presidents Sukarno and Suharto adopted the authoritarianism approach and managed to achieve political stability by using the military to maintain the complex mix of order and violence. The facade was one of order, but conflicts endured, and in some regions, intensified for reasons of differences in religion, ethnicity and the legacy of *transmigrasi* policy of Suharto.

After the economic crisis and the downfall of Suharto's New Order, it seems that the reformation, democratisation and liberalisation have not seen much progress in national integration and nation building of Indonesia. The three presidents after Suharto adopted the democracy approach based on the reformation in 1998. One may argue that the approach adopted by all five presidents was to put law and order first and then justice second. It has been recounted, suppression by the use of military force or use of violence was unsuccessful. Justice has to be considered first, owing to the diversity of ethnicity, social, culture and religion (*SARA*). Hence, the 1945 Constitution and the philosophy and ideology of *Pancasila* have to be looked into seriously. It may be one of the causes of the internal security problems.

Internal security issues will continue to be Indonesia's constant concern irrespective of who will be the next president after the 2004 general elections. The people's expectations will become higher in the future. President Megawati's government is seen to have been making some progress in respect to the economy. On the other hand, the Aceh and Papua problems, ethnic, social and religious issues are an irritant and demand political solutions. Currently the threat is real and without serious care could lead to the 'balkanisation' of Indonesia.

Endnotes

1. The key decision markers consist of the executive branch of government: the president, his immediate office and the Cabinet to include the Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs, the Minister of Defence and Home Affairs, the Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief, and the heads of the Armed Forces Strategic Intelligence Agency and the National Intelligence Coordinating Body, and a small group of senior officers from several other governmental and research institutes. See Haseman, JB, 'Security Policy in Indonesia: By Guess, Or By Golly?' A paper prepared for the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies Symposium: Domestic Determinants of Security Policy, Security Institutions and Policy Making Process in the Asia-Pacific Region on 10-11 Jan 2001, Internet, <http://www.apcss.org/Publications/Ocasional%20Papers/OPIndonesia.htm>, Accessed 19 May 2003, pp. 5-6.
2. 'Indonesia's leadership has always identified internal instability as the country's greatest security threat'. The serious security is violence between ethnic, social and religious groups. The other major internal security issues involved separatist groups in Aceh and Papua (Irian Jaya). These two issues pose a great danger to the territorial integrity of Indonesia. Haseman, JB, *ibid.*, p. 2.
3. The World Factbook 2002-Indonesia, Internet, <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/id.html>, Accessed 8 May 2003, pp. 2-5.
4. The ethnic groups comprise of Javanese 45%, Sundanese 14%, and Madurese 7.5% Coastal Malays 7.5% and other 26%. Bahasa Indonesia is the official language of the country.
5. The World Factbook 2002-Indonesia, *loc. cit.*, pp. 2-5.
6. G Evans and J Newnham, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, Penguin Books, London, 1998, p. 490.
7. J Baylis, 'International and Global Security in the Post-Cold War Era' in Baylis, S and Smith, S (eds), *The Globalisation of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 2nd Ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, p. 255.
8. *ibid.*
9. *ibid.*
10. The threat perception was based on Lowry, B, Indonesia Defence Policy and the Indonesian Armed Forces, Canberra Paper No. 99, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, the Australian National University, Canberra, 1993, pp. 9-16 in Lowry, B, 'Indonesia' in Klintworth, G, (eds), *Asia-Pacific Security: Less Uncertainty, New Opportunities?* Martin's Press, New York, 1996, pp. 103-104.
11. In the White Paper, it is assessed that the external traditionally conventional invasion and military aggression from other countries is very unlikely in Defence of Indonesia in the 21st Century, Department of Defence, Republic of Indonesia, http://www.dephan.go.id/buku_putih/ringkasan.htm, Accessed 6 May 2003, pp. 7-11.
12. *ibid.*, p. 11.
13. Sukarno declared independence from the Dutch on 17 August 1945. But independence was not effectively realised until 27 December 1949. Until 1959, Indonesia was a parliamentary democracy and the last democratic elections were held in 1955.
14. The causes of the outbreak were due to the dominance of the Sukarno's government by the Javanese and failure to address the welfare and sociol-economic problems of other ethnic groups. See Vatikiotis, MRJ, *Indonesia Politics Under Suharto, The Rise and fall of the New Order*, 3rd Edition, Routledge London, 1998, p. 101 And also see Dibb, P and Prince, P, 'Indonesia's Grim Outlook', *Orbis*, Fall 2001, pp. 623-624.
15. The Guided Democracy system was more authoritarian. Power was shared between three major power holders, President Sukarno, the army and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). See Anwar, Dewi Fortuna., 'Indonesia: Ketahanan Nasional, Wawasan Nusantara, Hankamrata', in Booth, K. and Trood, R (eds), *Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region*, MacMillan Press Ltd, London, 1999, p. 207; Dibb, P and Prince, P, *ibid.*, p. 624, And also see Ubai Bhanu Singh, Dr., Indonesia's Security Perspective, Strategic Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the IDSA, March 2000 (Vol. XXIII No. 12), Internet, <http://www.idsa-india.org/an-content>, Accessed 5 May 2003, p. 4.
16. Sukarno failed to address the problem of unity through the parliamentary democracy and resorted to authoritarian system. Sukarno left the country with a negative growth rate of 600 per cent inflation and a national debt of over \$US2 billion. See Vatikiotis, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

17. The military's involvement in politics started gradually with the introduction of the Middle Way during President Sukarno in 1958. The concept was modest, however under the New Order; the doctrine was legitimised in that the military dominates all aspects of civilian affairs: a political role as well as the traditional roles of internal security and national defence. See Internal Affairs, Indonesia, Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment SEastAsia, <http://defweb.cbr.defence.gov.au/disgjanex/janes/seasu12/indos070.htm>, Accessed 4 Apr 2003, p. 4, And Anwar, Dewi Fortuna. loc. cit., p. 206; Dibb, P and Prince, P, op. cit., pp. 624–625.
18. The New Order Government was a complex hierarchy of authoritarian institutions designed to curtail political participation and enable Suharto and the military to control society. See Liddle, RW, 'Regime: The New Order' in Emmerson, D.K., (eds), *Indonesia beyond Suharto: Polity, Economy, Society, Transition*, M. E. Sharpe Inc., 1999, p. 40.
19. The 1945 Constitution in Indonesian is known as 'Undang- Undang Dasar (UUD) 1945. 'The Constitution was drafted in haste amid the struggle for Independence and was meant as a temporary document until a new Constitution could be drafted after the revolutionary war'. See Lanti, IG, 'Indonesia, The Year of Continuing Turbulence', *Southeast Asian Affairs 2002*, p. 119.
20. The Pancasila ideology is designed to unite the country by providing an indigenous Indonesian ideology. These values are to promote national resilience. It was a compromised formula to appease those that favoured an Islamic state and those that favoured a more secular nationalism in 1945. The five principles values are: Belief in the One and Only God; Just and Civilised Humanity; the Unity of Indonesia; Democracy Guided by the Inner Wisdom in the Unanimity Arising out of Deliberation amongst Representative; Social Justice for the Whole of the People of Indonesia. See Liddle, R W, loc. cit., p. 40.
21. Lowry, loc. cit., p. 95.
22. During the Suharto New Order in order to achieve unity, the national doctrines: National Defence, National Integration, The Archipelago Concept, National Defence and Security were produced and disseminated to every corner of Indonesia and conducted through indoctrination. See Hasnan Habib, A. 'Repositioning the Archipelago Concept to Bind the Nation Together', *Telstra*, No 66 Juni–Juli 2001, pp. 5–13 and Suryohadiprojo, S., 'Updating the Archipelago Concept to Create National Unity', *Telstra* No 66 Juni–Juli 2001, pp. 17–26.
23. To prepare for economic development, President Suharto's government secured an agreement with creditor countries to reschedule an overseas debt of US\$5 billion. With the recovery of the country's overseas credibility, in 1967, Indonesia succeeded in the formation of a consortium of creditor countries to assist in the economic development. This consortium was known as the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI) and included the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Britain and a number of West-European countries. See Vatikiotis, op. cit., p. 46.
24. RW Liddle, loc. cit., p. 35.
25. J Wanandi, 'Indonesia: A Failed State?' *Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2002, pp. 135–137.
26. Indonesia, The World of Information, *Asia & Pacific Review 1999*, Eighteenth Edition, The Economic and Business Report, pp. 64–65.
27. Haseman, op. cit., p. 6.
28. A lengthy impeachment process involving charges of corruption.
29. An example of ethnic conflict. The indigenous Dayaks killed hundreds of Madurese. They arrived from the island of Madura as part of Suharto's relocation program known as *transmigrasi* policy. It was to solve the problem of overcrowding and to homogenise the population. However, it has created resentment among the local population. The Dayaks felt that they were neglected while the Madurese had become commercially successful. The result was tragic and to some extent further destabilised the Indonesian Government. See Djuli, MN and Jereski, R, 'Prospects for Peace and Indonesia's Survival', *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Spring 2002–Volume IX, issue 1, pp. 36–37.
30. Haseman, op. cit., p. 2.
31. White Paper, Defence of Indonesia in the 21st Century, Department of Defence, Republic of Indonesia, op. cit., Chapter 3, pp. 22–23.
32. B Bando, 'Indonesia: A 'Broken-Backed' State?', *Indonesian Quarterly*, Vol. XXIX/2001, No. 4, p. 334.
33. *ibid.*

34. The problems in these two provinces, Aceh and Papua have different roots and basically stem from the injustices and exploitative policies of the Suharto New Order Government; Djuli, M N and Jereski, R, op. cit., pp. 36–38.
35. Bandoro, loc. cit., p. 335.
36. A Alisjahbana, and C Manning, ‘Survey of Recent Developments’, *Bulletin of Indonesia Economic Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 2002, pp. 227–280.

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