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Security Sector Reform in Indonesia: The Case of Indonesia's Defence White Paper 2003

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National security does not consist only of an army, a navy, and an air force....It depends on a sound economy...on civil liberties and human freedom (Harry S. Truman)¹

¹ <http://www.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/poldocs/uspessu/SuaddressHTTruman.pdf>
accessed 10 December 2004.

Introduction.

The past few years have seen Indonesian politics undergoing rapid and dramatic changes since the fall of Soeharto's authoritarian regime in May 1998. Those changes have accordingly posed a tremendous challenge for the government to reform any aspects of national affairs. As a consequence, one of the pressing challenges for Indonesia is to reform its national security affairs.

As in other Third world countries, the Indonesian military is arguably the only institution that dominated the whole aspects of national life. The era of national reform is now pushing the military (TNI) to change its traditional focus on internal security threats to a focus on external defence. This change has been under way since the early 1990s when the TNI started to change its doctrinal functions².

Among the themes that emerged from security sector reform (SSR), particularly in the Third World countries, is the importance of civilian participation in controlling the military. More specifically, security sector reform is primarily concerned with the establishment of appropriate structures for (democratic) civilian control. The other key elements of SSR, as Timothy Edmunds argued, are the process of the civilianisation of security sector bureaucracies and the de-politicisation of the security sector³. The arguments above clearly implies that the role of the civilians as part of "wider security family"⁴ is quite crucial in the development of democratic security forces and the process of SSR.

This article attempts to delineate the issue of civilian involvement in SSR in Indonesia. To be more specific, it attempts to answer why and how civilians should be involved in the security related issues. The next part of this paper describes the conceptual perspective of the capacity of civilians in participating and controlling security related issues. Then, this paper utilises the Indonesian Defence White Paper 2003 as a special reference in looking at civilian involvement in security-related issues. The last part of this paper discusses what lessons Indonesia's civilians can learn from the formulation of the Defence White Paper.

² Some military analysts argued that the other important changes are: (1) abandonment of the *dwifungsi*, (2) separation of the police from the armed forces, (3) severance ties to the former ruling party, Golkar, (4) appointment of Indonesia's first civilian Minister of Defence (Prof. Juwono Sudarsono).

³ See Edmunds, Timothy (2001). Security Sector Reform: Concepts and Implementation. Report for Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces, p.6.

⁴ See Fitz-Gerald, Ann (2003). Security Sector Reform-Streamlining National Military Forces to Respond to the Wider Security Needs. In *Journal of Security Sector Management*. Vo.1.No.1 (March).

The Capacity of Civilian in Security-Related Issues: A Conceptual Perspective.

Based on the literature⁵ of national security studies, there are --at least-- three approaches that can be utilised to examine how (national) security policy is formulated. The first approach is 'the concentric circle approach'. This approach assumes that the top decision maker is at the centre of national security policy process. At the same time, the wider circles play a less important role as the sources of security policy. As a result, the possibility for 'extra state-actors' (civilians, for example) to play a major role in policy formulation and policy oversight are very limited and minimal. In other words, it exhibits the characteristics of a strong state that can dominate society⁶.

The second approach, 'the elite versus participatory policymaking approach' is based on the view there is a basic dilemma of democracy in the policy process. (National) Security policy is made by military elites, but the military elites in turn must develop support for such a policy with the public. In other words, for (national) security policy to be successful in the long term, there must be a significant degree of participation by the wider civilian public. As a result, this approach struggles to reconcile the expertise of the military elites and civilians with the demands of participatory democracy.

The last approach, 'the system-analysis approach' assumes that many different inputs from many different actors including civilians go into the policy process. These inputs, of course, create political dynamics both within the public and policymaking process, which must reconcile different competing interests. In turn, the impact of policy should be measured by feedback, both in terms of policy effectiveness and how it is perceived by the wider public.

All the above approaches indicate the degree of civilian participation in the security policy process and at the same time, they also show different consequences of civilian involvement in the policy process. Further, in contrast to the first approach, the second and third approaches underline the need to re-constitute the capacity of the civilian to involve and to control the policy processes. This is mainly due to the fact that security policy is not a purely military notion. It is more of a political one than a military one as a part of the state policies where the military component is only one of the elements/actors engaged.

⁵ See for example, Sarkesian, Sam C (1989). *US National Security: Policymakers, Processes, and Politics*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, Valdes, Jorge A Tapia (1989). *National Security, The Dual State and the Rule of Exception*. Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit.

⁶ For further discussion on this concept, see for example Dauvergne, Peter (1998). *Weak States, Strong States: A State in Society Perspective*. In Dauvergne, Peter ed. *Weak and Strong States in Asia Pacific Societies*. Canberra; Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies-Australian National University, pp.1-10.

These arguments imply that an effective civilian control to the military require some basic preconditions⁷. Firstly, there should be a clear constitution and legal framework for democratic control. Fitz-Gerald argues that a comprehensive security reform is unlikely to be initiated without addressing the constitutional and legal frameworks that enable a high degree of accountability and transparency of the armed forces⁸. It also means that SSR to be successful needs a strong political will from both the executive and legislative branches of government.

Secondly, the effectiveness of civil oversight mechanism (parliament in particular). The scope of parliament's authority, of course, will be varied from one country to another. At least, the parliament should have three roles in controlling the military, such as political accountability and policy accountability. However, in terms of military professionalism, parliament should also play the role of operational accountability. This accountability is concerned with the role of parliament in controlling the military, particularly the management of military operations, military budget and even monitoring the human right abuses in any military operation⁹.

Thirdly, professional civilian control of the defence ministry which can capably direct and manage military activity. This capability, of course, includes sufficient transparency in policy making to facilitate public scrutiny of defence policy and its implementation. Lastly, the active involvement of society in redefining its relations with the military, including a national debate on security related issues.

From the perspective of SSR, the above preconditions underline the first and second generation of SSR simultaneously. The first generation of SSR includes the establishment of appropriate institutional and legislation structures for democratic civilian control while the second generation of SSR is concerned with democratic procedures of oversight and transparency and the wider engagement of civil society¹⁰. In this context, the civilians should not only have more understanding and awareness on defence issues but they should also have sufficient capability to control the implementation of defence policy.

⁷ See Caparini, Marina (1997). The Challenge of Establishing Democratic Civilian Control Over the Armed Forces of Central and Eastern Europe. In Canadian Defence Quarterly. Winter edition.pp.16-24.

⁸ See Fitz-Gerald, Ann (2003).

⁹ Anggoro, Kusnanto (2003). Supremasi Sipil, Profesionalisme Tentara, dan Kontrol Parlemen atas Anggaran Militer [Civilian Supremacy, Military Professionalism, and Parliament Oversight to Military Budget]. Background paper of discussion of Indonesia Working Group on Security Sector Reform-Pro Patria, Hotel Mulia Senayan, Jakarta, 21 April 2003.

¹⁰ See Edmunds, Timothy (2001).

Indonesia's Defence White Paper 2003: A case study.

The government, through Department of Defence, has published on 31 March 2003 a defence white paper. The white paper, as some have argued, was a clear attempt to put the brakes on the ongoing security reform within the Indonesian Military (TNI)¹¹. The paper, titled "*Mempertahankan Tanah Air Memasuki Abad 21*" (Defending the Land and Water at the Start of the 21st Century) was also a welcome attempt by the Department of Defence to become more transparent about its activity.

The major aims of the paper are twofold. Nationally, the white paper is crucial to inform the country about national defence and the need for its integrated implementation. While, internationally, it aims to inform the international community about Indonesia's defence policy. The paper has outlined the government's perception of threats to Indonesia and the strategies needed to deal with these threats.

In a press conference during the launching of the paper, the Minister of Defence, Matori Abdul Djilil stated that the paper implies the readiness of the people to defend the nation with all their mental and physical strength¹². This statement reflects an attempt to influence the people who fully participate in national defence. Still, the paper has invited strong criticism from the wider public since it had not been drawn up after a thorough public debate.

The obvious example of the above issue was the government's decision to buy jetfighters from Russia. This decision had invited a rejection from the parliament since the government did not directly involve the Ministry of Defence in the process of arms acquisition. While the White paper clearly stated the Defence Minister/Minister has an authority to make the policy of arms/weapons acquisition for the TNI¹³. This situation, to a certain extent, shows the lack of understanding among military and civilian officials regarding powers and authority in defence issues. Further, it also indicates the lack of coordination and harmonisation among Government agencies.

Even though national security is the concern of the whole public, the white paper still reflects the domination of military views and interests on defence issues. As the Jakarta Post argued in its editorial, this comes as no surprise considering that although the Department of Defence may be led by a civilian, those running the show, including those who drafted the white paper, come from the TNI¹⁴.

¹¹ See the Jakarta Post, April 15, 2003.

¹² See the Jakarta Post, April 1, 2003.

¹³ See Defence White Paper and Law no.3/2002 on National Defence.

Many civilians argued that this is still a serious weakness in Indonesia, particularly the lack of knowledge of military strategy and defence management of the civilians in the national security policymaking process. The other weaknesses of the civilians in this process were strategic and policy constraints¹⁵ which had limited the substantial role of the civil society in policy making and controlling the policy. Despite these constraints, the first thing that Indonesian civilians should have is more awareness of the defence knowledge and needs in order to be more involved in the debate on security related issues.

Further, the white paper also contains some controversial issues. The first controversial issue is the need for TNI to play a leading role in maintaining domestic security along with the national police (Polri). This issue reflects that the government is still attempting to mix and even blur the distinction between defence and security. Although under the new doctrine, TNI may not have the legal responsibility for internal security, TNI is still heavily involved in counter-insurgency operations.

This is quite obvious when the government has to face regional conflicts, namely communal conflicts in some parts of Indonesia such as in Papua, for example. The government's decision to send more troops to boost military strength in military operation other than war (MOOTW) in Papua has aroused people's suspicions of the TNI. Past experience has shown that sending troops to communal conflict areas -- despite the otherwise noble intention of bringing peace -- has only created more economic, political and even social problems¹⁶.

The paper also, for example, stated that while Indonesia does not have any immediate military external threats, it does have non-conventional threats ranging from terrorism, drug trafficking, separatist movement, illegal fishing, illicit human trafficking and so on which could ultimately jeopardise the national security. In this context, the paper mixed the changing nature of threats that Indonesia is facing in the next decade.

The other controversial point of the paper is the TNI's need to maintain its presence among the people through its huge network of territorial commands. Yet we know that from the previous experience, particularly during the New Order regime, the presence of the territorial structure all the way down to the village level has created the impression of a heavily militarised nation. The other experiences of the military commands was that through these territorial system, TNI has continued to exercise its

¹⁴ See the Jakarta Post, April 15, 2003.

¹⁵ For further discussion on these issues, see Sukma, Rizal, Prasetyono, Edi (2003). Security Sector Reform in Indonesia: The Military and Police. Working Paper no. 9. Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael".

¹⁶ See The Jakarta Post, 8 September 2003.

political influence, even though the concept of *Dwifungsi* (dual function)¹⁷ is legally no longer in politics. Ironically, the paper also seeks to put an end to the debate about TNI's current territorial system by stating that those calling for its abolition are denying the fact that TNI and the people are one and cannot be separated¹⁸.

Ironically, some civilian officials perceive that in many rural areas of Indonesia the civilian governmental infrastructure is inadequate and therefore the territorial system in those regions must remain in place until an adequate civilian government presence can be established. While some military officials believed that the police are incapable of taking on the internal security functions that traditionally have been performed by TNI¹⁹.

Not everyone in the TNI and civilian government, however, agreed that the territorial structure should be abandoned. In between the radical reformist of TNI and the conservative view is the argument for gradual change which maintains that the territorial role is acceptable as long as it is restricted to national security.²⁰

The above points, as some Indonesian civilian experts on military affairs have argued, were counterproductive to one goal of reform, which is to demilitarise the nation as Indonesia march toward a stronger civil society. Further, this point will also disrupt a healthy civil-military relation which requires the premise that the military should obey civilian control²¹. But as Lieutenant General (ret) Agus Widjoyo argued "empowering civilian is the adopted posture of (ABRI) TNI in the era of democratisation, but whether it reduces ABRI's role or not may depend on the quality of people's life"²². The above statement can also be interpreted that the

¹⁷ With this concept, the military (TNI) has enabled to serve its sociopolitical function and to have an institutionalized role in the government.

¹⁸ Anak Agung Banyu Perwita (2003). Memahami Buku Putih Pertahanan RI 2003 [Understanding Indonesia's Defence White Paper 2003], KOMPAS, 26 May.

¹⁹ According to the white paper, the number of Indonesia's police is only approximately 200.000 and if the territorial system is abandoned, the police should take over some of the internal security functions of the territorial system and need to increase its size up to 600.000 officers.

²⁰ This statement is represented by Lieutenant General (ret). Agus Widjoyo.

²¹ This argument was the result of several discussion on TNI's reform in a series of workshops in Jakarta organized by Indonesia's Working Group on Security Sector Reform-Pro Patria in which the writer was also a member of this working group.

²² As quoted from Honna, Jun (2003). Military Politics and Democratization in Indonesia. London:Routledge.p.143.

military still doubts the capabilities of civilians in understanding the security related issues.

Concluding remarks

Even though TNI is now experiencing internal reform, the above arguments show that the published Defence White Paper is still the product of a political system in which the State (military) is stronger than Society. During the New Order period, national security policy issues were used as a powerful instrument by which the state could mitigate the role of civil society. More important, the making and the conduct of national security policy reflected the core values of the state, internal order and political stability.

The limited role and the low capacity of the wider (civilian) society were also shown in the policy making process of the White Paper. As has been argued above, it comes as no surprise considering the lack of political will of the military, the civilians' lack of knowledge on security affairs, the lack of self confidence of the civilian politicians in speeding up TNI reforms with an objective to transforming it into a more professional military organisation and more importantly, the domination of the TNI military views and interests of security related issues as the legacy of the authoritarian regime of the New Order.

However, the white paper provides a rare glimpse into the thinking of the members of society who are in charge of national security. The significant lessons that we can learn from this glimpse is quite disturbing for the pace of internal reform and for our march toward democracy and a strong civil society. The wider concept of security poses a significant challenge to the future of Indonesia's security policy which is not only a question of defending national territories, but it has also to reflect a number of different considerations such as the empowerment of civil society and the protection of civil (human) rights. Finally, in the security sector reform, we are now still closer to the beginning than to an end, and while much difficult jobs remain to be done, considerable progress in TNI's internal reform in Indonesia has been little made.

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