

Foreign Policy Begins At Home: the Domestic Sources of Indonesia's Foreign Policy under SBY's Presidency (2004-2014)

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Introduction

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY)'s presidency lasted for two terms, covering the whole ten years from 2004 to 2014. SBY became the first president in a democratic Indonesia who survived two presidential elections, in 2004 and 2009. Such a ten-year tenure for sure leaves some legacies on Indonesia's domestic politics as well as international relations. Given the fact that the SBY presidency covered the large part of Indonesia's 16 years departure from the authoritarian regime of Suharto, democracy and democratization shaped many of his domestic and foreign policies.

Indonesia's transition to democracy that started in 1998 impacted its foreign policy in that it provides normative foundation and moral voice as a newly democratic country.¹ Coincidentally, the war on global terror also started at about the same time as Indonesia struggles to consolidate its fledgling democracy. Being a country with a Muslim majority population

1 Evan Laksmana "Indonesia's Rising Regional and Global Profile: Does Size Really Matter?" *Contemporary Southeast Asia* Vol. 33(2) (2011)

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and a democracy at a time when the two are seen as not being compatible with each other also brought Indonesia into a new level of international attention. Meanwhile, Indonesia also suffered from various terrorist acts, the most significant one was in Bali 2002. Since then on, the country has entered a complicated period to find the right balance between expanding freedom and liberty as it continued to democratize and security that necessitates a strong presence of the state and its security apparatuses. This is no easy task for the successive presidents following the collapse of Suharto's New Order regime in 1998, from Presidents Habibie, Abdurrahman Wahid, Megawati Sukarnoputri and eventually Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

This paper seeks to explain the domestic sources of Indonesia's foreign policy under SBY's presidency. It delineates two aspects of Indonesian foreign policy, the first is the enabling environment that creates opportunities for President SBY to pursue a more active participation for Indonesia in many international for a, and the second being the structure and actors that in the past 10 years of Indonesia's democratic experience have expanded beyond the small circle of elites concerned with foreign policy.

The Enabling Environment

Economic Performance

During SBY's presidency, Indonesia experienced quite impressive economic performance. Some indicators also show that Indonesia's economy has been stabilized although has yet to bounce back to the pre-1997 financial crisis level. The economic growth has been recorded on average at 6 percent in the past few years, enabled President SBY to create jobs and stabilize the country's economy. Acharya notes that the level of government debt has been down from 70 per cent of Indonesia's GDP during 1997-1998 when it was hit by severe financial crisis to 24 per cent in 2012.² In addition, inflation was also reduced from 20 per cent during the time of financial crisis to 8 per cent in 2012. President SBY may also be given some credits due to his ability to reduce unemployment rate from 8.4 per cent in 2008 to 6.1 per cent in 2012.³

In 2012, Indonesia was considered as the world's 16th largest economy.⁴

2 Amitav Acharya, *Indonesia Matters: Asia's Emerging Democratic Power* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2014), pp. 28-29

3 Ibid.

4 Raoul Oberman, et al, *The Archipelago Economy: Unleashing Indonesia's Potential* (McKinsey Global Institute, 2012), pp. 2-3.

The World Economic Forum Competitiveness Report also noted a dramatic improvement in Indonesia's macroeconomic stability whose rank was 25th in 2012 compared to 89th in 2007.⁵ These promising macroeconomic performance seem to find their way to trickle down to the ordinary people. The country has witnessed significant increase in its gross national income per capita to US\$ 3,563 in 2012, whereas it was US\$ 2,200 in 2000.⁶

Regardless of the fact that it still faces problems with inequality, lack of investment in educating the people, Indonesia's rank in terms of Human Development Index (HDI) has also been improving over the period of SBY years, especially in his first term (see Table 1). The size of Indonesian middle-class in its absolute term is also growing, about 45 million in 2012 and projected to be around 135 million in 2030.⁷

Indonesia then has been included in G-20, an inter-governmental group of 20 world's large economies initiated by the United States in 2010, as it is transitioning from "being a low income country to a middle income country and from a beneficiary country to a beneficiary and concurrently a donor country".⁸

Table 1. Human Development Index (country ranking) of ASEAN Countries: 1980-2010

	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	Change 2005-2010
Brunei	-	19	25	33	37	-4
Cambodia	-	-	109	125	124	1
Indonesia	69	85	95	110	108	2
Lao PDR	-	99	104	126	122	4
Malaysia	46	54	48	55	57	-2
Myanmar	-	-	-	138	132	6
Philippines	50	70	78	95	97	-2
Singapore	-	-	-	28	27	1
Thailand	55	72	76	93	92	1
Vietnam	-	93	93	114	113	1

5 Ibid.

6 Acharya, *Indonesia Matters*, p.32.

7 Oberman, et al, *The Archipelago Economy*, p. 4.

8 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Official Statement by the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs," <http://kemlu.go.id/Pages/IFPDisplay.aspx?Name=MultilateralCooperation&IDP=11&P=Multilateral&l=en>

*Electoral Democracy and Islam*⁹

Indonesia has enjoyed relative political stability and continued economic development during the period of 2004-2014. Meanwhile, the democratization process continues and brings fundamental and dramatic changes in the country's politics. In 2004, Indonesians for the first time directly elected their president an act of which was seen as the affirmation for Indonesia's status as the world's third largest democracy.¹⁰

Democratization helps Indonesia to resort to peaceful solutions to many of its intra-state conflicts, including the Aceh separatist problem and the conflict between Muslims and Christians in Poso. It also triggers a wide-ranging decentralization program through which political and fiscal authorities have been transferred from the central to local government at district level.

More importantly, Indonesia's national politics was continuously mainstreamed into electoral politics. One of the most radical features of Indonesian political reform is the adoption of a direct presidential election system in 2004 through which SBY was elected for the first time. While political parties are "lacking of meaningful platforms, experiencing the high frequency of party-switching and short-term coalition building,"¹¹ political campaigns are now personalized. Individuals who are aspiring to become a presidential candidate set up their own parties, which paves the way for the rise of 'presidential parties'. The prime example is President SBY himself who established the Democratic Party to be his political vehicle in 2004. Indeed, the direct presidential election system adopted in 2004 has necessitated the "presidentialization" of the Indonesian political parties. Party mechanisms are necessary, but they are not sufficient to attract votes. In some cases, candidates have to bypass their party mechanism especially when a party has two or more candidates running for office.¹²

SBY's first term saw a decline of vote share win by Islamic parties.

9 This part of the paper is mainly taken from Philips Vermonde and Rizal Shiddiq, "What happened in the Early Years of Democracy: Indonesia's Experience", in Ishac Diwan Ishac (Ed.), *Understanding the Political Economy of the Arab Uprising* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2014).

10 Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "The Impact of Domestic and Asian Regional Changes on Indonesian Foreign Policy". *Southeast Asian Affairs* (2010)

11 Andreas Ufen, "Political Parties in Post-Suharto Indonesia: Between "Politik Aliran" and Philippinization." German Institute of Global and Area Studies Working Paper No. 37 (2006).

12 The case in point is Jusuf Kalla of Golkar when he paired with SBY as the latter's vice-presidential candidate in 2004. As SBY's running mate, Kalla was campaigning against the Golkar's party presidential candidate Wiranto, who won the nomination through the party's convention. As a result, Kalla had to rely not on Golkar's party mechanism, but more on his own personal network.

The total votes obtained by the Islamic parties dropped from 35 per cent in the 2004 election to 26 per cent in the 2009 election (see Table 2).

Table 2: Vote Shares and Seats of the Islamic parties in the Indonesian parliament

	2004 votes (%)	2004 seats	2009 votes (%)	2009 seats
PAN	6.44	53	6.01	43
PBB	2.62	11	1.8	0
PKB	10.57	52	4.94	27
PKS	7.34	45	7.8	57
PPP	8.15	58	5.3	39
Total	35.12	219	25.85	166

There are at least four explanations as to why the Islamic parties experienced declining support from the electorate. First, pure instrumentalism among voters may be occurring. Being rational, voters see that the Islamic parties are too fragmented so none of the parties has a clear chance of to win the election. As a result, voters throw their support to other parties.

Second, relevant to the first, Muslim voters may have chosen alternative channels outside the electoral arena to pursue their interests. Indeed, non-party Islamic organizations have mushroomed since the fall of Suharto in 1998. Most of these new Islamic group share the same agenda, advocating the implementation of Islamic laws in the country. In many cases, these non-party organizations are more articulate in advancing their agenda than the existing Islamic parties.¹³

Third, political parties tend to always shift to the center, trying to project the image as parties that are not too secular or too Islamic as to find a middle ground.¹⁴ The nationalist parties pursue strategies to accommodate the aspiration of the conservative electorate. There are many examples; one in particular is the fact that two largest nationalist parties, Golkar and PDI-P, are in favor of the implementation of *sharia* (Islamic by-laws) in

13 See Bahtiar Effendy, *Islam and the State in Indonesia* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2003).

14 See Sunny Tanuwidjadja, "Political Islam and Islamic Parties in Indonesia: Critically Examine the Evidence of Islam's Political Decline." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* Vol. 32(1) (2010), pp.29-49.

various districts.¹⁵ While more conservative voters still will not favor the secular-nationalist parties, Islamic voters with a secular view of religion and politics might be attracted to them. It is important to note, however, that the Islamic parties have also pursued moderate agendas to attract less-religious Muslim voters too. Mietzner¹⁶ argues that the Islamic parties have shifted their electoral strategy to what he calls “new centrism” by portraying themselves as pluralistic and inclusive parties in order to seek support from the largely moderate and secular Indonesian society.

As a result of electoral competition, some of the Islamic parties have even distanced themselves from Islamist agenda, particularly that of turning Indonesia into an Islamic state. Two purist Islamic parties, PPP and PKS for example, are no longer supportive of the inclusion of a controversial paragraph, which is called the Jakarta Charter, into the country’s Constitution that will require all Indonesian Muslims to strictly abide by *sharia*. In essence, the decline of vote share gained by Islamic parties in Indonesia illustrates the moderating effect brought about by electoral politics.

The “presidentialization” of politics that leads to individual campaign to attract voters and the moderation effect of electoral politics are the two main features of the political changes that occurred particularly in the first term of SBY’s presidency. While the “presidentialization” of politics makes political actors becoming more sensitive to public opinion, the moderation effect helps forming the image of Indonesia as a model country in which democracy and Islam are compatible with each other.

However, when it comes to foreign policy, successive democratic governments in Indonesia as a matter of fact face a difficult dilemma of the “dual identity” being a new democratic country with a majority Muslim population. As such, Islam rarely enters as core position of Indonesia’s foreign policy, paving the way for a non-religious character of Indonesia’s foreign policy.¹⁷ Yet, the government in power cannot

15 See Michael Buehler, “Sharia by-laws in Indonesian districts: an Indication for Changing Patterns of Power Accumulation and Political Corruption.” *Southeast Asia Research* Vol. 16(2) (2009), pp 165-195; and Robin Bush, “Regional Sharia Regulation in Indonesia: Anomaly or Symptom?” in Greg Fealy and S. White (Eds.), *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2008), pp. 174-191.

16 Marcus Mietzner, *Military Politics, Islam, and the State in Indonesia: from Turbulent Transition to Democratic Consolidation* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2009).

17 Exception is probably on the issue of Palestine of which almost all domestic political actors, including the presidents, political parties and politicians in the parliament, have always been very sympathetic and supportive to the Palestinian cause, not the Israeli’s, which continues on to the whole ten years of SBY’s presidency. See for example: “DPR RI Mendorong Kongres AS Untuk Berperan Mewujudkan Kemerdekaan Palestina”, *Republika*, 4 March 2011; “RI Tegaskan Dukungan: Komite DK PBB Bertemu Membahas Permohonan Palestina”, *Kompas*, 28 September 2011; “RI Lobbies to Pass Resolution on Palestine”, *The Jakarta Post*, 29 November 2012.

ignore the Islamic voices domestically.¹⁸ As one observer puts it: “any government in Indonesia is obliged to move beyond strict secularism by taking into account Muslim aspirations.”¹⁹

The effect of democratization on Indonesia’s foreign policy-making establishment

Democratization brings profound impact of the structure and actors of foreign policy making in Indonesia at both international as well as domestic levels. It forces the government in power to find the right balance between satisfying domestic pressures and maintaining Indonesia’s traditional position on many issues in foreign affairs. This has to be carried out against the fact that democratization proliferates the number of actors in foreign policy making and it places public opinion as one of determining factor.²⁰ In this context, now the making of Indonesian foreign policy involves “multiple centers of power”.

This part of the paper discusses three main arena in which actors are influencing each other in foreign policy making during SBY’s presidency: the Foreign Ministry, the DPR, and public at large.²¹

The Foreign Ministry

The Foreign Ministry had undergone internal reform since 2001, three years before SBY took the presidential office in 2004, under the auspices of then Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda.²² The reform resulted in two important outcomes. First, it ended the contest between civilian and military actors within the ministry over foreign policy and second, it basically reorganized the organizational structure of the ministry that established venues for the involvement of a wider public participation in foreign policy making.²³ Equally important though, the notion of democracy and public participation have now ingrained within the ministry, not only in terms of

18 See Jorn Dosch, “The Impact of Democratization on the Making of Foreign Policy in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.” *Sudostasien Aktuelle* No. 5 (2006), p.64.

19 Rizal Sukma, *Islam in Indonesian Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 22, as quoted in *Ibid*.

20 This is often referred to as the “two-level game.” See Robert Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of Two-Level Games” in *International Organization* vol. 42(3) (1988).

21 Anwar, “The Impact of Domestic and Asian Regional Changes on Indonesian Foreign Policy.”

22 However, Hassan Wirajuda served as Indonesia’s foreign minister for eight years, from 2001 to 2009 meaning that he was the foreign minister during SBY’s first presidential term from 2004-2009.

23 For excellent account on the ministry’s organizational reform, see Greta Nabbs-Keller, “Reforming Indonesia’s Foreign Ministry: Ideas, Organization and Leadership.” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* Vol. 35(1) (2013).

organizational structure but also as an ideational impulse embedded in the Indonesian foreign policy.²⁴

Studies have shown how democratization might have “contagious effect” to a region reflecting an outside-in influence, the use of democracy as a platform by new democracies in their foreign policy reflect an inside-out process that also serves certain purpose. A new democratic regime can use democracy in its foreign policy to distance itself from the past authoritarian regime that it replaces. By doing so, it can associate itself with other democracies which eventually help its democratic consolidation internally.²⁵

In this regard, Indonesia has never intended to export democracy to its neighboring countries in Southeast Asia, but somehow it is pretty clear that the idea of promoting democracy and human rights become a lexicon that Indonesia consciously uses to enhance its new democratic image abroad that had started since 1999.²⁶ It can be seen, for example, from the strategic plan of the foreign ministry that places “democracy as a national identity” as the top priority of Indonesia’s foreign policy (see Table 3).

Table 3: Stages and Priorities of Indonesia’s Foreign Policy 2005-2025

2005-2009	Strengthen and expand national identity as a democratic country in international society
2010-2014	The recovering of Indonesia’s important role as a democratic country which is marked by the success of diplomacy in international forums as a means to safeguard national security, territorial integrity, and the protection of natural resources.
2015-2019	Increase the role of Indonesia as a leader and contribution in international cooperation
2020-2024	The positioning of Indonesia as an independent nation in the global community: create market access, position Indonesia in the right place in international rivalry, increase foreign investment by Indonesian companies

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs” (2013), as quoted in Acharya, *Indonesia Matters*, p. 16

It is safe to say that democracy manifests itself not only in the organizational term of the foreign policy but also as an idea that shapes many of Indonesia’s foreign policy initiatives. Indonesia lobbied

24 The author’s interview with Hassan Wirajuda on 19 November 2014.

25 See for example Alison Stanger, “Democratization and the International System: the Foreign Policies of Interim Governments” in Y. Shain and J. Linz (Eds.), *Between States: Interim Governments and Democratic Transitions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

26 For a review of how Indonesia projected its democratic image before the SBY presidency, see Philips Vermonte. “Demokratisasi dan Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia: Membangun Citra Diri in Bantarto Bandoro (Ed.) *Mencari Desain Baru Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia* (Jakarta: CSIS, 2005).

intensively for ASEAN Charter to be signed by all members²⁷ which, upon its acceptance in 2008, somehow transformed ASEAN from an organization that strongly supports the principle of strict non-interference to the members' internal affairs into the one that urges ASEAN members to acknowledge "the principles of democracy, the rule of law and good governance, respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms."²⁸

The foreign ministry under Wirajuda was also set to engage with various elements of the Indonesian society in foreign policy making processes. It introduced the concept of "total diplomacy", which is defined as "diplomacy that engages all instruments in a manner that involves of all stakeholders and utilizes all elements of influence (multi-track diplomacy)."²⁹

Thus, the foreign ministry expands deliberation processes of Indonesia's foreign policy to include more actors beyond the foreign ministry officials. It was implemented through various means, including regular "foreign policy breakfast" at which the foreign minister invited civil society representatives to discuss various international issues, conducting more intensive public diplomacy to reach out the media, religious groups, and others.³⁰ This public diplomacy practices continue on during the tenure of Marty Natalegawa as the foreign minister in SBY's second term. Nevertheless, critics have said that under foreign minister Natalegawa in the period of 2009-2014, the practices were done in a less intensive manner.³¹

In the second term, President SBY was increasingly confident with Indonesia's foreign policy and the democratic image abroad. In his 2009 inaugural speech, SBY stated the following:

"Indonesia will continue to practice a free and active politics, fighting for justice and world peace. Indonesia will maintain a friendly and moderate spirit and nationalism. Indonesia is facing a strategic environment where no country perceives Indonesia as an enemy and there is no country that Indonesia considers an enemy.

27 Ann Marie Murphy, "Democratization and Indonesian Foreign Policy: Implication for the United States." *Asia Policy* No. 13 (2012), p. 90.

28 ASEAN Secretariat, "The ASEAN Charter" (2008), p.2.

29 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Visi Kementerian Luar Negeri: Landasan, Visi, Misi, Polugri" (2009), <http://www.kemlu.go.id/Pages/Polugri.aspx?l=id>

30 Nabbs-Keller, "Reforming Indonesia's Foreign Ministry," pp. 68-69.

31 Ibid, p.72.

Thus Indonesia can exercise its foreign policy freely in all direction, having a million friends and zero enemies. Lastly, Indonesia will cooperate with anyone with the same intentions and goals to build a peaceful, just, **democratic** and prosperous world. Indonesia will stay at the front line in the efforts to save the earth from climate change. And in reforming the world's economy, mainly through the G-20 in the fight for the Millennium Development Goals, advancing multilateralism through the United Nations and creating harmony among countries. Regionally, Indonesia is working with other ASEAN countries to make Southeast Asia a peaceful, prosperous and dynamic region."³²

At the same time, Indonesia's strong economic performance also further boosted SBY's confidence. Some agencies have projected continued and future economic success of Indonesia. Goldman Sachs included Indonesia in the so-called "Next 11" countries, PricewaterhouseCoopers dubbed it as "The Emerging 7", The Economist grouped Indonesia in "CIVETS" (Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey, and South Africa all of which have shown impressive economic success.³³

As a result, President SBY became a more active player on Indonesia's foreign policy and diplomacy. The president, among others, actively participated in the summits of G-20, ASEAN, and assumed the co-chair role in the UN Secretary General 27-member High Level Panel on the Post-2015 (Millennium Development Goals) Development Agenda, together with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom.³⁴ As such, although the foreign ministry remains in "driver-seat", the second term of President SBY witnessed an era when the president was also an enthusiastic and active foreign policy player. It, at one point, may create a rift between the foreign minister and the president.

A case in point was the opposing statements made by Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa and President SBY regarding the United States (US)'s

32 SBY Inaugural Speech (2009). The full text is available online at: <http://thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/archive/sbys-inaugural-speech-the-text/>

33 Karen Brooks, "Is Indonesia Bound for the BRICs?" *Foreign Affairs* (2011), as quoted in Acharya, *Indonesia Matters*.

34 See "UN Secretary General Appoints High Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda", <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=2692&ArticleID=9243&l=en>

plan to set up a marine station in Darwin–Australia³⁵, which is of a very close proximity to the Indonesian territory. The foreign minister Marty Natalegawa questioned the plan by citing that it might create tension in the region, while President SBY stated that he was assured that the US plan posed no harm. Nevertheless, the foreign ministry and the presidential palace later denied rumors about the rift between the two.³⁶

Having said all the above, the foreign ministry and the president as a matter of fact have both to deal with increasingly powerful political parties and legislatures at the DPR. The DPR, as a consequence of political reform, acquire more power including overseeing the conduct of the country's foreign policy which traditionally is held by the executive branch of power, i.e. the president and/or the foreign ministry. The next part of the paper discusses some issues involving the DPR in foreign policy making during the ten years of SBY's presidency.

The Parliament – DPR

The continued political reforms have also resulted in the four-series of amendments to Indonesia's 1945 Constitution since 1998, which elevated the authority of the DPR vis-à-vis the executive branch of power. The empowered DPR has been eagerly exercising its newly acquired power against the presidents. The constitutional amendment stipulates that ambassadorial appointment, which traditionally is the sole authority of the executive under a presidential system setting, must be consulted with the DPR. In addition, the amendment also provides a provision that the DPR will no longer be a rubber-stamping state institution in regards to international treaties/agreement signed by the presidents. Although the DPR had always had the authority to ratify international treaties under the old 1945 Constitution, the amendments allow the DPR not to ratify a treaty if it is not in the country's best national interest.³⁷

During the 2004–2009 period, the DPR's Commission I³⁸ had carried out the so-called “fit and proper test” to more than 60 would-be Indonesian ambassadors and had given recommendations to President SBY regarding which candidates should be dropped off from their

35 “Indonesia Wants Answer on US Military Plan”, *The Age*, 12 November 2011, <http://www.theage.com.au/national/indonesia-wants-answers-on-us-military-plans-20111111-1nbg.html>

36 “No Rift in Personalities and Policy between President and FM”, *The Jakarta Post*, 31 December 2011, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/12/31/discourse-no-rift-personalities-or-policy-between-president-and-mc-fm.html>

37 See Anwar, “The Impact of Domestic and Asian Regional Changes.”

38 The commission is responsible in overseeing foreign and security policy.

ambassadorial candidacies.³⁹ On the authority to ratify international treaties, the cases of the 2007 Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA) between the governments of Indonesia and Singapore, and the passing of UN Security Council Resolution no. 1747 that imposes sanction against Iran over its nuclear program are two cases that have been well-documented by scholars⁴⁰ showing how the DPR has been eagerly flexing its muscles against the president on international issues.

The two governments signed the DCA in February 2007. Indonesia hoped to secure a separate bilateral extradition treaty (ET), submitted to the DPR in one package with the DCA for ratification, in order to capture several economic criminals and corruptors from Indonesia who allegedly have found a safe heaven in Singapore. Indonesia as a matter of fact has been wanting to have an ET with Singapore since as far back as the 1970s.⁴¹

Meanwhile, by signing the DCA, Singapore would gain access to three areas within the Indonesian waters/territory to conduct its military exercise. As the details of the DCA emerged, protests broke out not only from within the DPR, but also from the would-be affected three local governments⁴², and the Indonesian Navy.⁴³ Two political parties, PPP and PAN, in the DPR also strongly opposed the ratification of the DCA. Succumbing from the pressures, the DPR eventually rejected and therefore refused to ratify the DCA as well as the extradition treaty. The DCA case is particularly instructive in showing the new reality of foreign policy making in Indonesia that involves “multiple centers of power”, not only the president or the foreign ministry.

The case of the UNSC Resolution no 1747 on Iran highlights the same dynamic between the executive and legislative branches of power, and also public opinion. Being a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Indonesia involved in the first drafting of the resolution. Although in principle Indonesia was supportive to the Iranian nuclear program so long as it is for peaceful purposes, the final resolution

39 Teguh Santosa, et al, *Komisi I: Senjata-Satelit-Diplomasi* (Jakarta: Suara Harapan Bangsa, 2009), pp.181-182.

40 See Anwar, “The Impact of Domestic and Asian Regional Changes.” See also a detailed account on the Iranian nuclear issue by Iis Gindarsah, “Democracy and Foreign Policy-Making in Indonesia: a Case Study of the Iranian Nuclear Issue 2007-2008.” *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol.34(3): pp. 416-437.

41 See Hikmanto Juwana, “Is the Extradition Treaty in the Interest of Singapore?” *The Jakarta Post*, 8 August 2007.

42 The DCA would give access to Singapore to conduct military access in Siabu (Kampar, Riau province), Natuna waters (Riau Islands province), and Baturaja (South Sumatera Province), see Anwar, “The Impact of Domestic and Asian Regional Changes.”

43 “RI-Singapore DCA Should be Studied Carefully: Navy Chief”, *Antara News, TANGGAL*, <http://www.antaraneews.com/en/news/72725/ri-singapore-dca-should-be-studied-carefully-navy-chief>

endorsed several measures of harsh sanction on Iran as it believed that the Iranian government did not comply with the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as an internationally agreed protocol on nuclear program to which Iran is a party.

Soon, criticisms sparked from many corners at home. Politicians as well as various Islamic mass-organizations openly expressed their disappointment over the Indonesia's position on the Resolution. The Indonesian public also showed disagreement with the government⁴⁴. Underlying these oppositions to the government official position over the Resolution was the accusation that Indonesia was very weak in dealing with the pressures from the West, notably the United States. Apparently, domestic political actors hoped that Indonesia would align itself with the interest of its fellow "Muslim country". Eventually, President SBY found himself in a political stand off with the DPR as the latter set to launch an interpellation initiative over the Iranian issue.

The initiative allowed the DPR to summon President SBY to explain his administration's decision to support the Resolution. President SBY refused to explain his policy before the DPR members, which in turn created more tensions between the two. As it turns out, over the same period President SBY's approval rating was in decline while time was fast approaching the coming 2009 election. His political opponents in the DPR continued to exploit President SBY's position on the Iranian issue in order to gain public sympathy. All this dynamics led the government to adjust its position over the Iranian nuclear issue. The subsequent UNSC Resolution no.1803 that imposed additional sanctions on the Iranian government was passed in March 2008. Indonesia abstained.

Interestingly, the DPR is also keen to show that it too can actively project the image of Indonesia as a democracy abroad. The 2004 legislative election brought in new faces into the DPR some of whom were long standing pro-democracy and human rights activists.⁴⁵ These fresh legislatures became influential in Commission I on Foreign and Security Policy and Commission III on Human Rights. Soon, they actively participated in promoting democratic values through the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus (AIPMC). These new member of the DPR attempted to put significant pressure on the Indonesian government to act more firmly against the undemocratic Myanmar government, while

44 One public opinion survey conducted by Kompas Daily revealed that more than 50 per cent of the respondents were disappointed with the government approval of the UNSC Resolution 1747. See Gindarsah, "Democracy and Foreign Policy-Making in Indonesia, p. 422.

45 Djoko Susilo and Nursyahbani Katjasungkana both are respected civil society activists.

the government was actually exercising a more pro-active engagement with Myanmar.

The DPR members in Commission I executed several measures with regards to the issue of Myanmar. For example, it successfully blocked the acceptance of new Myanmar ambassador to Jakarta. In addition, it was also able to delay the appointment of an Indonesian ambassador to Myanmar for more than a year, which was supposed to take place in the late 2006 and eventually occurred only in early 2008.

Moreover, the DPR also delayed the ratification of the ASEAN Charter as it expressed doubt about the Charter's human rights provisions that was believed to be weak on Myanmar. Nevertheless, President SBY was still having the upper hand over the DPR regarding the Myanmar issue. For example, the Indonesian government was abstaining on a UN Security Council resolution in 2006 that imposed stern measures against Myanmar, pointing out the fact that it did not adopting policy preferred by Commission I at home.⁴⁶

Conclusion

This paper has highlighted the fact that democratization also affects Indonesia's foreign policy establishment in a number of ways. First, political reform that comes as a logical consequence of democratization triggers reform in the heart of foreign-policy making arena, which is the ministry of foreign affairs. Not only in organizational term, the reform has mainstreamed the notion of democracy into the ministry both in terms of inclusion of multiple stakeholders in foreign policy making and of making it an ideal to be realized through diplomacy.

Second, the DPR has also emerged as a new power center equipped with some Constitutional rights to oversee the conduct of Indonesia's foreign relations. Although it may in breach of the presidential system of which foreign policy is normally seen as an area controlled by the president, the Myanmar case described above reveals that the executive branch of power still retains control over the country's foreign policy.

Third, nevertheless, as experienced during the two-term period of SBY's presidency, democratization and the political reform it has brought

46 For a more detailed account on Commission I's active involvement on the Myanmar issue during the period of 2004-2009 see Lee Jones, "Democratization and Foreign Policy in Southeast Asia: the Case of the ASEAN-Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus", paper presented at The Still the Asian Century? Conference, University of Birmingham, 10-13 September 2008.

complicate the process of foreign policy making. “Multiple centers of power” emerge, causing the government in power to be restrained as not to upset existing “status-quo” on certain issues, in particular ones that relate to the Muslim majority electorate.

The paper has also revealed that while domestic economic and political situations to some extent boost President SBY’s confidence to be active in foreign policy arena, the same situations, in particular the political one, also serves as constraint to the president in carrying out high profile foreign policy as it is shown by the Iranian nuclear case.