



Security fault lines: Unresolved issues and new challenges

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INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of this issue brief, 'security fault lines' are defined as political cleavages that have the propensity to be expressed violently in extreme conditions. The focus is on the premeditated and systematic use of violence for political ends, while acknowledging that criminality is an inevitable companion of such action. Cathartic outbreaks of violence, such as that following the recent regime change in Indonesia, are mentioned only peripherally, as they derive primarily from frustration and the inability of governments to adapt effectively or quickly enough to changing domestic or international circumstances, rather than from sustained, willful attempts to overthrow a government or split the nation.

The key security fault lines in Indonesia have been religious, ideological, social, racial, ethnic, and regional.¹ Since independence was declared Indonesia has struggled to reconcile the competing tensions inherent in and across these fault lines.² In the midst of the war of independence (1945–49) the nascent state had to combat two internal rebellions: one undertaken by the communists; and another by Darul Islam seeking to establish an Islamic state.

Having achieved independence, Indonesia endured a number of rebellions—many involving mutinous military officers and units—and other conflicts, until the Aceh peace agreement was signed in 2005.³ The annexation and liberation of East Timor was unique because it was never part of the colonial inheritance, nor was it recognised by the United Nations.

The two current intractable fault lines are constituted by Papua and Islamic extremism. No new fault lines are evident but some old ones could become more attractive or be revived. For example, should modernisation not succeed, or not succeed fast enough, or exacerbate structural inequalities, then support might grow for alternatives that could include the adoption of an Islamic state (Sharia Law), populist nationalism, or separatism, or a combination of these potential outcomes. Although it currently appears unlikely, in this context political revival by the army—the only organisation to usurp state power successfully—could not be ruled out.

MILITANT ISLAM

Although 90 per cent of Indonesians profess Islam, adoption of an Islamic state or Islam as the official religion of the state was rejected by the founding fathers, who feared that it would alienate non-Muslims and incite separatist movements.⁴ The Muslim community was also divided on the issue depending on the extent of orthodoxy or syncretism in their adherence to the tenets of the faith.⁵ Consequently, a number of groups resorted to violence to force the adoption of Islamic law, even though a democratic forum for this program existed in the early 1950s.⁶

Darul Islam was the most prominent expression of this type of movement. When its demands for an Islamic state were rejected in 1949 it launched a guerrilla campaign that lasted until its leader, Kartosuwiryo, was captured and executed in 1962. In the early years, defeating Darul Islam was impeded by tensions between the government and the military and sympathisers in the Islamic parliamentary parties who shared its demand for Islamic law.⁷ Nevertheless, in the constitutional debates curtailed by the declaration of Guided Democracy in 1959, Islamic parties could only muster 43 per cent of the vote in the Constituent Assembly for the inclusion of Islamic Law in the constitution. Thereafter, the major Islamic parties were outlawed or corralled during Guided Democracy and the New Order, and after 1998 the major parties abandoned the quest for Islamic law, leaving the field open to smaller, more radical parties.⁸

The internationalisation of Islamic extremism and the broadening of its agenda by some groups to include a Caliphate have added another dimension to the challenge of countering extremism in Muslim communities. Real and perceived injustices at home and abroad combined with the mobilising power of extremist interpretations of the Koran makes a powerful rationale for the use of violence. Advances in social media have also made it easier for such groups to disseminate messages and to conduct operations.

Consequently, although perpetrators of Islamic extremist violence have been suppressed and their doctrinal justifications countered, periodic acts of violence are likely to continue for many years to come. Because of its historical origins in Indonesia, this conclusion is unlikely to be affected by the reduction of US forces in the Middle East and Central Asia or democratisation in these regions.

1 For a recent iteration of this see *Perkembangan Lingkungan Strategis Tahun 2012*, (Lemhannas: Jakarta, April 2012).

2 For a historical perspective on the creation of Indonesian identity and its inherent tensions see R.E. Elson, 'Problems of Identity and Legitimacy for Indonesia's Place in the World', in Anthony Read, Ed., *Indonesia Rising: The Repositioning of Asia's Third Giant*, (Singapore: ISEAS, 2012).

3 See Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, (Cornel: Ithaca, 1988), and *Political Reform in Indonesia after Suharto*, (ISEAS: Singapore, 2010).

4 M.C. Recklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c.1200* Third Edition, (Palgrave: Basingstoke, 2001), p. 262, and Azyumardi Azra, 'Islam, Indonesia and Democracy', *Strategic Review*, vol.1, no.1, August 2011, p. 73-80.

5 Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, (Cornell: Ithaca, 1962), p. 31

6 Personal ambition and regional issues were also interwoven with the declared aims in these revolts.

7 Feith, *The Decline*, p.412.

8 Mietzner, *Military Politics, Islam and the State in Indonesia*, (ISEAS: Singapore, 2009), p. 341.

SEPARATISM

There have only been two serious and prolonged secessionist movements in Indonesia: one in Aceh, the other in Papua. An earlier separatist revolt in Maluku was quickly defeated, although ineffectual remnants persisted until the early 1960s.⁹ This issue was revived when Maluku exploded in sectarian violence after the fall of Suharto, but it was a peripheral phenomenon raised for political advantage by both sides. After the fall of Suharto there were murmurings of possible independence movements, but the advent of democracy and decentralisation of government functions and revenue along with the proliferation of regional governments quickly defused these.¹⁰

ACEH

The revolt in Aceh erupted in 1953, seeking the adoption of Shari'a law, respect for local leaders, and recognition of Aceh as a Province. Compromises eventually resulted in a settlement by the early 1960s, but the centralising impulse of the New Order and its failure to involve the locals in resource exploitation sparked a renewed rebellion in 1976 demanding independence.¹¹

The rebellion by the Aceh Liberation Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, or GAM) was quickly contained and the leaders forced into exile, but the movement adapted and endured despite repressive measures taken by the New Order.¹² When Suharto resigned in 1998 the rebels and their sympathisers thought their hour had come and reinvigorated the campaign for independence. However, when in 2005 it became evident that Indonesian society was not going to disintegrate in Suharto's absence; that GAM could not win militarily, and that the international community was not coming to its assistance; under the pall of the Tsunami, GAM accepted the compromise of regional autonomy that Suharto had not been prepared to offer.¹³

9 Ramadhan KH, A.E., *Kawilarang: Untuk Sang Merah Putih*, (Pustaka Sinar Harapan: Jakarta, 1988), p.241.

10 The resource-rich provinces of Riau and East Kalimantan were mentioned but Riau was quickly split into two provinces, and North Kalimantan was split from East Kalimantan in 2013.

11 For a full account of the revolt in Aceh see Edward Aspinall, *Islam and Nation: Separatist Rebellion in Aceh, Indonesia*, (Stanford University Press: Stanford, 2009).

12 Robin Simanullang, *Sutiyoso The Field General: Totalitas Prajurit Para Komando*, (Pustaka Tokoh Indonesia: Jakarta, 2013), pp.153–65 gives a first-hand account of the hunt for the GAM leadership in 1978.

13 Aceh, like Jogjakarta, previously had special status but no meaningful autonomy.

PAPUA

Papua is the only other case where a serious long-term, but fragmented independence movement emerged and continues to wage a low-key, persistent struggle for independence.¹⁴ Papua was part of the Netherlands East Indies, but its accession to the new state of Indonesia was delayed by Dutch politics. The Dutch finally surrendered the region when Sukarno, under pressure from the PKI and the military, mounted a concerted diplomatic offensive backed by the infiltration of guerrilla forces and the threat of invasion. Pressure from the United States was crucial in averting military confrontation. Dutch victory would have discredited the Indonesian military and advanced the cause of the PKI; while Dutch defeat would have further demoralised a NATO ally.

The agreement brokered by the United States involved face-saving measures for the Dutch that included interim nominal United Nations administration for six months before Indonesia assumed governmental control in May 1963, and a plebiscite to be held within five years to gauge Papuan support for incorporation within Indonesia. The 1969 plebiscite produced an almost unanimous vote for incorporation from the representative body set up for that purpose. Although all parties, except Indonesia, admitted that the Act of Free Choice had not been free, the results were accepted by the UN and the international community.

The newly arrived Indonesian administration swept aside Papuan political and economic interests and the military plundered the province, setting the repressive standard for ensuing years.¹⁵ Small-scale armed resistance quickly emerged and has continued sporadically at a low scale ever since. There is no doubt that an act of free choice would result in almost unanimous support from the Papuans for independence, but Indonesia has repeatedly rejected this option. Successive governments have attempted to mollify the Papuans in various ways, none of which have succeeded.¹⁶

The Papuans do not possess the political cohesion to mount an effective challenge to Indonesian authority; their small numbers, divided allegiances and geographic fragmentation make it unlikely that they will be successful in the future.¹⁷ Meanwhile, the proportion of migrants to Papua is increasing, which inevitably and simultaneously weakens the political and economic clout of the Papuans and strengthens their sense of exclusion, neglect, and racial and religious identity.¹⁸ This can only compound the challenge of pacifying Papuan grievances.¹⁹

14 See Robin Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War: The Guerilla Struggle in Irian Jaya*, (Allen & Unwin: North Sydney, 1985), and various International Crisis Group reports for the background and current assessments of the problems of managing Papua.

15 Jusuf Wanandi, *Shades of Grey: A Political Memoir of Modern Indonesia 1965–1998*, (Equinox: Jakarta, 2012), p. 99.

16 Eddie Walsh, 'Peace and stability in Papua requires a comprehensive policy approach', *Strategic Review*, vol.2, no.2, April-June 2012, pp. 68–77.

17 For a description of the effects of political fragmentation see 'Carving Up Papua: More Districts, More Trouble', *IPAC Report* No. 3, Jakarta, 9 October 2013.

18 Walsh, 'Peace and stability in Papua requires a comprehensive policy approach', p. 72.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 73.

Consequently, it is unlikely that Indonesia will be capable of eliminating periodic bouts of armed resistance; it faces the continuing challenge of managing the modernisation of Papua in a way that will incorporate Papuan political, economic and social aspirations and perhaps blunt the demand for independence.²⁰ While this conflict in itself is unlikely to threaten national unity, it is a continuing reminder of the tensions inherent in Indonesia's construction of nationhood, and diminishes its international credentials accordingly.

CATHARTIC VIOLENCE

Cathartic violence occurs intermittently across the archipelago, but by definition it is localised and generally short-lived. In a limited number of cases, such as Poso, unresolved tensions simmer and explode periodically.²¹ Such circumstances often arise from seemingly minor incidents such as accidents, the eviction of squatters, fights between individuals over rents, gambling, or access to women, but then take on larger dimensions because of underlying ethnic or religious tensions or conflicting economic interests resulting from land disputes, access to surface mining resources, electoral competition, or other forms of economic and social inequality. In many cases national political and economic interests are engaged and the police and military are compromised.

Individually such incidents do not represent a direct challenge to the state unless their frequency and intensity is sufficient to worry investors or undermine the government's legitimacy.²² The issuing of Presidential Instruction Number 2 of 2013 relating to the management of communal disturbances is an indication that such incidents have reached this threshold, especially in the lead-up to the 2014 elections, and that better leadership and coordination is needed to deal with such incidents and their causes.

TNI

The Indonesian National Armed Forces (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia* – TNI) has been a key political actor since the revolution and the only organisation to usurp the authority of the state successfully. It conducted a staged withdrawal from formal politics between 1998 and 2004, but continues to play an informal political role and has yet to complete the transition to full democratic control.²³ It also maintains a legislated supporting role in internal security and counter-terrorism under Police direction.

20 For proposals in this regard, see Bambang Darmono, 'Solving Papua's problems', *Strategic Review*, vol.2, no.2, April–June 2012, pp. 78–84; see 'Otsus Plus: The Debate over Enhanced Special Autonomy for Papua', IPAC Report No. 4, Jakarta, 25 November 2013.

21 The tensions in Poso have also been exacerbated by its use as a haven for terrorist training or terrorists on the run, see 'Weak, Therefore Violent: The Mujahidin of Western Indonesia', IPAC Report No. 5, Jakarta, 2 December 2013.

22 The Wahid Institute reported that there were 274 incidents of religious intolerance in 2012 compared to 121 cases in 2009. 'Public blames Yudhoyono for rising religious intolerance', *The Jakarta Post*, 11 November 2013.

23 Mietzner, *Military Politics, Islam, and the State in Indonesia*, p. 380; and Crouch, *Political Reform in Indonesia after Suharto*, p. 177.

Issuance of the presidential instruction mentioned above was necessitated by ineffective political and institutional leadership and coordination in pre-empting and overcoming incidents of violent political or social unrest. It was also made necessary, in part, by the refusal of parliament over several years to pass a draft bill on national security designed to outline the division of responsibilities between the various departments, levels of government, and agencies for maintaining national security. The bill has been rejected by community groups fearful that it allows the army to return to national politics; and it has also been rejected by the police, who fear that the army will try to usurp its responsibility for internal security.

The purposes of the bill could be achieved by identifying shortcomings in existing legislation and instituting specific amendments, rather than by pushing for an umbrella law. However, delays in passing the bill are as much about competition for resources – public and private – between the police and the military as they are about fears of a political revival by the army.²⁴ Until this problem is resolved and the funding for both forces is provided solely by the state, fundamental reform of the police and the military will remain stalled.

THE FUTURE

In their book 'Why Nations Fail', Acemoglu and Robinson posit that it is the absence of inclusive political and economic institutions that entrenches poverty and tyranny.²⁵ Their thesis is that plural inclusive political and economic structures of power, accompanied by effective government, are essential to fostering the 'creative destruction' that unleashes the genius of the people to create and sustain prosperity. They warn that the predictive power of their thesis is limited because of the variability of 'small differences' and 'contingencies'. The book is not without its critics, but it has not been substantively rebutted and for the purposes of this issue brief its thesis will be used to explore where Indonesia stands in this regard, and what its current condition might tell us about its future prospects for sustaining peace and security.

Indonesia began its journey back to democracy in 1998 and has recovered from the 1997–8 Asian Financial Crisis, posting growth rates of over six per cent in recent years. However, it confronts a number of obstacles that it will need to overcome before it can be said have created sustainable and inclusive political and economic institutions supported by effective government.

24 Passage of the draft law was also complicated by the inclusion of provision for establishing a National Security Council. It should have been the subject of a separate bill or administrative arrangement.

25 Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*, (Profile Books: London, 2012).

Access to politics remains restricted by the way in which political parties function as personal fiefdoms or private companies, rather than as open organisations reliant upon membership in which aspiring leaders can emerge based on merit.²⁶ The source of party finances is often unclear; becoming a party candidate and running for election requires resources that are often obtained with strings attached. The only way such debts can be repaid is through corruption or by supporting policies inimical to the public interest.²⁷ On the positive side, such political parties need to maintain broad geographic representation, which restricts their ability to represent particular sectional interests and forces them to adopt relatively centrist policies.²⁸

Economic institutions also continue to exhibit traces of their past reliance on resource and wealth extraction rather than seeking to establish a sustainable economic environment. In general terms the economy comprises a large state enterprise sector, large Chinese conglomerates, large indigenous conglomerates, a mixed small and medium business sector, and a broad micro informal and subsistence farming sector. Only the first three have decisive political impact, although the other sectors rely upon political connections, especially outside Jakarta, and the micro informal sector constitutes an index of those living on the margins.

State enterprises retain many active business functions that create opportunities to syphon off funds – either directly or through out-sourcing arrangements – for the benefit of individuals or political parties. Although the Indonesian Chinese community represents less than four per cent of the population, it is over represented in the large private sector. The advent of democracy has seen most of the restrictions on Indonesian Chinese cultural and religious life lifted, but its economic dominance feeds economic nationalism and contributes to the retention of 141 state enterprises, many of which are inefficient loss-making entities that oblige Chinese businesses to pay protection money to the police, military, politicians, and other state agencies.²⁹

As with the rest of the business sector, indigenous business conglomerates were badly affected by the Asian Economic Crisis, but more especially by the loss of political patronage when Suharto was forced from office. Many of these businesses have since been revived or restructured and have established new political patronage networks linking the elite through political parties, the bureaucracy, the judiciary, state enterprises, and the security services.

The Corruption Eradication Commission (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi* – KPK) has shone a light on many of these illicit practices and jailed a number of offenders in senior positions of power.³⁰ However, although an anti-corruption strategy was released in December 2012, it has so far had little impact on what is an endemic problem.³¹

A telling cipher for the myriad deficiencies in the political and economic spheres is that members of the TNI are not subject to civil law for civil offences, are not subject to investigation by the KPK, and are effectively immune to charges of abuse of human rights. Unsurprisingly, this bastion of the authoritarian past will not become subject to recent democratising norms until the military is fully funded by the state, freeing it from the necessity of competing with the police and others to obtain illicit funding, and closing the gap between what the state provides and what its members think they need.³² Although the TNI no longer operates formal business structures beyond those associated with its cooperatives, many of its members maintain additional sources of income, some of which are illicit and hidden, or complicitly shared to preclude exposure.

Apart from tensions arising from these transitional obstacles, there are a number of contingent factors that could cause a breakdown of social order; some of these are beyond human control, such as natural cataclysms and pandemics, and others are embedded in the social structure, or could arise as a consequence of modernisation.

Fortunately, Indonesian Islam is overwhelmingly Sunni: as a consequence intra-Muslim violence is not a major fault line. Nonetheless, the violence inflicted on its small minorities is a measure of continuing intolerance, political cynicism, and ineffective law enforcement. In the absence of challenges to domestic Islam there is little impetus for the Islamic community to unite. It can also afford to be tolerant of other minorities, although this is more often observed in the breach than in the observance.³³

26 A recent court ruling relating to the allocation of votes within parties might help to loosen the grip of party bosses.

27 Mahfud MD, a 2014 presidential hopeful, has described the process of political recruitment as being based on 'dirty politics', 'Pemimpin Indonesia Lahir Dari Sistem Transaksional', *Antaranews*, 21 January 2013.

28 Jon Fraenkel and Edward Aspinall, 'Comparing Across Regions: Parties and Political Systems in Indonesia and the Pacific Islands', *CDI Policy Papers on Political Governance*, 2013/02, (ANU: Canberra, 2013).

29 'Laba bersih 141 BUMN tidak capai target', *Antaranews*, 28 December 2012.

30 Since 2002, 'At least 360 Indonesians jailed for corruption: VP', *The Jakarta Post*, 31 October 2013.

31 'Indonesia ranking 118 negara bebas korupsi', *Antaranews*, 9 December 2013.

32 General Moeldoko surprised many when he freely disclosed his personal wealth to be about \$3.6 million in parliamentary hearings examining his suitability to be promoted to chief of the TNI in 2013. This included contributions from businesses during the New Order arranged by one of his former superiors; 'Selamat Datang, Panglima Tajir', *Tempo*, 2 September 2013.

33 'Indonesia: Defying the State', *International Crisis Group Asia Brief No. 138*, Jakarta/Brussels, 30 August 2012.

Should economic modernisation falter, or fail to meet expectations fast enough, or fail to breakdown glaring inequalities for whatever reason, then the political reaction could be to seek alternatives.³⁴ Economic nationalism continues to have some attraction across the political spectrum, despite grudging surrender to a more liberal trading and investment climate since the beginning of the New Order. Although it will be difficult for any political party or presidential candidate to claim ownership of economic nationalism, some will try forcing others to follow.³⁵ In the absence of class-based parties it is unlikely that a leftist party of the Hugo Chavez variety will arise, but economic nationalism could be combined with calls for a more Islamic agenda, or nationalist parties could claim the mantle of both.

Separatism could be revived either by rebellion or, as Robert Cribb has canvassed, by Java declaring independence from the rest of Indonesia.³⁶ Cribb was not suggesting that the latter option is imminent, but was outlining the costs and benefits of running a geographically fragmented and racially and ethnically diverse empire and the conditions under which elites might decide that the costs are not worth the benefits. There are no signs of this eventuating and there are no signs, apart from Papua and possibly Aceh, of a revival of historically based or new separatist movements.³⁷

At first glance Indonesia's geographic fragmentation and ethnic diversity appears to make it a prime candidate for separatist movements, but this is illusory. Indonesia's strength is that it has only one large geographically confined ethnic group, the Javanese, located in Central and East Java (41 per cent of the population). The next largest is the Sundanese of West Java (15 per cent). All the other large islands comprise substantial numbers of much smaller ethnic groups. Consequently, although no other group has the strength to compete with the Javanese, their geographic concentration, despite domestic migration, means that the Javanese need to give due quarter to all the minorities if Indonesia is to remain united.

None of the separatist movements to date have had any real prospect of success, and in all cases emerged as a consequence of the failure of the central government to appreciate the political and economic interests of the regions concerned, rather than from any innate passion to break away.

34 For example, a Centre for Strategic and International Studies economist has warned of increasing disparities and relatively low employment creation despite high growth rates: 'Pande Radja Silalahi, *Pertumbuhan Semu*', *Suara Karya Online*, 4 March 2013.

35 For example, the Deputy Chairman of the Regional Representatives Council (DPD) has urged the government to restrict foreign ownership in the mining industry: 'Government told to restrict foreign ownership in mining industry', *The Jakarta Post*, 20 February 2013.

36 Robert Cribb, 'Independence for Java? New National Projects for an Old Empire', in Grayson Lloyd and Shannon Smith (eds.), *Indonesia Today: Challenges of History*, (ISEAS: Singapore, 2001), pp. 298–307.

37 The International Crisis Group has cautioned against complacency in Aceh. 'How will Partai Aceh Govern?', *Tempo*, 19 April 2012. For the challenges in Papua see 'Indonesia: Dynamics of Violence in Papua', *International Crisis Group Asia Report No.232*, Jakarta/Brussels, 9 August 2012.

The most prominent racial cleavage in Indonesia has been that of the Indonesian Chinese. They have not initiated violence, but have been the victims of it when larger political fault lines have arisen over political power, or economic rent, or both.³⁸ Rarely has anyone been brought to account in these instances. This fault line is and will continue to have an impact on Indonesia's modernisation for several reasons: as political eunuchs the Indonesian Chinese possess little power to change the overall political and economic arrangements of the country. They are therefore forced into alliance with the existing rent-seeking elites, further weakening the impetus for reform.

There is no indication that generational tensions, urbanization, or labour militancy will produce major fault lines in themselves, but they could give rise to occasional episodes of cathartic violence and add to other pressures promoting political reform or political alternatives. The use of social media could increase the frequency and intensity of these events, but it is equally likely that people will become more discriminating and cautious in responding to such incitement, and governments more adept at countering it.³⁹

Indonesia's fate depends on the extent to which the current political stasis can be attributed to either structure or leadership. An example of how effective leadership could challenge the status quo is the recent political renaissance in Jakarta, where the new gubernatorial team elected in 2012 has opened the budget and contracts to public scrutiny and greatly accelerated improvements in public administration, social services, and public works. Whether this reformative zeal can be implemented nationwide has yet to be seen, but it will inevitably encounter resistance.

Perhaps the best measure of when Indonesia has completed its democratic consolidation is not when power can be handed over peacefully after free and fair elections, which has happened, but when the government can subject the TNI to legal redress for civil offences, open it to investigation by the KPK, and end its de facto immunity from prosecution for contemporary, if not past, human rights abuses. That can only occur when the military is totally funded by the government and the justice sector is judged to be effective, fair, and impartial. Until that time there is always the potential for the siren call of the authoritarian past to be heard again.

In conclusion, Indonesia's time might have come and the security fault lines of the past relegated to the dustbin of history. However, reinvigorating the democratic reform agenda, managing Papua, and containing terrorism will be continuing challenges. Until Indonesia completes its democratic transition and provides the services that open and sustain inclusive political and economic institutions, the potential for various forms of civil unrest, including violent fringes accompanied by the resurgence of authoritarian impulses, are possibilities that cannot be ignored.

38 See Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996–1999*, (University of Hawaii Press: Honolulu, 2006) for analysis of the ambiguous status of Chinese-Indonesians and the origins of violence against them.

39 David Clemente, 'Compelled to control: conflicting visions of the future of cyberspace', (ASPI: Canberra, Special Report, October 2013) discusses various views on the utility and control of cyberspace.

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