



# ASIA MAIOR

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## **Asia in 2022: The impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on local crises**

**Edited by**  
**Michelguglielmo Torri**  
**Filippo Boni**  
**Diego Maiorano**

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**viella**

A large, intricate mandala pattern in a light orange color, located in the bottom right corner of the page. It features complex, symmetrical geometric and organic shapes, resembling a stylized flower or a traditional Indian mandala.

CENTRO STUDI PER I POPOLI EXTRA-EUROPEI “CESARE BONACOSSA” - UNIVERSITÀ DI PAVIA

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The Journal of the Italian think tank on Asia founded by Giorgio Borsa in 1989  
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INDONESIA 2019-2022: THE AUTHORITARIAN TURN AS LEITMOTIF OF  
PRESIDENT JOKOWI'S SECOND TERM

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*Now approaching the last year of his second and last presidential term (2019-2024) Indonesia's businessman president, Joko Widodo (Jokowi), is becoming increasingly pragmatic in his political objectives. His goal of achieving high economic growth has led him to adopt policies that sacrifice democratic principles for immediate financial gain. At the same time, his cooptation of his main political rival during the 2019 presidential election, former general Prabowo Subianto, as his defense minister has deflected potential opposition and increased Jokowi's political power. Such successful cooptation has also brought the Indonesian parliament under Jokowi's full control thus enabling him to push through national laws which support his economic agenda. Here the goal of attracting foreign direct investment looms large and recent legislative initiatives such as the revision of the Indonesian criminal code and the new omnibus law on job creation have highlighted these priorities. The President's harsh reaction to the criticisms articulated by civil society organizations and student activists reflects a deepening authoritarian tendency, already highlighted by observers of Indonesian politics at the end of Jokowi's first presidential term in 2018-19. The present article considers the validity of this analysis, in part by setting Indonesia's authoritarian «turn» in a broader historical context. We ask fundamental questions about the viability of democracy and liberalism within the underlying political processes at work in the post-independence Indonesia. We look in particular at the making and unmaking of western political initiatives aimed at transforming the country into a functioning democracy following the fall of the former dictator, Suharto, in May 1998. Finally, we consider the increasingly desperate moves by Jokowi as his presidency draws to its close to ensure the continuation of his political legacy and pragmatic policies under his elected successor.*

KEYWORDS – Indonesia; Jokowi; authoritarian democracy; liberalism; pragmatism.

## 1. Introduction

Indonesia's seventh president, Jokowi (Joko Widodo, born Surakarta 1961) is now coming to the end of his second five-year presidential term (2019-24).<sup>1</sup> However, instead of cruising to a triumphal conclusion of his ten-year incumbency, a number of events have recently occurred which have shed a troubling light on his leadership, management style and the inner workings of his administration. Two events in particular, both involving the notoriously corrupt Indonesian National Police (*Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia*), reflect the fragility of law enforcement and said National Police's lack of a duty of care for ordinary citizens.

The first is a murder case. It involves a high-ranking police officer, Inspector-General Ferdy Sambo (born 1973). He is accused of murdering his 27-year-old adjutant, Police Brigadier Nofriansyah Yosua Hutabarat (born 1994), in the Inspector-General's own residence in East Jakarta on 8 July 2022. At first blush, this seems a simple murder case. But the assassination of the young Yosua Hutabarat has wide ramifications. In the first instance, it blew the lid on a complex corruption scandal. This involves the very highest echelons of the Indonesian National Police and the wildly popular online betting business of which sections of the police force are implicated. The scandal also brings the whole institution of the national police and its corrupt practices into public view. What has been revealed to date is very damaging [*Tempo* 2022, 28 August pp. 62-66].

The second event, which also involved the country's police force, was the Kanjuruhan Football Stadium disaster in Malang, East Java, on 1 October 2022. In the second worst football tragedy ever,<sup>2</sup> 135 people, many of them women and children, lost their lives, and 583 others were injured, when pandemonium broke out, in the packed spectator stands, after police fired multiple rounds of teargas into the overcapacity crowd (42,000 had crowded into stands built to hold just 38,000). The incident happened just after 3,000 angry local supporters of the losing home team, *Arema*, had swarmed onto the pitch to chase after players and officials from the opposing *Persibaya* (Surabaya) side, whose 3-2 match win had been deemed to have been fixed by a sporting mafia in which the Indonesian National Police are heavily involved [*Tempo* 2022, 16 October, pp. 59-61].

1. The possibility that the Indonesian constitution might be changed to allow Jokowi to contest elections for a third time is discussed below in Section 3.3. Changes to Indonesia's constitutional charter are rare with the last made in 2002. This included capping the presidential limits at two terms to prevent a repeat of President Suharto's rule when he remained in office for 32 years. See further Moktar 2022.

2. The worst was at the National Stadium (Estadio Nacional) in Lima, Peru, on 24 May 1964, when 328 died and 500 were injured after police fired teargas into the crowd following an on-pitch invasion by aggrieved home fans.



The combination of these two tragic events, coming so close together, casts a poor light on the integrity of a key national institution – the national police force. But they also raise serious questions about the sincerity of Jokowi's 2019 campaign pledge to reform Indonesia's security apparatus and strengthen his administration's grip on domestic protection.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, for those outside Indonesia who watched the almost impeccable Indonesian hosting of the 15-16 November 2022 G-20 Summit in Bali, and the seamless security provided by Indonesian police and associated paramilitary units for the world leaders at the Nusa Dua Bali Beach Resort, the irony was inescapable. How come these leaders were so efficiently guarded, when the self-same state police force, which had ensured their round-the-clock protection, had so singularly failed to protect the 42,000 ordinary citizens of Indonesia who had gathered at the Kanjuruhan Stadium to watch a football match just six weeks earlier? There seemed to be two weights and two measures at work here.

This seemingly contradictory picture of Jokowi's leadership reminds us of the complex and volatile nature of politics in Indonesia. The present article takes this volatility and complexity as its starting point and provides a review of the first three years of Jokowi's second presidential term (2019-24), covering the period from 20 October 2019 to 31 December 2022. It looks at Jokowi's successes and failures in leading the nation through the many challenges of these three years, starting with the ever-changing currents of domestic politics. It then considers the unexpected economic impact of COVID-19, the global uncertainties caused by Russia's 24 February 2022 invasion of Ukraine and the unfolding cataclysm of climate change.

Given that previous scholars such as David Bouchier [2015], Elena Valdameri [2017, 2018] and Vedi Hadiz [2017] have all argued that Indonesia has been drifting toward authoritarianism for the best part of a decade since 2014, this article will take their argument as its starting point. However, we need to enter a caveat. While we (the present authors) are minded to confirm this tendency, we argue that Indonesia's authoritarian turn can only be understood by delving deeper into the complex historical roots which have fed this rightward drift and understand some of the key drivers at work in Indonesian politics and society today. Jokowi's second term in office cannot be seen in isolation. The wider historical context must constantly be kept in mind.

The present article is divided into three parts, the first part is an analysis of internal policy, followed by a second and third part which consider the impact of economic and foreign policies respectively. A concluding section looks at Indonesia's political prospects as the country prepares to enter the decisive presidential election year of 2024.

3. Strengthening of the rule of law ('ensuring security and justice for all'), and police reform ('to [re]gain public trust') were put forward as the sixth and seventh of nine 'missions' for Jokowi's 2019 presidential poll. See Heriyanto 2018.

## 2. *Internal policy*

### 2.1 *The pragmatist president*

The coming to power of Jokowi as president in 2014 sparked new hope amongst millions across the nation that under his leadership they would see an improvement in their lives. Such hopes were fed by portrayals of the new President in social media as a «man of the people» – down-to-earth, simple, hard-working and close to ordinary folk. Born into a family of very modest means in the ancient royal capital city of Surakarta, Jokowi was perceived as a leader who got things done. This was evidenced, his supporters pointed out, in his successful implementation of wide-ranging infrastructural improvements which have transformed the cityscape of his native Surakarta during his period as mayor between 2005-2012. At the time of his move to Jakarta in October 2012, his achievement had earned him the title of Third Best Mayor – after Bilbao (Spain) and Perth (Western Australia) – in the 2012 World Mayor competition, the official citation praising his achievement in Surakarta for combatting corruption and turning what had been a crime-infested city into a regional centre of art and culture [Can 2013]. In September 2012, with his running mate and successor, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok, in post, 2014-2017), he won the Jakarta governorship. where he served just two years (2012-2014) before becoming President in October 2014. In Indonesia's sprawling capital city, home to over 10 million people, many of whom live in squalid slum conditions, Jokowi made his mark as a hands-on governor. Eschewing the privileges of office, he made it his habit to get out of his air-conditioned office and go into the poorest urban communities (*kampung*) to see and experience at first hand the living conditions of the capital city's slum dwellers, albeit always accompanied by a team of photographers and sympathetic journalists. As an outward mark of his commitment as a people's governor, he swapped his epauletted governor's uniform for a simple white shirt with rolled up sleeves, drill trousers and sneakers. This Harun al-Rashid<sup>4</sup> technique of appearing incognito in the most unexpected places, referred to in Javanese as «blusukan» (going into small and narrow streets), became Jokowi's hallmark as Jakarta governor.

Jokowi's image was also greatly enhanced by his skilful use of the social media (*sosmed*), through media savvy supporters known as «buzzers». They amplify his messages and celebrate his achievements. His popularity as a hands-on governor and now president rests heavily on his buzzers' social

4. Fifth Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad (r. 786-809), who inaugurated what is known as the 'Islamic Golden Age'. As Caliph, he became famous for his incognito appearances in Baghdad which enabled him to witness at first hand his subjects' living conditions.

media feeds. A modern version of Vance Packard's *Hidden Persuaders* [1957]<sup>5</sup> the *sosmed* industry has perfected the art of manipulating popular perceptions and capturing the imagination of the masses. In the past two decades, it has become a massively important platform for communication in Indonesia and around the world. Jokowi's popularity and high public profile are both dependent on it. His image as a leader for the common people and his performance as a hands-on mayor and governor, both helped him win the presidency by a slim majority as a candidate of the people in 2014 and 2019. He even captured the imagination of those versed in Javanese folklore as a *satrio piningit* or «hidden knight».

Jokowi's first period as the president (2014-2019) was marked by his ambitious agenda to develop the nation's infrastructure – in particular highways and rail links – to connect and integrate his country. His achievement in linking Java's two main cities by toll road mirrored that of the first great highway builder, Marshal Herman Willem Daendels (Governor-General 1808-1811), Napoleon's appointee, whose trans-Java post road (*postweg*), stretching nearly 1,000 kilometres from Merak in the Sunda Strait to Panarukan in Java's Eastern Salient, created a new infrastructural backbone for Indonesia's central island [Carey 2013]. Jokowi also initially prioritized what he labelled the «poros maritim» (maritime pivot), namely the revival of Indonesia's past glory as a major maritime state based on trading connections between the ports and harbour towns of the principal islands encircling the shallow and navigable Java Sea. Unfortunately, Jokowi lacked the capital resources to implement this grand design and it was gradually abandoned. The same fate threatens another mega project – the high-speed «bullet train» covering the 142 kilometres between the capital Jakarta and Bandung, the administrative hub of West Java. 40% financed by China, it was started in January 2016 and was originally due to open in early 2019, but is now US\$ 3 billion over budget and four years behind schedule. Ironically, its economic rationale has been destroyed by another of Jokowi's ambitious mega projects: the move of the Indonesian capital from Jakarta to East Kalimantan [Strangio 2022]. But he did fulfil one of his other promises. This was his completion of the 800-kilometre Jakarta-Surabaya toll road in December 2018. Long planned by previous presidents since the fall of Suharto in May 1998, the project had never been properly implemented until Jokowi's first term.

Popularly known as the reformation era or *reformasi*, the period following the fall of the Suharto dictatorship began with high expectations that a more democratic Indonesia might be realised. Although brief, the seventeen months of Ir B.J. Habibie's (21 May 1998-20 October 1999) transitional government was crucial here. It ushered in a number of important political

5. Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* is a classic examination of the psychoanalytical techniques employed by the advertising industry in manipulating the thoughts and feelings of the masses.

changes, three of which were especially important. The first was the freedom to form political parties, albeit one which did not include reviving the long banned Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). This immediately turned Indonesia into a multiparty political system. But one with shallow democratic foundations given that the new parties were not based on ideologies and electoral programs but rather on personalities and transactional – money – politics. The second was the granting of autonomy to district-level governments or *kabupaten*. This reform dismantled the highly centralised system of government inherited from the Dutch colonial state or Netherlands Indies (1816-1942) and honed during the 32 years of Suharto's dictatorship (1966-98). The third was the ratification of international labour conventions, the most important of which was the 1948 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (ratified on 9 June 1998), which opened the door to the establishment of free trades unions [ILO 2024].

Reformists also began to amend the constitution. Salient here was the placing of a limit of two five-year terms on the tenure of a president, ending the possibility that presidents could extend their rule indefinitely, which had occurred under both Sukarno (in office 1945-67) and Suharto (in office 1967-98). This reform was further enhanced in 2004 when the president, vice-president and all other political-cum-administrative offices (mayor, district [*bupati*] and subdistrict heads [*camat*]) were made elective. In 2004, a former general, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (born 1949; in office 2004-14), became the first directly elected president. Vital government institutions were also created to support democracy and human rights, such as the Constitutional Court, and the Corruption Eradication Commission (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi* or KPK), both established in 2003.<sup>6</sup>

B.J. Habibie's short, but legislatively productive, tenure as president was followed by another brief incumbency. This, however, was altogether more tumultuous. The presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid (1940-2009; in office 1999-2001), or Gus Dur, as he was popularly known,<sup>7</sup> brought to power a public intellectual and Islamic pluralist extraordinary. Even today, Wahid is still celebrated as the liberator of Indonesia's minorities, especially the economically powerful Chinese community. But he was an erratic president suffering from serious ill-health due to a stroke in the early 1990s. This had left him almost blind and confined to a wheelchair. Although leader of the country's largest grassroots Muslim Organization, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the Renaissance of the Ulama (founded 1926), Gus Dur was ultimately brought down by his own reformist colleagues, notably his Vice-President, Megawati Soekarnoputri and the Speaker of the People's Consultative

6. The Constitutional Court on 13 August 2003 and the KPK on 29 December 2003.

7. «Gus» is an abbreviation for the title «Bagus», roughly equivalent to the English title «Sir» or «Honourable», used to address male children of respectable and well-born families in Java.

Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, MPR), Amien Rais (in office 1999-2004). His political demise reflected the schism and fragmentation of Indonesia's political elites in the post-Suharto era. Gus Dur's replacement was his Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri. She served out the remainder of his five-year term, namely, the years 2001-2004. A politician forged in the brutalities of the late New Order period (1966-98), Megawati had held out courageously as head of her Indonesian Democratic Party (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia)<sup>8</sup> against the pressures of Suharto's dictatorial rule. This had enhanced her political standing originally based on her father-daughter relationship with Indonesia's founder-president, Sukarno (1901-1970). Unfortunately, her three-year administration saw a democratic 'recession' with the intensification of the Indonesian government's struggle against the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM) in Aceh, and a spike in the number of political prisoners accused of «insulting» the President. But a number of reforms were passed during her presidency. The most salient of these, as we have seen, was the new direct election law of 2004 for office holders.

In this relatively short six-year period (1998-2004), when Indonesia transited from autocracy to democracy, a number of international agencies provided financial support and technical assistance to state and non-state actors. The focus was on creating institutions which could enhance democracy and human rights, both conceived along Western lines. Paradoxically, these reflected the values of Europe not Indonesia's own pre-colonial feudal past, still less the egalitarian and democratic values of Indonesia's early 20<sup>th</sup>-century anti-colonial movement. The euphoria of a successful popular movement-cum-mass mobilization, which had toppled an authoritarian government, was strongly embedded in the minds of civil society leaders and activists. Yet, what these leaders and activists imagined as real political reform was far removed from actuality. The role of international agencies in providing assistance in creating new democratic institutions during the political transition was instrumental here. Looked at from today's vantage point, there is a feeling amongst those civil society activists who helped Jokowi win the presidency twice that something of great value has been lost.<sup>9</sup> It is as though authoritarianism and illiberalism

8. Post-15 February 1999, Partai Demokrasi-Perjuangan, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle.

9. Exactly what this is tends to be harder to quantify since it has to do with a perceived connection between Indonesia and the 18<sup>th</sup>-century European enlightenment. That there was once such a connection is indisputable: the British interim administration's (1811-16) abolition of judicial torture and 'cruel and unusual punishments', in particular mutilation (the amputation of arms under Islamic law) and the pitting of suspected criminals against wild animals (tigers) is a case in point, see Carey 1980:99; 2014:149-50; 2022: xxii-xxiii. But whether these enlightenment reforms established an enduring legacy of respect for human rights is moot given the horrors of the 1965-66 anti-communist massacres and their aftermath.

really are the Indonesian default setting and the bedrock of its core values and traditions. But are they?

The truth is that genuine reform and democratic consolidation proved to be an impossible achievement in the period following the demise of Suharto and his oppressive New Order (1966-98). As Haryadi and Peter Carey have written:

Although the watchword of the 1999 and 2004 elections was «reform» – a term that gave its name to the whole post-Suharto transition period in Indonesia – none of the leading contenders for the presidency was a reformer at heart. The drastic political events which culminated in Suharto's May 1998 downfall and the country's first free elections in forty-four years [the last had been in 1955] were anchored in a huge national movement born out of decades of frustration and bitterness. No one leader could lay claim to this emotional charge [Haryadi and Carey 2014, p. 146].

While the so-called reformists assumed democratic consolidation would be achieved, this was a chimera: as early as 2004 two leading scholars, Richard Robison and Vedi Hadiz, had already pointed out that Indonesian democracy had been hijacked by the «bad guys», capitalists, corruptors, gang bosses and political fixers, with a pervasive politico-business oligarchy controlling Indonesian democratic processes. Robison and Hadiz meticulously showed the intricate processes of the reconstitution and reorganisation of predatory forms of power in co-opting new governance and forging new alliances [Robison and Hadiz 2004, especially chs. 8 and 9, pp. 187-252]. There was also intense infighting amongst members of the Indonesian elite and their supposedly «reformist» political parties. Nowhere was this more evident than in the fractured relationship between Megawati and her former Coordinating Minister of Politics and Security Affairs turned political rival, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY). His newly formed personal party, Partai Demokrat (Democratic Party, founded in 2001), later riven by corruption scandals, went head-to-head with Megawati's likewise corrupt, Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan (PDI-P, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle), the largest vote winner at the polls during the 2004 election. This left a legacy of bitterness, which took years to dissipate. However, both Megawati and SBY were soon eclipsed by the rising star of the former Surakarta mayor, Jokowi.

Whereas neither Megawati nor SBY could be described as hands-on presidents, still less social media sensations, Jokowi's rising popularity, as we have seen, owed much to popular perceptions that he could make real changes to people's lives. A latter-day *Ratu Adil*, a «Just King» of Javanese prophetic legend, as mayor of Surakarta Jokowi created a city which was not only more liveable for the middle class, but also for lower social strata such as bank clerks, market women, street-food sellers and day labourers.

Jokowi was seen as a leader for the common people or «*wong cilik*», a Javanese term which refers to Indonesian citizens of distinctly modest means. The standard measurement of poverty, however, is nearly always based on incomplete statistical data due to widespread under-reporting of household incomes. The number of people officially classified as living under the poverty line is therefore understandably a compromise magic number which hides the real economic conditions of the rural and urban poor. In March 2022, for example, it was reported that the number of people living under the United Nations absolute poverty line of US\$ 1.90 a day had decreased to 9.54% (26.16 million people). The report, however, indicated that while the number of people living in absolute poverty had dropped under Jokowi, income inequality remained stubbornly high [*The Jakarta Post* 2022, 19 July]. There is a paradox here. Since Suharto's New Order (1966-98), when economic growth became the government's primary goal, eradicating poverty was always the policy planners' main concern, while the widening income distribution gap between socio-economic classes was deemed irrelevant and never seriously addressed.

As a cadre of Megawati's PDI-P, a political party seen by its leadership as a «reform» party representing a nationalist and secular ideology, Jokowi was expected to uplift the condition of the Indonesian working class or proletariat. But in Indonesia, that class has a special name – *Marhaen*. Pak [«Father»] Marhaen was the eponymous subsistence farmer whom Sukarno, Indonesia's founding president, met on his tiny third-of-a-hectare rice field plot just outside Bandung in the early 1920s when he was studying at the Institut Teknologi Bandung (Bandung Technical Institute, ITB). In Sukarno's view, Pak Marhaen represented the majority of Indonesians who eked out a bare subsistence on a small parcel of land with a hoe (*cangkul*) to produce sufficient agricultural product to support their marginal life [Giebels 2021].<sup>10</sup> Megawati as current PDI-P head and Sukarno's daughter, portrays her political grouping as a party of the *wong cilik* with *Marhaenism* as its political ideology [Aditya 2020].

10. Lambert Giebels, in his *Soekarno: Biografi 1901-1950* (Jakarta: Grasindo, 2001), p. 59, recounts that Sukarno supposedly conversed with Pak Marhaen as follows: «Who owns this field that is being worked on by the farmer? The farmer answers that it is his own land, as well as the hoe he uses, the rice he harvests later and the simple hut on the side of the rice field. He did not hire anyone, said the farmer, and he did not work for anyone. Soekarno [Sukarno] realized that this small farmer, although very poor, could be considered as an independent businessman and this also applies to the satay [kebab] seller, the fishermen, the person who carried the goods to the dock, and many more. He asked the name of the farmer. 'Marhaen', he answered. Thus, at that time the name was born for a theory which always inspired Soekarno [Sukarno's] political ideology which he would convincingly submit: 'Our tens of thousands of workers don't work for others and other people don't work for them [...] Marhaenism is Indonesian socialism in practice'».

However, this vision of the relationship between the political elite and the masses so carefully crafted by Sukarno in his books and speeches, like *Marhaen and Proletariat*, which he delivered to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his Partai Nasional Indonesia on 3 July 1957, has long been a fiction. Suharto's repressive New Order regime finally buried it. The elite and the masses are now living in parallel universes in Indonesia. Mass organizations as a bridge between the elites and the masses were liquidated by Suharto in 1965. They were seen as part of the *onderbouw* (support base) of the Indonesian Communist Party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* or PKI), along with other left-ist parties like Tan Malaka's (1897-1949) Partai Murba (Partai Musyawarah Rakyat Banyak, 1948-77), and were destroyed. Since 1965, the Indonesian national economy has been transformed and is now increasingly dominated by foreign and domestically owned capital. Many of these are multinational companies involved in highly polluting extractive industries such as mining and palm-oil plantations where most of the value-added activities in terms of processing and refining is done outside Indonesia – a throwback to the late Dutch colonial period (1816-1942), when a brief spurt of industrialization during the blockade years of the First World War (1914-18) had been speedily reversed at the onset of peace [Booth 1998, pp. 34-44, 148-53]. The result of this corporatization of the Indonesian economy has been a widening income gap between the rich few and the economically struggling masses. In 2019, Indonesia's Gini Coefficient rating (61.8), which measures income inequality, is in the lowest 70<sup>th</sup> percentile (70 most unequal countries) in the world just ahead of Russia [World Economics 2019].

During Jokowi's 2014 presidential campaign one of his key straplines was the so-called *Revolusi Mental* (Mental Revolution). This was used as shorthand to describe a revolutionary change in people's mindsets, which was deemed to be a *sine qua non* for creating a just and prosperous new Indonesian society – a Pancasila society. Pancasila are the five philosophical principles of the Indonesian nation, namely: (1) Belief in the One and Only God; (2) Just and civilized humanity; (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives, (5) Social justice for all of the people of Indonesia.

Jokowi, who was born in 1961 and thus still a child when Suharto came to power in 1965-66, is often described as the first Indonesian president without political connections to Suharto's New Order. That may be, but if there is a quality specifically associated with Jokowi it is perhaps his experience as a businessman. The owner of a successful furniture company in his native Surakarta, his business career may have given him the ability to calculate politics on a cost-benefit analysis. In his view, politics is no different from doing business. Negotiations and transactions are the basic building blocks. The logic of any given political act must stem from rational choices and be firmly rooted in the ideology of pragmatism. Jokowi is a no-nonsense pragmatist president.



## 2.2. *The threat of Islamic politics*

In the aftermath of Ahok (Basuki Tjahaja Purnama's) defeat in the highly divisive final round of the Jakarta gubernatorial election in April 2017, Jokowi realized that religion, specifically the strident Islamicism or political Islam aimed at prioritising the rights of the Muslim majority and the establishment of a *syariah* (Islamic law) state in Indonesia, is now a crucial component of Indonesian politics. Religious sentiments of the Islamic right were successfully mobilized by Anies Baswedan's (born 1969) camp to secure crucial votes on that decisive gubernatorial election day in April 2017. Using his cost-benefit analysis, in the view of the present authors, Jokowi calculated that the influence of religious sentiments on Islamic voters should be accommodated when he made his run for his second term in 2019. The strength of Islamic mobilization in the so-called 212 movement, which took its name from the mass turn out for the *Aksi Damai Bela Islam* (Action for the Peaceful Defence of Islam) demonstration in downtown Jakarta on 2 December 2016, convinced Jokowi that he would have to take the Islamic lobby on board. This was one of the reasons why Jokowi chose the conservative Islamic cleric (*alim*), Ma'ruf Amin (born 1943), as his running mate in 2019.

Then there is the stormy petrel, Habib Muhammad Riziek bin Hussein Shihab (born 1965). Usually referred to as «Habib Riziek»,<sup>11</sup> he is a cleric of Arab descent who created (1998) and headed up the Islamic Defenders Front (*Front Pembela Islam*, FPI) until its 2019 dissolution by the Jokowi government. A notorious Islamic paramilitary group created as a political device during the early Reform period and strongly associated with Wahhabism, FPI brought home to Jokowi the dangers posed by the Islamicist mobilization during his second-term presidential candidacy. The rising influence of political Islam also resulted from the elimination of the left and the rise of secular politics after 1965. This had opened the door to the politics of cultural and ethnic identity following the banning of class-based politics grounded on Marxist-Leninist ideology. Since 1965, the nascent middle class in Indonesia, at that time still small and still largely defined by its bureaucratic office-holding status as latter-day *priyayi* (civil servants/government employees), developed its sense of identity in a cultural rather than a political context. This was often expressed as a politics of identity.

Jokowi's decision to take Ma'ruf Amin, a conservative Muslim *alim* and head of the Indonesian Ulema Council (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, MUI) (in office, 2015-19),<sup>12</sup> as his running mate during his second term reflected his pragmatist politics. While the Islamic political parties traditionally per-

11. In Bahasa Indonesia, «Habib» is an honorific to address a Muslim scholar of a Sayyid (descendant of the Prophet Muhammad) family.

12. Established on 25 July 1975, MUI is an umbrella organization of Islamic clergy created by Suharto to co-opt Islamic leaders and involve them as supporters of his New Order (1966-98) regime.

formed badly as vote winners in general elections, Islamic vigilante groups like the FPI and conservative organizations like MUI provided space for non-political party Islamic voters to be mobilized ahead of elections. This opened the door for more radical Islamicist political agendas and resulted in mass support being thrown behind presidential candidates, like former General Prabowo Subianto, Jokowi's main opponent in the April 2019 presidential election, who was deemed more sympathetic to the Islamicist cause. Jokowi's decision to go with the MUI head as vice-president headed off this challenge. As such it could be seen as a master stroke. Yet, in the same breath, Jokowi clearly disappointed the civil society groups who had previously supported him. They now perceived him as a turncoat, willing to embrace the politics of identity as his strategy to win the 2019 presidential election. In the run-up to the election, some reformist activist remnants, critical academics, and intellectuals with close links to civil society movements began to abandon his cause. Jokowi was now perceived by such civil society critics to be no longer a representative of the ordinary people [Baker 2016].

### *2.3. The reform of Indonesia's criminal code, 6 December 2022*

This perception has been seemingly confirmed by the deeply illiberal and repressive reform of Indonesia's criminal code which was passed in Indonesia's parliament on 6 December 2022, with Jokowi's approval.

Indonesia inherited its legal system from Dutch colonial rule, and successive governments have wanted to reform it and make it more relevant to today's Indonesia. Indeed, the current draft was presented to the parliament three years ago in September 2019, but it provoked such widespread protests that it was shelved on the advice of Jokowi. The committee charged with redrafting gave out that the revised code has been altered to take into account some public concerns. At the same time, they stressed that the new law would not take effect for three years. Although, in principle, challenges can be mounted in the constitutional court, this is questioned by Eva Kusuma Sundari (born 1965). A former member of the Indonesian parliament and board member for ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights, Sundari was dismissive of this claim. She stated:

We have made great strides towards democracy since the downfall of Suharto's dictatorship, and the new criminal code threatens to reverse that progress, [...] the government and House [of Representatives] claim to have opened room for input from civil society, but that was evidently just for the sake of appearances, as they have largely ignored objections from academics, experts and human rights defenders [Sundari, as quoted in Head 2022].

Overseas, the new law has been labelled tongue-in-cheek the «Bali Bonking Ban» because those accused of having extra-marital relations face up to a year in jail if caught having sex or cohabiting with someone they

are not married to. But the «sex ban» is not the most disturbing change for many Indonesians. They rightly point out that, although foreigners are bound by the law as much as Indonesians, the stipulation that you cannot be prosecuted for extramarital sex or cohabitation unless a complaint is filed by a child, parent or spouse of the accused makes it highly unlikely that tourists will be affected. Instead, it is of far greater significance to Indonesia's LGBTQ+ community, who cannot marry, and fear the law will be used against them. Others have highlighted the risk that this provision will be abused in personal vendettas against estranged family members, or by people with ultra-conservative or religious beliefs, who cannot accept the lifestyle preferences of their children.

But it is the other provisions of the new code which really alarm those concerned with civil liberties. The new code, for example, makes it a crime punishable by up to three years in prison to insult the president or vice-president if the two top office-holders file a complaint. It also criminalises holding protests without permission. At the same time, human rights groups have identified 17 articles which they believe threaten the freedoms won since the return to democratic rule in the 1990s. Evi Mariani Sofian, (born 1976) of the public journalism group Project Multatuli, has voiced her concern about the threat to journalists from article 263 of the new code. This stipulates a four-year prison sentence for anyone found guilty of spreading news which is suspected of being false and causing public disturbances. This is similar to the «hate-sowing articles (*haatzaai-artikelen*)» of the old Dutch Penal Code (*Wetboek van Strafrecht*, articles 153 bis and 161) which ensnared many Indonesian nationalists, including Sukarno, in criminal proceedings during the period when Indonesia was still a Dutch colony [Paget 1975, pp.3, 71, 102]. Mariani described the code as «a siege against freedom of expression», and said that now «every avenue of dissent has criminal charges lurking» [Mariani as quoted in Head 2022].

For others, the inclusion of what is called «living law» gives greatest concern. This originated in the idea that customary law, known as *adat*, which still governs some aspects of life in rural areas of Indonesia, should be incorporated to prevent conflicts between it and the official criminal code. This, in the view of Andreas Harsono (born 1965), Indonesia's leading researcher for Human Rights Watch, is the most dangerous part of the new criminal code. It did not exist in the old code. He fears that this «living law» could be used to implement narrow religious or customary practices such as female genital mutilation, child marriage, mandatory hijab rules or polygamy [Harsono, as quoted in Head 2022]. It could also be used for land grabbing. Indonesia's largest indigenous peoples' coalition, the Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago (AMAN), is protesting against this article because they see it as taking away their own traditional dispute mechanisms [AMAN, as quoted in Head 2022]. Finally, the influence of conservative Islamic groups is evident in the widening of the blasphemy

provisions in the code from one to six and the outlawing of both apostasy (i.e. the abandonment of the Islamic faith) and activities aimed at conversion from one faith to another (i.e. Islam to Christianity).

#### 2.4. *The historical context*

If Jokowi's sanctioning of such an illiberal code puts a question mark on his integrity what does this tell us about his statesmanship and image as president of modern Indonesia? A detour back in time to the moment when the republic was created in 1945 may help shed light on the roots of Indonesia's predicament as a «half-finished nation» [Lane 2008].

The Indonesian Republic was created in an emergency situation. The days prior to the proclamation of *merdeka* (independence) on 17 August 1945 were nail-bitingly tense. Moreover, the abrupt changes, which followed the sudden Japanese surrender (15 August 1945), created a political vacuum. This provided room for a group of young revolutionary nationalists or *pemuda* (youth activists) to demand an immediate declaration of independence. The way in which these youth leaders acted during the days of crisis which followed Japan's capitulation, their 24-hour kidnapping of Sukarno and Hatta and their successful pressuring of these leaders into making an immediate independence proclamation has passed into legend.

Over the months preceding the declaration of independence, the older generation nationalist leaders – representing different political factions – conducted a series of meetings to prepare a state constitution for their imagined nation. These deliberations, which took place under the auspices of the Japanese military occupation government (*Gunseikan*), were both intense and contentious. But there was no meeting of minds on the ideological foundations of the new state. Then the Japanese suddenly surrendered, bringing the preparatory meetings to a shuddering halt, with the draft constitution still unfinished. It was agreed in the final meeting that the constitution – known as the UUD (*Undang-Undang Dasar* or Basic Constitutional Law) of 1945 – would be temporary and would later be revised. The UUD 1945 is therefore an unfinished constitution and leaves many important issues unresolved.

The constitution opens with a preamble that elaborates the five principles (*Pancasila*). Here the notion of *persatuan* rather than *kesatuan* is incorporated. Both words derive from the Indonesian *satu*, meaning «one». But, while *persatuan* means the process of *becoming* one, *kesatuan* means the condition of *being* one. Put another way, *persatuan* emphasizes the process of unification (of a highly diverse nation), whereas *kesatuan* emphasizes homogeneity (a done deal). While *persatuan* implies the importance of differences and heterogeneity, *kesatuan* highlights the concepts of oneness and uniformity, leaving little room for dissent.

The engagement of the first generation of nationalist leaders with civic nationalism rather than ethnic nationalism underscores their commit-

ment to the enhancement of political diversity rather than uniformity. Such nationalist feelings imply an appreciation of the *federal idea* as the basis for state formation, despite the state's unitary structures.<sup>13</sup> The political abruptness surrounding the birth of the Indonesian state heavily influenced the provisional character of the Indonesian constitution.<sup>14</sup> Although the Dutch were successful in reclaiming a large part of the territory through military action during the period 1947-49, they failed to establish a federal state. Their attempts to do so triggered a strong reaction from the masses. This expressed itself as a commitment to unity and unitarism – the political doctrine advocating the creation of a unitary state. This was the beginning of a majority view that Indonesia had to be formed as a unitary state (*Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia*, NKRI) rather than as a federal entity which its size and diversity might suggest would be more appropriate.

A fragile political agreement between a strong nationalist group (the Republicans) and those advocating federalism (Federalists) was temporarily formed. The Republicans asserted that the formation of a federal state was only a Dutch strategy to weaken the nationalist movement. This argument was used to explain their rejection of a federal state format for the young republic. An uprising of Royal Dutch Netherlands Indies army (KNIL) forces in Makassar in April 1950 [Kahin 1952, p. 457] and sporadic pro-Dutch protests in Medan led to the collapse of the agreement. On 17 August 1950, the deal between the Republicans and the so-called Federalists ended. The nationalist leaders had decided unilaterally to form a unitary state rather than continue with the federal constitution.

The perception among Indonesian nationalist leaders that the Federal State of Indonesia had been a ruse by the Dutch to recolonize the country brought the notion of a federal Indonesia into disrepute. The strong negative impression lingered long after the last Dutch colonial official had departed. This negativity presents major difficulties for those who advocate the federal state format in Indonesia today.<sup>15</sup>

The idea of *persatuan* implied in the preamble of the constitution subsequently shifted towards the idea of *kesatuan*, in which the notion of

13. The term «federal idea» is borrowed from Robert Rae (2003). Rae argues that the «federal idea» provides more room for discussion while the «ism» in federalism has a way of limiting debate and understanding.

14. According to the study by Schiller (1955), the process of formation of Indonesia's federal state, the first constitution of the Republic of Indonesia was based on the federal constitution of the United States of America.

15. See the comprehensive study by A. Arthur Schiller [1955], especially its epilogue (pp 337-342), which deals with the Indonesian experiment with federalism in 1947-50. On the rejection of the federal idea, an analysis by Hans Antlöv [2000, pp 263-284] is particularly interesting. Antlöv persuasively argues that the failure of federalism in Indonesia has little to do with the qualities of the federal idea as such, but rather «because it was a colonial scheme supported by an outdated local aristocracy, and because it was enmeshed in Cold War considerations» [*Ibid.*, pp. 279-280].

unity is underscored and differences avoided. The format of the Indonesian state moved from the Republic of Indonesia (1945-1946) to the Federal State of Indonesia (1947-1949) and finally to the Unitary State of Indonesia (*Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia*, NKRI, 1950-present). 17 August 1950 was thus a defining moment in the history of state formation in Indonesia.

In 1955, a decade after its hasty declaration of independence, Indonesia's first general election was held. This was to elect peoples' representatives to the new parliament whose most important task was to draft a new constitution. However, the long process of political debate and deliberation among MPs, combined with the pressure of regional rebellions, created feelings of distrust towards civilian politicians amongst the military elite. This, in turn, pushed the President to issue a decree on 5 July 1959, abolishing parliament and returning to the first constitution of Indonesia [Ricklefs 1981, especially ch. 18].

Indonesia then entered its long period of authoritarian government which only ended with the fall of Suharto on 21 May 1998.<sup>16</sup> In those years military influence over the nation became ubiquitous. This remains the case to this day when the «territorial» structure of the military command, which enables the army to shadow the civilian administration from the most highly placed provincial governor down the lowliest village head, has yet to be fully dismantled. This shadow military administration concept had its origins in the doctrine of *dwifungsi* (dual function) during Suharto's New Order, when the Indonesian armed forces (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia*, TNI) were deemed to have both military and civilian responsibilities [Crouch 1978; Haryadi and Carey 2014, p.147].

The tensions between the military and the Communist Party of Indonesia (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI) resulted in the tragic loss of life following the failed «coup» of 1 October 1965. Blamed on the PKI, this resulted in an anti-communist bloodbath orchestrated by the Indonesian army in which perhaps as many as a million died and a further 500-750,000 were imprisoned, many for lengthy periods. This forced then-President Sukarno into a corner and opened the door for Suharto to become the new president. With the 1945 constitution still in place, Suharto's authoritarian regime rapidly established itself. Based on a strong centralist bureaucratic polity, economic developmentalism, technocracy and military leadership, the new regime intensified the unitary state format.

The young Republic, born out of a strong spirit of civic nationalism, which had promised to enhance plurality and accommodate ethnic and re-

16. A polemic between Herbert Feith (1965) and Harry Benda (1964) on the «decline» of constitutional democracy in Indonesia is revealing. Their academic debate on Indonesian politics in the late 1950s is still very relevant today (2022), even though the political constellations are completely different and infinitely more complex.

ligious diversity, now confronted fatal new challenges to realise its ideals. As successive governments have discovered after the demise of Suharto's authoritarian regime, national unity is continuously compromised by the fragmentation of the Indonesian elite. Given the failure to root Pancasila deeply enough as the state ideology, only Islam would seem to offer a credible alternative with sufficient contending power and ideology to bind the nation. But this would likely spell national disintegration.

## 2.5. *The disillusionment of democratic politics*

Indonesian politics in the post-Suharto era, turbocharged by interim President B.J. Habibie's decentralization law of April 1999, have given birth to a different order in which local citizens and regions can articulate their political aspirations with greater freedom than ever before. State authority is no longer in the hands of a dictator-president, still less an omniscient central government. Instead, it has been dispersed into diverse political organizations, most notably the regional parliaments (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah*, DPRD) and local governments or *Pemerintah Daerah* (Pemda) based on districts (*kabupaten*) rather than whole provinces.

A series of amendments to the state constitution (UUD) have recently been ratified. These provide the basis for the creation of a new political system, which, in theory, should have a better chance of accommodating people's needs rather than just serving the priorities of the ruling elites. The new political system is influenced by a strong drive for regional decentralization which began with Habibie's April 1999 reforms. This has quickened local enthusiasms for greater decentralization, a process witnessed by the creation of a number of new districts and even provinces since 1999,<sup>17</sup> a development not properly foreseen by the principal designer of the new law, Regional Autonomy Minister (*Menteri Negara Otonomi Daerah*, 1999-2000), Professor Dr M. Ryaas Rasyid (born 1949) [Rasyid 2010]. But there is also a downside to these new regional autonomy laws as the drawing of new territorial boundaries can be seen as a process of nation-state fragmentation. In this process of «disintegration from within», the ethno-religio-demographic dynamic has become a crucial driver [Tirtosudarmo 2021, pp. 207-218]. The potential for political manipulation is also very considerable.

Following the collapse of Suharto's New Order regime in 1998, the urge to form social and political organizations arose amongst the educated indigenous population. These new organizations were often based on

17. The new provinces created since 1999 are North Maluku (1999). Banten (2000), Bangka-Belitung Islands (2000), Gorontalo (2000), Riau Islands (2002), West Papua (2003), West Sulawesi (2004), North Kalimantan (2012), and the four new provinces hewn out of West Papua in 2022: namely, Central Papua, Highland Papua, South Papua and Southwest Papua.

identity politics. For long a contending source of political power since colonial times, the resurgence of Islamic grassroots organizations like the Tarbiyah (literally the «education and upbringing of the people») discussion groups [Fuad 2021, pp. pp.187-207] challenged the civic principles of the nation-state. Indonesian Islam, once described by sociologist Wim Wertheim [1980], as a majority religion with a minority complex, now began to shed this complex and flex its majoritarian muscles. This phenomenon was already evident in the New Order period following the annihilation of the PKI and its roughly 20 million supporters. In recent years, mass grassroots mobilization led by small but fanatical Muslim groups, most notably the FPI (Front Pembela Islam or Islamic Defenders Front), have notched up a number of successes. In April 2017, during the second round of the Jakarta gubernatorial election, they were instrumental in the defeat of the Chinese Christian Jakarta Governor, Ahok, at the hands of Anies Baswedan, an Indonesian Muslim of Hadhrami Arab descent. A similar strategy was attempted, but failed, in the 2019 presidential election when Jokowi's main contender, former general Prabowo Subianto, attempted to mobilise the Islamic vote against the sitting President.

The recent mobilization of Islam to serve populist politics points to an inherent contradiction in the position of Indonesia as a nation with a common – non-ethnic and non-religious – Pancasila self. Furthermore, its encroachment into various state institutions like the state intelligence agency, the *Badan Intelijen Negara* (BIN), and the Public Prosecution Service (*Kejaksaan Republik Indonesia*) highlights the dangers of political Islam expanding its control into the social and institutional fabric of the nation. The resurgence of Islam as the embodiment of a majority religion in a country, Indonesia, with substantial non-Muslim minorities, most notably the 10.72% (28.6 million) Christian population,<sup>18</sup> has the potential to rupture the nation-state. As we have seen, the re-election of Jokowi in 2019 was bought at high cost because he had to take a conservative Muslim cleric as his running mate. This created a paradox, whereby Jokowi's re-election relied on a profoundly illiberal strategy to confront illiberalism [Hadiz 2017]. This is seen by the President's critics as a sign of increasing authoritarianism. But such an explanation is too glib. It misses the dimension of discontinuities and ruptures in the construction of nation-state. If unchecked, Islamic mobilization could lead to a major political schism in Indonesia's modern history in the near future.

18. In 2021, an estimated 7.60% of Indonesia's 276.4 million population were classified as Protestant (20.25 million) and 3.12% Catholic (8.33 million), the latter mainly situated in Eastern Indonesia, in particular the province of Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) and Maluku Utara, where the Iberian (Portuguese and Spanish) missionaries had left a strong legacy. Indonesia has the fourth largest Christian population in Asia after China, the Philippines, and India.



Ruth McVey, in her passionate obituary of her long-time colleague, Ben Anderson (1936-2015), reflected on Ben's famous book *Imagined Communities* [1983], noting that:

[...] there was a fundamental conflict between these two concepts. 'Nation' meant community, a sense of togetherness, a striving towards the realization of a common self. 'State', however, was about control and the entrenchment of a hierarchy. In the nation-state that replaced royal dominion as the legitimate source of rule, the state seized the collective dreams of community [...] and pressed them into slogans legitimizing its power. [McVey 2016, p. 19].

Contemplating this tension between nation and state we can discern at least four political discontinuities and ruptures which shaped Indonesia as a nation-state since 1945. These forced the young Republic to reinvent itself at four key junctures. The first was Indonesia's proclamation as an independent country from Western colonization in 1945 and the removal of the Dutch following Indonesia's War of Independence (1945-49); the second was the shift from parliamentary to Guided Democracy in 1957-59 under Sukarno; the third was the brutal transition to the army-dominated New Order regime in 1966; the last came after the fall of Suharto on 21 May 1998 when autocracy was replaced by *Reformasi*. In each case the future represented a sharp break with the past. All were draining and painful episodes for the young nation [Haryadi and Carey 2014, p. 152]. The tragic events of 1965 were especially heart-wrenching, marking as they did the beginning of a long period of authoritarianism, state-sanctioned violence and the rise of so-called «repressive developmentalist» regimes. After more than two decades have passed since the outwardly tumultuous but internally smooth (palace politics) transfer of power from Suharto to his Vice-President, B.J. Habibie, on 21 May 1998, we are only now beginning to realise what really happened: May 1998 was not a democratic revolution in the true sense of the term but the continuation of political control by other means. Power remained firmly in the hands of the old-established elites. Today, as we come to the end of Jokowi's second and final presidential term a widespread disillusionment with democracy seems to have set in. A feeling of *déjà vu* hangs heavy in the air.

### 3. *Economic policy*

#### 3.1. *All the President's men (and some women)*

As a businessman Jokowi knows full well the strong connection of economy and politics. Brought up in a secular nationalistic political milieu (his family were PNI and then post-1973 PDI-P supporters), the future president was strongly inspired by the first Indonesian president, Sukarno. As mayor,

governor and president, Jokowi has been a workaholic with an obsession for turning abstract plans into concrete realities. He is also a master of the art of how to get things done by working with other people. While none of the previous Indonesian presidents had business backgrounds, President Jokowi is a stand-out. For him, business and the economy are what makes the world go round. In his view, Indonesia is a giant corporation with the president as its CEO. Economic policy is thus key to achieving his ambitious political agenda of turning Indonesia into an economic and political global power.

The appointment of Sri Mulyani Indrawati (born 1962) as Minister of Finance in July 2016, half way through Jokowi's first term (2014-19), tells us much about his priorities. It shows the trust Jokowi places in Sri Mulyani – who was ranked best Finance Minister in the Asia Pacific by *FinanceAsia* magazine in 2019 [Fitriyanti 2019]<sup>19</sup> – as the only person who can manage the economy and preserve the nation's financial stability. This, Jokowi rightly sees, is the backbone for the realization of his political agenda. A graduate of the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign) and Visiting Professor at the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University (2000-2002), Sri Mulyani served as Minister of Finance under SBY (in office, 2005-10) and spent many years with the World Bank where she rose to become the Bank's Managing Director (in office, 2010-2016).<sup>20</sup> This has given her an unparalleled knowledge of managing both Indonesia's domestic economy and international finance, making her a very suitable partner for Jokowi to implement his economic policies.

Another cabinet post crucial for Jokowi's plan for turning Indonesia into a global player is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Here Jokowi appointed a career diplomat, Retno Marsudi (born 1962), as minister (2014-to present). A contemporary of Jokowi, both graduating in the same year (1985) from Gajah Mada University (Jokowi in Forestry Engineering, Retno in International Relations), Retno went on to earn an MA in International Law and Policy from The Hague University of Applied Science, then serving as Indonesia's ambassador to Norway (2005-8) and the Netherlands (2011-14). When Jokowi appointed her Indonesia's first female Foreign Minister in October 2014, he was well aware of the importance of international diplomacy given the manifold links which bound Indonesia's economy to the global market.<sup>21</sup>

19. She was also ranked 37<sup>th</sup> in the Forbes 100 Most Powerful Women List in the year of her appointment (2016) [Coconuts Jakarta, 2016, June 7].

20. Her full title was Managing Director of the World Bank Group, which put her in the no. 2 spot after the World Bank President, Robert Zoellick (in office, 2007-2012) and Jim Yong Kim (in office 2012-2019).

21. A business colleague of Jokowi in Solo told the principal author of this article, Riwanto Tirtosudarmo, about Jokowi's habit of participating in international furniture expos in Europe. As the owner of a leading furniture company in Surakarta, he needed to secure orders from European suppliers for his products. This helps to explain his knowledge and experience of international business practices.

After Sri Mulyani's appointment to the Finance Ministry in 2016, Retno worked closely with her. Two examples from the beginning and end of the COVID-19 crisis (2020-2022) are relevant here. The first was the need for Indonesia to negotiate with major international vaccine producers to secure a sufficient stock of vaccine to inoculate Indonesia's 183 million adults (citizens over 18 years of age). Here Sri Mulyani and Retno Marsudi proved to be instrumental in the success of Indonesia's vaccination programme. They made sure that supplies reached Indonesia from China (Sinovac/Sinopharm), UK (AstraZeneca) and US (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna),<sup>22</sup> with 62.3% of the population fully vaccinated (two doses) by the end of the first year of the nationwide programme in March 2022. The second example was working for the success of Indonesia's G-20 presidency. This was a major opportunity for Indonesia when it came out of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022. Culminating in the G-20 leaders' summit in Bali on 15-16 November 2022, once again the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs were to the fore in ensuring Indonesia's widely praised performance as summit host.

A third cabinet post vital for Jokowi is the Ministry of Public Works, which he entrusted to Basuki Hadimuljono (born 1954). A career bureaucrat with a doctorate in civil engineering from Colorado State University (1980), Hadimuljono is Jokowi's point man for handling his mega infrastructure projects, which Jokowi sees as the foundation for the country's future. The President's hugely ambitious idea of building a new national capital outside Java should be understood in this light. By siting the new capital in East Kalimantan (Borneo) – a geographical choice long cogitated – Jokowi aims to distribute resources more evenly, thus devolving government from what he regards as an overly Java-centric polity. This is part of his strategy of ensuring a more balanced and integrated nation with equal access for the outer islands to national investment and knowledge-production. This geographical shift, in Jokowi's view, will correct the imbalance between the politically predominant Javanese centre and the outer island periphery, which has traditionally generated the lion's share of foreign earnings from mining, hydrocarbons (oil and Liquefied Natural Gas, LNG) and cash-crop exports, but which has enjoyed few of the state investment benefits.

Jokowi's economic policy in his second presidential term is a continuation of what he embarked on in his first. The triad of infrastructural development, foreign investment and high economic growth are still the main drivers. As a businessman Jokowi is only too keenly aware that Indonesian government bureaucracy is riddled with systemic and structural corruption. This constrains its ability to respond to the requirements of foreign investors. Jokowi is also of the view that many government departments and institutions are now redundant and should be abolished to make savings to

22. By 11 July 2021, Indonesia had received 122,735,260 million doses of vaccine, the vast majority (108.5 million doses), Sinovac from China, see Setkab 2021.

the government budget. Another problem is the malfunction of many laws and regulations. These hinder the effectiveness of both the bureaucracy and the civil administration. Reforms are needed in both areas to speed up the process of foreign investment.

With an eye to pushing through these reforms, Jokowi appointed former four-star general, Luhut Binsar Panjaitan (born 1947), as Coordinating Minister of Maritime and Investment Affairs at the beginning of his second term in October 2019.<sup>23</sup> Luhut, a special forces officer with long experience in Indonesian-occupied East Timor (1975-99), where he served four tours of duty, has been supportive of Jokowi since his first successful presidential bid in April-July 2014. He is also seen as Jokowi's man in ensuring the President's smooth relationship with the military. But Luhut has his own agenda. Known for his business and political activities since Suharto's New Order, in the early Reformasi period (1998-present) he set up his own conglomerate, Toba Sejahtera Group (2004), with interests in natural resources (oil, gas and mining), electricity generation (coal, gas and geothermal) and agriculture (palm-oil).

Alongside Luhut, as coordinating minister for Political, Security and Legal Affairs, Jokowi appointed Mahfud MD (born 1957, in office 2019 to present), a law professor from Sampang in West Madura. Mahfud's strong Islamic credentials through his membership of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest grassroots Islamic organization in Indonesia, enabled him to protect Jokowi from the potential use of Islam as a mobilizing force, as had happened with the Christian Chinese Jakarta Governor, Ahok. Under Mahfud's watch, the firebrand Habib Rizieq has been brought to trial and sentenced to a four-year imprisonment for infringing the COVID-19 protocols and for inciting unrest. As a legal expert, Mahfud MD has also been instrumental in tweaking laws and regulations to smooth the process of foreign investment.<sup>24</sup>

In his second presidential term, Jokowi designated former Chief of National Police (2016-2019) General Tito Karnavian (born 1964), to be his minister of Home Affairs (2019 to present), a cabinet post vital to the management of Indonesian domestic politics. This includes sensitive areas such as managing political parties and conducting general elections. Before becoming Indonesian Police Chief, Tito was head of police in Papua (2012-2015). This makes him Jokowi's point man to oversee the political situation in Papua. A region of vast natural resources – the US mining firm Freeport McMoRan is the largest taxpayer in Indonesia thanks to its Grasberg mine which has an estimated US\$ 100 billion of copper and gold reserves

23. Luhut was previously Jokowi's Chief of Staff (2014-15) and Coordinating Minister for Political, Security and Legal Affairs (2015-2016).

24. On the selection of the new cabinet at the start of Jokowi's second term, see 'Kabinet Anti-Radikalisme [Anti radicalism cabinet]', *Tempo*, 28 October-3 November 2019.

[Shulman 2016] – Papua has seen protracted military conflict between the Indonesian army and the Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merdeka, OPM) since 1969 UN referendum – known locally as the «Act of No Choice» [Saltford 2003]. As Home Affairs Minister Tito has recently (2022) attempted to address the underlying legal and political problems in the vast half island by establishing four new provinces in Papua (footnote 17). These, along with the original province of West Papua, effectively split Papua into five separate administrative regions, which the national government argues ensures a better distribution of public services to the remoter highland areas and isolated communities. Critics, however, see this as a political strategy to weaken the Papuan resistance movement, which wins increasing recruits even as the Indonesian military ramps up its repression.

Since his first presidential term Jokowi has restructured his cabinet and created a new Presidential Staff Office (*Kantor Staf Presiden*). Tasked with supporting cabinet ministers, its main responsibility is to iron out miscommunication between ministries and government agencies, thus speeding up the execution of strategic national policies [*Tempo* 2019, 28 October, pp. 32-38]. Initially headed up by Jokowi's ally, Luhut, who served for just nine months in 2014-15, the post was then entrusted to Teten Masduki (born 1963, in office 2015-18), a former NGO activist close to Jokowi. In the period under review, it was filled by Moeldoko (born 1957), a former four star general and commander (*panglima*) of the Indonesian army (in post, 2013-15). He acted as one of the President's key advisers on internal military affairs. Another figure in Jokowi's close political circle is Police General Budi Gunawan (born 1959), the current head of the National Intelligence Agency, BIN (*Badan Intelijen Negara*). A close confidant and long-serving adjutant (1999-2004) of Jokowi's political boss, Megawati Sukarno Putri, Gunawan's rapid promotion as the youngest Police general ever (2008) has not been without controversy given his links with the former president and speedy net wealth accumulation.

Another important economic cabinet post is the Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises or BUMN (*Badan Usaha Milik Negara*). Its current incumbent is Erick Thohir (born 1970). One of Indonesia's most successful young businessmen, whose US\$157 million net wealth places him amongst the top 20 richest government officials in contemporary Indonesia, he was the manager of Jokowi's successful second presidential campaign in March-April 2019. As we have seen, Jokowi has appointed many able non-party members to strategic ministerial cabinet positions like Finance, Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs, as well as to his key Coordinating Ministries (Luhut, Mahfud, etc.). By contrast, his choice for less strategic portfolios has fallen largely on political party coalition members who are currently supporting his presidency. Here Jokowi has shown himself to be very skilled in his approach to political party leaders. Not only does this bring them within his fold politically, but also guarantees their parliamentary support for his eco-

conomic policy agendas. Since Indonesia adopted a direct presidential election format in 2004, it is still not clear what political system has been chosen – is it presidential or parliamentarian? For Jokowi, however, the nature of the political system is simply not his concern. As a pragmatist he can live with any political system. Indeed, if required, he can engineer it to achieve his economic and political ends. Jokowi is a man who sees every challenge as an opportunity.

### 3.2. *Engineering the national laws*

After winning the 2019 presidential election, Jokowi showed Machiavellian genius when he approached his former presidential rival, Prabowo, to join his cabinet (August 2019). This was part of Jokowi's strategy of minimizing the possibilities of resistance to his economic and political agendas in parliament. Prabowo agreed and was given the Defence Ministry, a post entirely in line with his military background. The former general's inclusion in Jokowi's cabinet has strengthened the political party coalition which supports the President in parliament. Now, only former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's deeply corrupt Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat) and the Islamist Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS)<sup>25</sup> are not in the coalition supporting the President. Together they amount to an insignificant minority group, and do not constitute an effective parliamentary opposition.

Seen in terms of Jokowi's immediate policy goals this balance of power may appear a highly favourable one. But, if one looks ahead to Indonesia's democratic future, it may not be such a healthy situation. The dangers of autocracy and oligarchy loom. This can be seen most recently in the illiberal revision of Indonesia's criminal code (6 December 2022). It would be much less of a danger if there was an effective parliamentary opposition along the lines of «His Majesty's Most Loyal Opposition» in the UK [Hutt 2017]. The case of the Chinese-dominated Democratic Action Party (DAP) in Malaysia may also be relevant here.<sup>26</sup>

Jokowi's parliamentary majority has enabled him to propose a new national law intended to enhance foreign investment and create jobs. The

25. The PKS, founded in 1998, was originally influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood Movement in Egypt and is seen as an Islamist party because of its calls for Islam to play a more central role in Indonesian public life. It provided political support for the 212 Movement and the Islamic Defenders' Front (FPI), before the latter's banning in 2019.

26. In 2018 and 2022, the DAP and its allies dealt the ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) two stunning general election reverses. The first even toppled the now imprisoned former prime minister, Najib Razak (born 1953; in office 2009-18), who had diverted US\$700 million into his private account from the state's 1MDB (1-Malaysian Development Berhad) Fund in the «largest kleptocracy case on record» [Teoh 2022].

proposed law merges many laws that are now considered redundant. These have been brought under a single umbrella legislation designed to boost economic growth by attracting foreign capital. Jokowi's obsession with turning Indonesia into a developed country through investment in mega infrastructure projects has also shaped his view of the role of science and technology. Scientific research has to be developed, in Jokowi's estimation, to make innovative scientific and technological products. His first visit to what was then the Indonesian Academy of Sciences (*Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia*, LIPI) shortly after his election as president in 2014 was telling. Addressing the gathered scientists, he asked them in all seriousness whether their collective research could at a stroke double the height and yield of a rice stalk.<sup>27</sup> In 2019, Law no 11 on the National System of Science and Technology, was enacted. It prioritised the role of education and research institutions in supporting government policies aimed at achieving high economic growth and realizing Indonesia's «Sustainable Development Goals» (SDGs).

The new law on science and technology has restructured national research institutions into a single body. Previously divided into separate government research agencies, the National Research and Innovation Agency (*Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional*, BRIN) was inaugurated under Presidential Regulation (*Peraturan Presiden or Perpres*) No. 33 of 2021. As a new national research body its task is to integrate all the state's research institutions into one umbrella organization [*Tempo* 2022, 23 January, pp. 90-95]. Critics see BRIN as a threat to that academic freedom which, in their view, is a *sine qua non* for the development of a healthy science and technology sector. With the strong backing of parliament, in particular from Megawati's PDI-P, the BRIN juggernaut proved unstoppable and the objections of the critics were swept aside. Megawati herself, who has zero academic qualifications apart from her ten honorary degrees – she never finished her undergraduate degrees in agriculture in Bandung and psychology at the University of Indonesia (1970-72) – was appointed Head of the BRIN Steering Committee.

### 3.3. COVID-19 and associated events

COVID-19, whose first transmission was reported in Jakarta on 2 March 2020, was perhaps the most challenging economic problem the country faced in Jokowi's second term. With over six million reported cases and 160,398 official deaths (figures which health experts consider substantially underreported), Indonesia had the seventh highest mortality in the world

27. The first author of this article, Riwanto Tirtosudarmo, was among the four LIPI researchers who met with President Jokowi at the State Palace (*Istana Negara*) and invited him to give a public lecture at LIPI on 16 September 2014, when Jokowi's talk was recorded in the author's personal notes.

per head of population.<sup>28</sup> The very considerable numbers infected by COVID-19, especially during the epidemic's second surge in July 2021, when the Delta variant was at its height, overwhelmed hospitals and quarantine shelters. A study by the SMERU Research Institute on the socio-economic impact of Covid-19 on household incomes in 2020-2021 shows that:

Given the fragile state of households throughout the survey period, it is reasonable to expect that the key socioeconomic indicators tracked by these surveys – job, income, food security, learning constraints, access to health services – have [all] deteriorated during the second surge, though more data and evidence are required to determine the true extent. As the COVID-19 situation remains uncertain, households and children will require ongoing assistance to avoid long-term scarring [SMERU 2021].

The unexpected economic impact of Covid-19 stretched national and local budgets. Although income inequality between the rich and poor remained stubbornly high, the percentage (10.1%) of the Indonesian population living below the absolute poverty line of one US dollar a day steadily declined during Jokowi's first presidential term (2014-2019) [Tjoe 2018]. But, as COVID-19 began to spread from early March 2020, Jokowi's government had to rethink its economic strategy in double quick time. Tackling the impact of this unprecedentedly deadly virus required the President and his key economic advisers to think out of the box. This was especially urgent when statistics showed that the livelihoods of households with less than US\$ 1.90 a day in the period 2017-20 were negatively impacted by the pandemic. Sharp increases in income inequality occurred within individual provinces, with a widening gap between urban and rural areas. At the same time, income disparities between provinces appear to have decreased [Novianti and Panjaitan 2022, pp. 29-37].

The economic downturn resulting from COVID-19 led to a delay in the implementation of planned mega-infrastructure projects. One casualty here was the development of a new national capital in East Kalimantan. But, despite delays, Jokowi determined to push ahead. The first step here was to make the necessary changes to laws and regulations thus straightening the path to project implementation. On 15 February 2022, after several delays caused by popular protests, the Indonesian parliament, at Jokowi's urging, hastily passed a new national law on the National Capital (*Undang-Undang tentang Ibu Kota Negara*, IKN). This legislation was put in place to ensure that the creation of the new national capital would have a watertight legal

28. Statistics from <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries>; for adjusted mortality statistics from Johns Hopkins University's Coronavirus Resource Centre, which places Indonesia immediately after Peru (4.3 percent) as the country with the most deaths proportionally (2.4 percent) to their reported Covid-19 cases, see <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/mortality>.



basis. But it attracted criticism from civil society organisations who saw Jokowi's persistence as an outcome of his unhealthy alliance with big corporations controlled by super-rich Indonesian oligarchs.<sup>29</sup>

The high public expectations that Jokowi's administration would begin to realise the promises of President Sukarno's 1 July 1945 Pancasila speech regarding the creation of a just and prosperous society in Indonesia [Meirizka 2009], were dashed. Instead of moving in the direction of a more just and equitable society, all the indications were that Jokowi's administration was becoming less democratic and less egalitarian. Many saw in his creation of the new omnibus law on job creation (*Undang-Undang-Cipta Kerja*, UUCK) in October 2020 and his revision of the regulation on the State Corruption Eradication Commission (*Undang-Undang Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi*, UUKPK), a concerted move to reduce the power of organised labour in Indonesia and clip the wings of the Corruption Commission. At one level, this was a way of reassuring foreign investors that they would not have to confront demanding labour unions while doing business in Indonesia. At another, it involved a trade-off between the President and the Indonesian *classe politique* in which the latter agreed to pass the omnibus law (UUCK) in return for the emasculation of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), thus ensuring that it would no longer have the power to investigate systemic corruption of the political elite as hitherto [Valdameri 2017, 2018]. Both steps were seen as a necessary compromise by Jokowi to achieve high economic growth. But Jokowi did not stop there. Under his watch, parliament also revised the state implementation law on mining (*Pelaksanaan Kegiatan Usaha Pertambangan Mineral dan Batu Bara*, PP no.96 2021) and information technology (*Undang-Undang Transaksi Elektronik*, UU no.19 2016), both legislative initiatives seen as favouring big corporations and their oligarch owners.<sup>30</sup>

In the same breath, as we have seen (section 2.3), another highly contentious issue was the revision of the Indonesian Penal Code (*Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana*, KUHP). Intentionally postponed until after the completion of the G-20 meeting in Bali on 17 November, both the government and parliament speeded up the finalization of the draft, ratifying it just 20 days after the Bali meeting (6 December 2022).

Jokowi's second presidential term has been marked by his legislative agenda. This has resulted in new laws and regulations perceived as friendly to big corporations and local oligarchs. Meanwhile, civil society groups, earlier supportive of Jokowi's 2014 presidential bid, have been given short shrift. Freedom of expression has been stifled and political opposition suppressed in the interest of securing high capital investment and economic growth.

29. For a clear and comprehensive analysis of the role of oligarchy in the making of the national law, see Winters 2021.

30. For a critical assessment of Jokowi's last three years in power (2019-2022), see Pabottingi 2022, pp. 34-35.

In early 2022, public controversy flared briefly after a group of Jokowi supporters, coordinated by Luhut, proposed that his presidency should be extended to an unprecedented third five-year term [*Tempo* 2022, 13 March, pp. 22-27; 10 April, pp. 24-29]. Civil society organizations immediately declared this to be unconstitutional. But, while Jokowi himself initially rejected the idea, he hedged his refusal by saying that as a democrat he was only adhering to the constitution. This indicated that he would be open to the idea of a third term if the constitution allowed it. As a pragmatist, Jokowi is prepared to use any strategy to achieve his goals. In this sense Jokowi is a Machiavellian.

The impact of Jokowi's development agenda, however, comes at a heavy environmental cost. His emphasis on mega infrastructural construction projects to support the expansion of extractive industries and cash-crop production raises a question mark about Indonesia's ecological future. This can be seen most clearly in Indonesia's loss of rainforest habitats (72% destroyed as of 2019) and carbon-rich peatlands which act as carbon sinks absorbing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Indonesian Borneo (Kalimantan) is especially badly affected. Both here and in neighbouring Sumatra, 15 million hectares of land have been licensed for palm oil development. The livelihoods of indigenous communities, who inhabit hitherto afforested areas and live symbiotically with the rain forest, have been especially badly affected [Greenpeace USA 2018]. Protests orchestrated by civil society organizations in alliance with local indigenous communities have led to flare ups across the country. Meanwhile, the drive for expansive extractive industries, backed up by newly drafted government laws and regulations, has accelerated.

#### 4. *Foreign policy*

##### 4.1. *ASEAN and the G-20*

Jokowi's foreign policy during his second administration has been strongly linked to his domestic economic agenda. Boosting foreign investment to achieve high economic growth is the touchstone here. Apart from business as usual as an ASEAN member state, Jokowi's diplomacy continues to implement the «free and active foreign policy (*politik bebas aktif*)» first enunciated in Indonesia's Basic Law (*Undang-Undang Dasar*, UUD) of 1945. Used to good effect during Indonesia's war of independence (Revolution) against the Dutch (1945-49) and often referred to by Vice-President Muhammad Hatta (in office, 1945-56) [Kusno 2014], it was further developed during the Cold War (1947-91). It was not the same as neutrality since it involved ensuring Indonesia's ability to manoeuvre skilfully between the superpowers, first the USA and the USSR, and then (post-1991) between China and the United States. In the 1999 revision of the Basic Law (UU 37 Article 3), Indonesia's «free and active» foreign policy was defined as main-

taining the freedom to determine the country's policy response towards international problems without being bound by a priori agreements with any single power.<sup>31</sup>

While China is currently expanding its global diplomatic presence through its Belt and Road Initiative (2013-49),<sup>32</sup> Jokowi has made no secret of his wish to get closer to Beijing. Indeed, his pragmatism makes him better able to deal with China than the United States, where policy initiatives often involve tricky issues like human rights, which Jokowi sees as a distraction from his main goal of attracting more foreign direct investment (FDI). That said, Chinese investment in high profile projects like Indonesia's high-speed «bullet train» between Jakarta and Bandung is not without its problems. Given shifting government policy priorities – in this case Jokowi's commitment to building a new national capital in East Kalimantan – the original economic rationale for the «bullet train» has been largely compromised (see Section I Part I).

In 2022, as we have seen, Indonesia served as president of the G-20. This group comprises the 19 countries in the world with the largest economies plus the European Union. Spain attends as a regular guest,<sup>33</sup> along with various intergovernmental organizations.<sup>34</sup> The G-20 group accounts for nearly 90% of the world's gross national product (GNP), 80% of total world trade and two thirds of the world's population. So, a lot was riding on the successful hosting of this meeting as far as Jokowi was concerned. The result appears to have exceeded even his expectations. The flawless hosting of the G-20 leaders' meeting in Bali on 15-16 November 2022 and the resulting G-20 leaders' declaration were widely praised. The declaration announced agreement on three issues, all proposed by Indonesia, namely: (1) global health architecture, (2) digital transformations and (3) sustainable energy transitions.

31. Cited at <https://www.sman2-tp.sch.id/read/giatinfo/947/lahirnya-politik-luarnegeri-bebas-aktif>. The Indonesian text reads: «Indonesia bebas menentukan sikap dan kebijaksanaan terhadap permasalahan internasional serta tidak mengikatkan diri secara a priori kepada kekuatan dunia manapun».

32. This seeks to replicate the old Silk Road (in fact Silk Routes) which linked China with Europe from the first century BC, ending in the early fifteenth century when Admiral Zheng He (Chêng-ho's, 1371-1433) seven «treasure voyages» to South-east Asia, South Asia, West Asia and East Africa came to a close with his death (1433), see WH McNeill, *A World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p.165; Edward L. Dreyer, *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty, 1405-1433* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2007).

33. Although now ranked 16th in terms of the size of its economy, Spain did not have a large enough economy to join the grouping in 1999 when it was originally formed.

34. These include the chairs of ASEAN and the African Union, as well as a representative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). A neighbouring country is always invited by the host. In 2022 it was Thailand.

#### 4.2. *COVID-19 and the global economy*

As COVID-19 began to spread throughout Indonesia in March 2020 Jokowi's economic agenda had to be rapidly adjusted to deal with the pandemic's unexpected impact. COVID-19 was a global phenomenon. It changed diplomatic relationships and altered foreign policy. Indonesia was no exception. Indeed, Jokowi's second presidential term has been largely shaped by the impact of COVID-19. It had important economic and foreign policy ramifications. Originating in Wuhan, in Central China's Hubei Province, the first confirmed case can be dated back to 17 November 2019. But Chinese doctors only understood that they were dealing with a novel Corona virus disease in late December 2019 [Ma 2020]. A fortnight later, on 14 January 2020, the first COVID-19 case outside China was confirmed in Thailand. The rapid spread of COVID-19 to other countries around the world through international travel and migration created tensions. Nations tried to protect their citizens by controlling the movement of people. National borders were closed or greatly restricted, except for returning citizens. In Indonesia, apart from managing the movement of foreigners, particular problems arose as many Indonesian migrant workers, mostly domestic workers, were living in the Middle East, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia. Some, who had finished their work contracts, found themselves stranded in their host countries. A recent study has shown that this situation greatly increased the vulnerability of migrant workers to COVID-19. The longer the migration process, the greater the dangers [Anaf et.al. 2022].

After vaccines began to be produced in sufficient quantities in early 2021, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Retno Marsudi lobbied vaccine producing countries, in particular China, UK and the USA, to allow Indonesia to obtain sufficient numbers of vaccine doses to inoculate its population. Despite all the problems, especially when patient numbers began to exceed the capacity of medical facilities during the pandemic peaks in April-May 2020 and July 2021, Indonesia seems to have carried out a rather successful vaccination programme – 62% of the population inoculated with two doses by March 2022. As the world's fourth most populous country (280.5 million as of December 2022), Indonesia faced a big challenge to protect its citizens from such a deadly virus. Foreign diplomacy was clearly crucial here. It enabled Indonesia to negotiate with vaccine producing countries to make sure sufficient doses were available for nationwide distribution. In this regard, Indonesia appears to have done a good job at managing its public health policy to curb the worst impacts of the pandemic [Bisara 2022].

#### 4.3. *The internationalization of the Papua issue*

Another critical foreign policy issue for Indonesia concerns Papua. Political disputes have recently multiplied in the vast half island due to

the heavy-handed and repressive behaviour of the Indonesian army. As repression has deepened, so demands have grown to resolve the Papua issue. There is now a growing number of ethnic Papuans who support the province's separation from Indonesia and the establishment of an independent West Papuan state, perhaps through a referendum similar to that which took place in Indonesian-occupied East Timor (post-2002, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste) on 30 August 1999. That led to the former Portuguese colony regaining its independence. The problem for Indonesia is that Papua is no longer just a domestic issue, but one with an increasingly high international profile.<sup>35</sup>

On 17 August 2019, there was an incident in a dormitory used by Papuan students in Surabaya. The students were accused of destroying an Indonesian national flag during the independence-day celebrations. The local security apparatus and civilian mass organizations surrounded the dormitory, and in the ensuing crackdown racist chants were shouted at the Papuan students. The following month in response to further racist assaults on Papuan students in several cities across Java, a riot occurred in Wamena in Papua's Central Highlands where a building was attacked and several people were killed.

In 2020, there were at least 65 violent incidents in Papua linked to racist actions by Indonesian migrants and security forces. One of the most serious was the killing of a 67-year-old Christian pastor, Pendeta Yeremia Zanambani (circa 1952/53-2020), in Intan Jaya District (Central Papua). The Nabire-born pastor, who was widely respected by the local population in his home province of Central Papua, was reported to have been specifically targeted by the Indonesian army (TNI) because of his outspoken sermons and public comments regarding the conduct of the Indonesian troops [Briantika 2020; Strangio 2021]. In 2021, several armed stand-offs occurred between the Indonesian security forces, local civilians and combatants of the armed wing of the Free Papua Organization (OPM). These resulted in fatalities on both sides.

The killing of the head of Indonesian National Intelligence (BIN) in Papua, Brigadier General I Gusti Putu Danny Nugraha Karya (1969-2021), in an ambush by OPM's West Papua National Liberation Army (*Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat*, TPNPB-OPM) on 25 April 2021 [*Tempo*

35. Regarding the controversy surrounding the so-called «Act of Free Choice» in May 1969, namely the UN-supervised referendum by which a carefully selected group of West Papuan leaders were browbeaten into joining Indonesia, see the forthcoming article by Greg Poulgrain, 'The Undeclared, Declassified: West New Guinea and the 1969 Act of Free Choice', *Masyarakat Indonesia*, published by the Indonesian Academy of Sciences (LIPI, now BRIN). In this lengthy article, Poulgrain makes a detailed analysis of the recently declassified cables between the US Embassy in Jakarta and Washington DC, which show clearly how the referendum was manipulated in favour of Indonesia.

2021, 16 May, pp. 40-41],<sup>36</sup> was the turning point here. This led to Jokowi's Coordinating Minister for Politics, Law and Security, Mahfud MD, declaring that the TPNPB-OPM and its armed affiliates in West Papua a terrorist organization (29 April 2021). Indeed, Mahfud's decision had already been prefigured in Jokowi's speech delivered shortly after Brigadier Karya's demise, where he stressed that there was «no place for criminal armed groups in Papua just as there was not in other places in Indonesia». Just before Indonesia's decision to label them a terrorist group, the principal spokesperson of the TPNPB-OPM, Sebby Sambom (born 1975), put out a press release stating said that: «We are ready to use UN legal mechanisms if Indonesia calls us a terrorist group», thus further internationalizing the issue [Mawei 2021].

Since the beginning of his presidency, Jokowi has been very active in his attempt to win the hearts and minds of the Papuan population. He is all too well aware that the problem will not be solved solely by using the security approach. Instead, he has tried to win the Papuans over by making frequent visits to the territory and facilitating major infrastructural projects such as the construction of the Trans-Papua Highway, as well as the expansion of airports and harbours. At the same time, he has announced plans to construct a new presidential palace in Papua to add to those in Jakarta, Bogor, Cipanas, Yogyakarta and Bali, as well as allocating more Special Autonomy Funds to the territory. These funds have recently helped to create four new provinces (footnote 17) [*Tempo* 2021, 16 May, pp. 40-41]. But money and mega projects will only go so far. Indonesia's egregious human rights record in Papua continue to attract global attention: in a UN Periodic Review (UPR) meeting in New York on 9 November 2022, the Indonesian Minister of Law and Human Rights, Yasonna Laoly (born 1953; in office, 2014-2019, 2019 to present), the first ethnic Nias to hold a cabinet post, was roundly criticized by representatives of eight countries, including the USA, for Indonesia's widespread human rights abuses in Papua [Tapol 2022].<sup>37</sup>

Papua's international profile will likely increase as a result of the continuing conflict between the Indonesian security apparatus and armed resistance groups. These latter represent diverse groupings of freedom fighters under the loose umbrella of the Free Papua Organization (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*, OPM). Social media and information technology have helped to internationalise the issue. News reports about alleged human right abuses by the Indonesian military and police against the indigenous Papuan people now reach an ever-larger global audience [Lantang and

36. Brigadier Karya's rank was raised posthumously to Major-General.

37. The eight countries who made critical statements were: Australia, Canada, Marshall Islands, Netherlands, New Zealand, Slovenia, USA and Vanuatu.

Tambunan 2020, pp. 41-59]. The increasing global awareness of the Papua issue through social media has prompted a change in Indonesian foreign policy. This is now focused on neighbouring countries like Vanuatu and the Marshall Islands in the South Pacific who are supportive of the Papuan independence struggle. Indonesia is very concerned about the use of social media by Papuan and non-Papuan pro-independence activists and their ability to influence these neighbouring countries. But recent research shows that Indonesian diplomatic initiatives have failed to reverse the internationalization of the Papua issue [Lantang and Tambunan 2020].

## 5. *Conclusions*

Jokowi's drift towards authoritarian government in his second administration has to be located in a wider perspective. This has both domestic and global dimensions. While his authoritarianism is shaped by domestic politics, it has an international context. In fact, globally, Jokowi's political agenda is unexceptionable. Authoritarian tendencies during Jokowi's second term are part of a global phenomenon: neo-liberal ideologies have been in the ascendant worldwide since at least the end of the Cold War (1947-91). The overlap between global and local realities has been accelerated by COVID-19 (2020-22). As the pandemic spread around the world, so international collaboration between nations to curb the disease rose to the top of the agenda. Jokowi's achievement in securing sufficient vaccines to inoculate over 60% of Indonesia's population, and his success in organizing the 15-16 November 2022 G-20 leader's meeting in Bali, both reflect his standing as a global leader. But these successes cannot excuse his failures in upholding democracy and the rule of law as epitomized by the Ferdy Sambo murder case and the Kanjuruhan Stadium tragedy. Both involved the deeply corrupt Indonesian state police force and show the distance Indonesia still has to travel before becoming an established rule-of-law state (*rechtstaat*).

Leaving aside the ongoing state-sponsored violence, persecution and human rights violations in Papua, such egregious infringements of democratic principles and individual liberties are the direct result of various national laws and regulations passed by the second Jokowi administration. These are mostly designed to boost foreign investment and economic growth. Despite the economic downturn caused COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine, Jokowi has been able to survive. Yet the cost has been high – namely an ever-shrinking space for freedom of expression. As several big projects, such as the Jakarta-Bandung bullet train and the development of a new national capital, currently hang in the balance, Jokowi has to find increas-

ingly drastic ways to ensure their success.<sup>38</sup> While the controversial idea of extending his tenure to a currently unconstitutional third presidential term has been shelved for now, the only alternative is securing the election of a successor president, such as his Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto, who might ensure the longevity of these projects. For Jokowi, the 2024 presidential race is crucial. Although he will likely no longer himself be a contender, its outcome will determine the nature of his political legacy. As Indonesia's first and only businessman president, the last entry in his accounts' ledger has yet to be written.

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38. On 20 December 2022, in an apparently desperate move to regain the political initiative following the postponement of the Omnibus Law (UUCK) by the Constitutional Court, President Jokowi used his emergency powers by creating a Regulation in lieu of Law or PERPU (*Peraturan Pemerintah Pengganti Undang-Undang*) to bypass the Constitutional Court. Within a calendar month, on 11 January 2023, in another hasty initiative, Jokowi attempted to crash the gears regarding the long overdue review of past gross human rights violations involving the Government. After a quick overview by his presidential team, tasked with reconsidering these serial violations, the President expressed his «deep regret». But observers saw this move as too little and too late. This was especially so as the cases involved no less than twelve serious episodes, inter alia the mass killings of 1965-1966 in which perhaps as many as a million Indonesians died. These two desperate moves, which occurred in quick succession, show once again how the President, through his loyal aides, is now trying to come up with seemingly radical policies to try to save his political legacy as his Presidency enters its last eighteen months.



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