

## **IDSS SEMINAR NOTES**

### **IDSS Public Lecture**

### **"Military Reform Post Suharto's Era: Civil – Military's New Relations in Indonesia"**

**Guest Speaker: Dr Yuddy Chrisnandi\*  
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#### ***Introduction***

One of the most critical issues in the post Suharto era is how to reconfigure the role of the TNI (Tentara Negara Indonesia/ Indonesian National Army). Since 1965, TNI had been the major socio-political force in Indonesia and the principle backer of the Suharto regime. When Suharto fell from power in 1998, the military has withdrawn from political life and sought to enhance its professional skills by focusing on external defence. Despite the fact that elected officials are now expected to determine policy outcomes, has civilian oversight over the TNI been realized? Dr Yuddy Chrisnandi's lecture was based on themes related to his recently completed manuscript on post-Suharto civil-military relations in Indonesia currently under review for publication as a RSIS monograph. He analyzed the nature of the relationship between the TNI and the four post Suharto administrations focusing on whether each of the post-Suharto presidents has been able to establish civilian oversight over the TNI. He also suggested what lessons that can be learnt from these experiences and provided some insights on the future of the TNI.

#### ***Military Reforms in Post Suharto's era***

Dr Chrisnandi began his lecture by giving a brief structural framework of his manuscript. In his manuscript, he gave a brief background on why the Indonesian military support national reform. He also listed who were the playmakers in both the military and political organizations during the time when Suharto stepped down from power. The manuscript also touches on an important topic on the relations between the military and the political opposition groups. Some of military generals had links and intense communication with the opposition parties during the time of reform. Thus, that communication can shed some understanding and also to support the agenda of reforms made.

A special attention was given to the role of military power and the military link under President Habibie's leadership. There are not many books or articles that discuss the military link during Habibie's presidency term. Dr Chrisnandi's manuscript had a section dedicated to this topic and he even listed the military generals under Habibie's term of presidency. General Faisal Tanjung was the former political Minister-coordinator under President Habibie. Lieutenant-General Sintong Panjaitan was his special advisor. Lieutenant-General Syarwan Hamid was the Head of party faction in parliament and was also elected by Habibie to become the minister of interior. Lieutenant-General Yunus Yosfiah was the Head of BABINKUM- the law institution of the armed forces- and was

elected to be minister of communication during Habibie's presidential period. Lieutenant-General Andi Ghalib was the former Indonesian attorney under Habibie. Lieutenant-General ZA Maulani was the intelligence chief under Habibie. Mayor-General Kivlan Zein was under Prabowo at that time, but still maintained good contact with Habibie.

### ***Generals under Suharto's control***

Dr Chrisnandi also spent much time explaining the group of generals under Suharto's control during his term of presidency. He explained how Suharto took the military under his direct control. All of the generals appointed by Suharto in Kendana had to have links with Suharto directly or Suharto's family. Suharto's family could promote some general or high-ranking officer to Suharto. However, they need to pledge loyalty to Suharto at that time. During Suharto's presidential term, all of the military belonged to Suharto and Suharto can control all of the military.

Nonetheless, during the power struggle in the Reform era, only some generals were trusted by Suharto because of their loyalty to him. These generals were General Wiranto, General Hantono, General Subagyp HS, General Dibyo Widodo and Mayor-General Sjafrie Syamsudin. Although all of them were loyal to Suharto, but they had different agendas. For example, General Wiranto was loyal to Suharto but he could not work well with General Hartono. General Subagyo HS was the chief-of-army under General Wiranto, but Suharto could check and balance him directly and he was not 100% loyal to General Wiranto. This resulted in conflicts between the generals.

### ***Generals with close relationships with Wiranto***

There were a few generals who developed close relationships with General Wiranto. This provided the foundation for Wiranto's close relationship with President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyuno in the later years. The generals were Lieutenant-General Widodo AS, Lieutenant-General Fachrurrozi and Lieutenant-General Faridz Zainudin. Lieutenant-General Faridz Zainudin was former chief of intelligence in armed forces and became inspector general in defense ministry. Others include Mayor-General Sudrajat, who was the spokesman for armed forces, and Mayor-General Sudi Silalahi, who was the assistant to Susilo B. Yudhoyuno. The former structure was enough to communicate with Susilo but General Wiranto also always include Mayor-General Sudi in any discussions with him and Susilo. Mayor-General Zacky Anwar Makarim and Brigadier-General Saurip Kadi had also developed close relationships with General Wiranto. In fact, all the generals mentioned gave their full support to General Wiranto.

### ***Generals on the grey area***

There were also generals who were on the grey area like Lieutenant-General Hendro Prijono, Lieutenant-General Agum Gumelar, Mayor-General Agus WK, Mayor-General Agus Widjoyo and Mayor-General Hari Sabarno. Generals on the grey area had formulated own strategy for their own position. They had successfully obtained high

positions after Suharto's era. Lieutenant-General Gumelar wanted to be one of the ministers. Mayor-General Sabarno became former minister of internal affairs under Megawati's administration. Dr. Chrisnandi was of the opinion that these generals on the grey areas are smart general who play the important rule at the time and until today.

### ***The Reformist***

After the Suharto's administration was toppled down, the reformists became the most important group directing the change in military and civil relations. The Ciganjur group had the most influence in the process at that time. The Ciganjur groups of organization leaders include Amien Rais, Gus Dur, Megawati and Sri Sultan HB X. The other group of reformists consists of the intellectuals and academicians like Nurcholish Madjid, Asman Budhi Santoso, Ryass Rashid, Affan Gafar and Rizal Ramli among others. Mass and political organizations like students' movement, HMI and KAMMI were also part of the reformist groups. In fact, students' movements were important in making impressions on the streets. These reformist groups were successful in resulting changes in the post-Suharto's era that many of them gained political positions. Rama Pratam, leader of KAMMI, is now a member of parliament.

### ***Sources of Information for the book***

Dr. Chrisnandi explained that he obtained the information used in his book through direct interview with 27 officers from the Indonesian army and 1 former president, Gus Dur. These people knew and were involved in the power struggle and were the policy makers during the end of the New Order period. The book was written as a doctoral research on civil and military relations. The observations and point of views made were based on Dr. Chrisnandi's experiences as an activist and a scientist, with involvement in political parties like Golkar.

The purposes for writing the book were basically to describe what kind of military reforms that happened in the post-Suharto's era and to describe and compare the working of civil and military relations during the administrations of the presidents in the post-Suharto's period. The book also serves to describe the role of some generals in the reform era, describe the relations among actors of reform and also to describe how the face of Indonesian politics and its prospects after the military reform.

### ***Civil and Military relationships in the Transition Era***

Dr. Chrisnandi also delved on a comparison of civil and military relationships in the Transition era, under the different presidents' administrations. Habibie ruled Indonesia from 21 May 1998 to 26 October 1999. Under Habibie, the military implemented internal reforms. Habibie had allowed the military a wider scope in which to develop their own autonomy. There was no interfering to the internal military policies. This was mainly due to strong relations between Habibie and Genral Wiranto. The detachment of police force from ABRI occurred in April 1999. New political parties were allowed to set up and participate in the 1999 General Election. Habibie gave full support to fairness and

opened the 1999 General Elections. Habibie was not involved in Golkar and kept a distance with the other political parties too. On the other hand, the military respected the government's policy for memorandum in East Timor, despite it being hard for the military to release the region.

President Abdul Rahman Wahid ruled Indonesia from 26 October 1999 to July 2000. Under Abdul Rahman, civil and military relations can be marked in three phases. The relation between Abdul Rahman and the military was controversial in nature. Initially, the transition phase from Habibie to Abdul Rahman had given the military broad bargaining powers to influence the policies of the newly formed cabinet. In fact, General Wiranto had pushed some names to be put in the cabinet strongly to President Abdul Rahman. The second phase saw Abdul Rahman wielding his authority to regulate and control the military. He fired General Fachrurrozi, General Sudrajat and made General Wiranto non-active. Instead, he appointed Tyasno Sudarto, Agus WK and Saurip Kadi into high positions in the military. General Sudarto was not well-liked and welcome by the military officers. General Wiranto had initially recommended Susilo B. Yudhoyuno to be Chief General, but President Abdul Rahman had insisted on Sudarto. He had subjective control of the military. To appease the Indonesians on Sudarto's appointment, Abdul Rahman had said that General Wiranto had encouraged the appointment, but it is not the case.

The third phase of civil and military relations occurred when President Abdul Rahman could no longer control the military and submitted to its pressure. He interfered too much into the military and made the officers unhappy. More than 100 high ranking officers wanted to resign from the armed forces and cause Abdul Rahman to panic. The decree in July 2001 received lacked of support from military and brought him down.

Megawati took over as President from August 2001 to 20 October 2004. Under her, there was a harmonious relation between the military and her. The military received a lot of respect from Megawati. The military was involved in the restructuring process of national policies on defense and security, particularly with respect to declaring the state of emergency in Aceh. Megawati understood the strong military's views regarding issues of separatism in Indonesia. Thus, she had brought the military into the decision process of political changes. However, a problem occurred between the military, government and parliament regarding the purchase of 4 Sukhoi planes. The parliament took charge of investigations regarding the issue of corruption into the process of buying the Sukhois. This led to the passing of the Bill no.3/2002 on State Defense, which defined issues that reflected the existence of civil supremacy. The Bill also suggested that the fundamental reforms of military should be more professional in nature and far away from politics.

Current President Susilo B. Yudhoyuno was the first President to be democratically elected through a direct general election. His administration represented the success of democratic development in the national reformation era that was capable of abolishing the dichotomy of civil versus military in society's political life. However, he still appointed several senior military officer into his cabinet. He also cancelled Megawati's letter no.32/2004 and replaced Chief of Command, Ryamizard, with Djoko Suyanto. This move created conflict with the parliament.

Nonetheless, there is still civilian subjective control over military. Susilo B. Yudhoyuno's control of the civil government over military was superior to the previous era. In fact, civil and military relations are in its best condition in the history of Indonesia politics. The military gives respect to several sensitive issues, such as the Helsinki agreement, Ambalat and asylum visas given by Australia to the Papuans. President Susilo had handled the military better than other presidents.

### *Some problems on military reforms remain*

Despite the military reforms slowly being introduced in the transition era, some problems still remain. One such issue is the dispute of implementation of Bills related to the military and state defense. Political military culture still persists, despite efforts to depoliticize the Indonesia military. There is also a tension on issues of the military's business. In Bill 34, the military is not allowed to engage in politics or join political party and run a business. However, the military still runs businesses today. The military had been given a timeframe to 2009 to end their businesses.

Other persisting problems include the practice of corruption to produce military requirements, the military's neglect of their officer's welfare and not having strong commitment to developing the strategic industry of national weapons. Dr. Chrisnandi also noted that the Indonesian military is incapable of prioritizing their expense. There is a need to expand the role of engagement of the military with the defense and security institutions. This is important as many disputes occur among the intelligence institutions and military on how to handle terrorism issues.

Regenerations take time to change. Military reforms become harder particularly because during the reform era, some officers became close to politics. Hence, it is difficult to change the mindset of military politics. The country need to wait for new generations who is not involved in politics from the start.

### *Conclusions*

Dr. Chrisnandi's concluding remarks reasserts the findings of his research on Indonesia's military reforms in the post-Suharto's era. There are many changes in TNI's internal reforms, with Wiranto and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyuno taking the most important role. With respect to civil and military relations in the reform Era, harmony was achieved during Habibie's presidential term. Under Megawati's presidency, there was minimal conflict. However, pool relations were experienced during President's Wahid era. The implications of Indonesia's civil and military relations saw the establishment of close cooperation between civil and military leaders. Military professionalism is still hindered by budget restrains and cultural limitations as well as officers' mentality.

The implication of internal military reform will pave way for the road to democracy and civil supremacy. The reform incident on 21 May 1998 highlights the importance of the role of military leaders. The prospect of military role in public arena increases in the transition Era. Dr. Chrisnandi ended his talk by listing down the officers' concept of an

ideal civil and military relation, where the military submits to the democratically elected civil government without exception. The civil government should involve the military in the process of National decision making. The civil government should also understand military issues and honors the military's internal autonomy. The civil authority should provide adequate welfare for the soldiers and allocate the military a sufficient budget. Lastly, there should be no civil-military dichotomy in social life.

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*\* Born in Bandung, West Java and educated at Pajajaran University and the University of Indonesia where he received his PhD in 2004, Dr Yuddy Chrisnandi is currently a Member of Parliament representing the Golkar faction in the DPR-RI. He is currently member of Komisi I or Commission I for the parliamentary term 2004-2009. Komisi I exercise oversight in matters pertaining to Defence, Intelligence, Foreign Affairs, Communications and Information. He has held a variety of political appointments in the Golkar Party since 1996 and is currently Head of Mass Organizations DPP MKGR and Golkar's Head of the Department for Membership and Caderization. Dr Chrisnandi continues to lecture at the National University in Jakarta and the University of Indonesia. He is the author of two books recently published by LP3ES entitled **Reformasi TNI, Perspektif Baru Hubungan Sipil-Militer di Indonesia** (2005) and **Kesaksian Para Jenderal** (2007). He was a Visiting Fellow at IDSS from January to March 2003.*