

**CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN INDONESIA
AFTER JOKOWI**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The willingness of Indonesian President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) to let the military and the Ministry of Defence expand their powers during his two terms in office will make it all the more difficult for his successor in 2024 to exert control over these institutions – assuming such control is seen as desirable. Civilian oversight of defence procurement powers will be particularly difficult to reassert.

Subordination of the military to civilian political control is a defining characteristic of democracies. This entails civilian control over decision-making, strategy-setting, and military spending and procurement procedures, as well as strong oversight mechanisms to ensure fiscal, operational and human rights accountability.

Following the 1998 transition to democracy in Indonesia, the military (Tentara Nasional Indonesia, TNI) seemed to relinquish its political role and cede control over internal security to the police, but it was not that simple. The division of labour with the police was never clearly defined, particularly in the absence of any significant external threat that might have facilitated a redefinition of the military's role; civilian politicians were often inept; and no civilian mechanisms were ever established to provide either overall strategic direction or competent oversight. The result was that little by little, and much more rapidly under Jokowi, the military regained much of its influence as well as credibility with the Indonesian public. It will be important to watch whether the slow recognition of China as an external threat will add to the TNI's argument for more resources and further chip away at civilian control.

One reason that both the TNI and Ministry of Defence (MOD) grew so much under Jokowi's leadership was that his political interests coincided with their institutional priorities or with the personal political ambitions of the individuals who led them. Jokowi's interests included broadening his political coalition, efficient implementation of infrastructure projects, including a new capital in Kalimantan, crisis and disaster management, and beginning with his second term, building a political dynasty for his sons. He was never particularly interested in security issues per se. The institutional interests of the TNI and MOD, while frequently at odds with one another, included preserving the territorial command structure, regaining a military role in internal security at the expense of the police, increasing budgets and gaining access to state-of-the-art equipment, and ensuring jobs for an oversupply of high-ranking officers. Of senior officials with political ambitions, the most prominent is retired General Prabowo Subianto, Jokowi's opponent in the 2014 and 2019 presidential elections, currently his Defence Minister, and as of July 2023, the front-runner for the presidency in 2024.

This paper explores the consequences of Jokowi's lack of interest in keeping the military in check, and what the consequences could be, particularly if Prabowo Subianto is elected.

II. BACKGROUND: CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AFTER SOEHARTO

Post-Soeharto military reforms that separated the military from the police, removed non-elected parliamentary seats for military personnel, and ended the practice of appointing active-duty officers to local government positions ended after 2004. New laws gave the police the primary role in internal security, but no progress was made on reforming the military's territorial command structure that paralleled the government's administrative structure down to the village level, ensuring that the military would keep a hand in internal security and compete with the police in rent-seeking at a local level.¹ The MOD, long a military bastion to the point that the last minister under Soeharto was simultaneously Commander of the Armed Forces, was returned to civilian control – superficially, and as it turned out, temporarily.² The armed forces commander was never placed under the MOD but reported directly to the president, as did the national police commander. Problems identified early on of overlap in certain “grey areas” between police and military, inadequate civilian oversight, and lack of strategic direction were never resolved.³

Not only did reform stop, but it turned out that many in the political elite, and particularly in the army, saw civilian control over the military as a Western concept to begin with, not compatible with Indonesian norms and culture.⁴ Jokowi's predecessor, (Ret.) Lt. Gen. Soesilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), once seen as a military reformer, focused on professionalisation and modernisation of the armed forces but did nothing to promote the “second generation” reforms of democratic oversight and accountability.⁵ Instead he used his influence to ensure that friends, relatives and loyal associates got plum positions in the military hierarchy, smoothing whatever ruffled feathers he created in the process by attending to the military's institutional interests:

He more than doubled the defense budget, positioned hundreds of senior officers into civilian ministries and agencies, expanded the territorial command structure, and created a multi-decade modernization plan under the Minimum Essential Force blueprint.⁶ The TNI's nonmilitary roles, from counterterrorism to civic action, also expanded under Yudhoyono.⁷

¹ It did not help that as late as 2021, Indonesian defence strategy still emphasised that all serious risks to Indonesia's security were internal and that the TNI “must increase its preparedness to deal with terrorism, radicalism, separatism, the latest danger of Communism, natural disasters, humanitarian aid and international peace-keeping missions.” See Kementerian Pertahanan Republik Indonesia, “Kebijakan Pertahan Nasional, Tahun 2021,” *Wira: Media Informasi Kementerian Pertahanan*, Edisi 2021, p.44.

² Marcus Mietzner, “Democracy and Military Oversight in Crisis: The Failed Civilianisation of Indonesia's Ministry of Defence,” *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, April 2023, pp.7-23.

³ International Crisis Group, “Indonesia: Rethinking Internal Security,” Asia Report No.90, 20 December 2004.

⁴ Jacqui Baker, “Professionalism without reform: the security sector under Yudhoyono”, in Edward Aspinall et.al., eds, *The Yudhoyono Presidency: Indonesia's Decade of Stability and Stagnation*, Singapore, 2015, p.115.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ MEF was a 20-year plan developed by a civilian defence minister, Juwono Sudarsono, that envisioned a major modernization program of the TNI within a limited budget, focusing on upgrading the navy and airforce.

⁷ Evan A. Laksmana, “Civil-Military Relations under Jokowi: Between Military Corporate Interests and Presidential Handholding”, *Asia Policy*, Vol.14, October 2019, pp.63-71.

He could do this because he was an insider and knew how the TNI functioned. His successor, Jokowi, was an outsider without his own political base who wanted the military onside but knew little and cared less about security issues. He surrounded himself with military advisers for what one scholar called “presidential handholding”, older men whose advice he trusted who could help him through bilateral and multilateral meetings while at the same serving as liaisons to the military establishment.⁸ They steered him away from reform and toward reinforcing military interests:

Jokowi almost doubled the defense budget from roughly \$5.7 billion in 2014 to \$8.9 billion in 2020 and allowed the TNI to expand its structure across Indonesia. He also further encouraged the TNI to expand its nonmilitary activities. Research by the Jakarta-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies shows that between 2014 and 2017, the TNI and Ministry of Defense signed 133 agreements and memoranda with ministries, social organizations, and universities on various programs ranging from basic military training to rural development projects. Finally, Jokowi issued a presidential regulation after the election that would allow active-duty officers to be assigned to various civilian agencies and ministries to accommodate hundreds of officers experiencing promotional logjams within the TNI.⁹

He also went some way to accommodating the military in its quest for a greater role in counter-terrorism, ordering the military in 2015 to work with the police to capture the pro-ISIS insurgent leader in Poso, Santoso, whom the police had failed to capture in the previous three years. A military unit, working as part of a joint task force, found and killed him shortly thereafter.¹⁰

As the now much more confident president embarked on a second term after winning a bruising re-election in 2019, the military became less a crutch to lean on than a tool of choice to get things done, faster and more efficiently than the bureaucracy could. The TNI also became a source of support as Jokowi strengthened his parliamentary coalition to ensure that important parts of his legislative agenda were adopted, and the creation of a new family dynasty could gather momentum.

The most important step in this regard was his surprise move to take his bitter rival, Prabowo Subianto, into his cabinet as Defence Minister in December 2019 with a virtual *carte blanche* to do whatever he wanted and buy whatever he wished with the highest budget of any ministry, even as many suspected that in the process he was building a war chest to make a final run for the presidency in 2024.¹¹ But if Jokowi refused to keep Prabowo in check, even when he ventured into matters of foreign policy, the TNI leadership was not as amenable

⁸ Ibid. Among these advisers during his first term were retired generals Luhut Pandjaitan, Ryamizard Ryacudu and Hendropriyono.

⁹ Ibid.p.69.

¹⁰ For details on military-police competition over Poso, see IPAC, “Expanding Role of the Indonesian Military”, Report No.19, 25 May 2015, pp.8-11; “Update on the Indonesian Military’s Influence,” Report No.26, 11 March 2016, and “Militant Groups in Poso: Down but not Out”, Report No.86, 27 June 2023.

¹¹ Even with a budget that was large relative to other ministries, Indonesia still spent less than 1 per cent of GDP on defence and much of the equipment that Prabowo purchased was used.

when he ventured on to its turf, underscoring the fact that the TNI was determined to keep the ministry as its submissive fief. A draft revision of the 2004 TNI law (discussed below), which Prabowo opposes, aims, among other things, to remove the involvement of the Defence Ministry in budget planning.

III. JOKOWI'S POLITICAL INTERESTS

Jokowi's apparent comfort with the military did not stem from any desire to return Indonesia to quasi-military control. Rather, in his first term, he needed advice on affairs of state, and he needed to expand his political coalition beyond his party, PDIP. This was not only to pursue his infrastructure and investment projects but also to build a circle of trusted allies beyond the reach of PDIP head Megawati Sukarnoputri, who tended to treat him not as president but as an insignificant cog in her party machinery. Jokowi was aided in his reliance on the military by the TNI's generally positive image. (It had risen from being the most loathed institution at the time Soeharto stepped down to the most trusted by 2015 and maintained that position thereafter.)¹²

By his second term, Jokowi's interests had evolved to securing his legacy, particularly with the construction of a new capital in East Kalimantan and moving the country's political nerve centre out of Jakarta, which was widely reported to be sinking with climate change. He was also determined to build a political dynasty for his children and son-in-law in a way that would enable him to have influence after his two terms were over. (His supporters floated the idea of a third term, but it did not fly.)¹³

A. *Broadening his Political Coalition*

Many of the people Jokowi turned to were conservative retired military officers, either because they were already senior figures in political parties and he needed the parties' support, or they were brought in on the advice of his closest adviser, (Ret.) Gen. Luhut Pandjaitan. Luhut was a personal friend and business partner and a powerful figure in Golkar, the ruling party under Soeharto, which because of its nationwide reach especially outside

¹² The TNI was also ranked first as the most trusted institution in the country, according to a 2015 survey by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). See CNN Indonesia, "Survei CSIS: TNI jadi institusi paling dipercaya public", cnnindonesia.com, 25 October 2015. In 2022, another CSIS survey with 1,200 respondents aged 17 to 39 found 93.5 per cent trusted the TNI more than any other institution, while the police (Polri), wracked by seemingly endless scandals of corruption, incompetence, and repression, ranked just above the national parliament (DPR) at the bottom. The military's formal withdrawal from internal security and the lessening of direct interaction with the public in most areas of Indonesia is undoubtedly one reason public perception of the TNI changed. (Papua is a notable exception, where indigenous Papuans make no distinction between the TNI and Polri and frequently fear both, for good reason.)

¹³ Indonesia's presidents are constitutionally limited to two five-year terms. A term beyond 2024 for Jokowi would either require a constitutional amendment or a postponement of the 2024 election in the name of an emergency. The idea was first floated in 2021 at the height of Covid and was periodically revived thereafter by people believed to be close to Jokowi's inner circle. Jokowi himself never publicly endorsed the idea and said he would abide by the Constitution, but he never forcefully rejected the idea either. See "Wacana Jokowi 3 Periode, Begini Sikap Jokowi dari Waktu ke Waktu: Menampar Muka Saya," tempo.co, 10 February 2023.

Java, became one of the strongest parties in democratic Indonesia. His military network, called Bravo 5, became one mechanism for getting support from military circles in 2014 that might otherwise have gone to his rival Prabowo.

Jokowi rewarded Luhut, first with a position as chief of staff; then as Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs (Menkopolhukam), and then as Coordinating Minister for Maritime and Investment when Jokowi in 2016 suddenly put former (Ret.) Gen. Wiranto in the security slot. Again, that move, which brought Wiranto into the Cabinet, was not so much a sign that Jokowi wanted a military-dominated administration, but an exchange to mollify Wiranto's Hanura party after Jokowi sacked two of its cabinet members in a reshuffle. Luhut was taken by surprise by the move and was clearly not happy. While some media analysts portrayed it as a demotion because Luhut was perceived as growing too powerful, Jokowi reassured him that maritime affairs were close to his heart and he needed someone he could trust to pursue his goals of transforming Indonesia into a global maritime axis, improving inter-island connections within the archipelago and upgrading seaport infrastructure.¹⁴

The potential power of the job became apparent when one sees the ministries that were to be coordinated, especially given Luhut's talents both as a master political player and as a successful businessman.¹⁵ Instead of a demotion, the position served to cement Luhut's role as the second most powerful man in Indonesia. He was also responsible for bringing Golkar, which had backed Prabowo in the 2014 election, over to Jokowi two years later.

Some of the other retired officers that Jokowi brought into the government were also the result of political bargaining to expand his coalition. His first Coordinating Minister for Security Affairs, for example, was Tedjo Edhy Purdijanto, a former admiral from the National Democrat (Nasdem) party, which had demanded and received a certain number of Cabinet positions for joining Jokowi's coalition. Other retired officers given Cabinet jobs were the result of pressure from Megawati. They did not represent Jokowi's own choice, and her admiration for the military was, if anything, stronger than his. One of her favorites was the man Jokowi named as Defense Minister, a reactionary ultra-nationalist Soeharto-era holdover, (Ret.) Gen. Ryamizard Ryacudu.

Jokowi's rationale for appointing senior military figures was also driven by the need to counter other generals' political influence that could threaten his administration. This was the case of Moeldoko's appointment as the Chief of Staff in 2018 after he retired as armed forces commander in 2015. According to one interpretation, he was brought in to wrest control of the chairmanship of the Indonesian Farmers' Association (HKTI), which had been

¹⁴ IPAC interview with Luhut Pandjaitan, Jakarta, December 2016. See also Vibhanshu Shekar and Joseph Chinyong Liow, "Indonesia as a Maritime Power: Jokowi's Vision, Strategies, and Obstacles Ahead," Brookings Institution, November 2014.

¹⁵ The ministries and agencies coordinated by the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs were Transportation; Maritime Affairs and Fisheries; Public Works and Housing; Tourism and Creative Economy; Energy and Mineral Resources; Environment and Forestry; Ministry of Investment; and Investment Coordinating Board. In 2015, the Ministry's name was changed to Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Investment.

held by Prabowo Subianto since 2004 and used by him as a campaign platform.¹⁶ In 2021, Moeldoko played the same role with his attempt to usurp the chairmanship of the Democrat Party from (Ret.) Major Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, son of party founder SBY.

B. Faster and More Efficient Implementation of Programs

Jokowi made no secret of his frustration with bureaucratic procedures and his desire for speedier implementation of his development agenda – and especially his infrastructure projects. To this end, he called on the TNI to assist, and encouraged his Cabinet members to do whatever necessary to get their projects finished on time. This led to a series of MOUs between the TNI and various ministries that served the president’s interests in bypassing local authorities and the TNI’s interest in absorbing military personnel without enough to do. By the end of Jokowi’s first term, there were more MoUs authorising troop deployment in civic missions than in the entire two terms of his predecessor.¹⁷

One example is the 2015-2018 effort to achieve self-sufficiency in rice – a nationalist goal that Soeharto had achieved with great fanfare in 1983 but which made far less economic sense in the mid-2000s.¹⁸ This was Jokowi’s first major partnership with the military. In December 2014, the Minister of Agriculture signed an MoU with the army to use its territorial command bases, assets, and manpower and the deployment of 50,000 non-commissioned officers to cultivate new rice farms. The military was also authorised to ensure all the harvested rice was distributed to the local Bureau of Logistics (Bulog) and stop local traders from stockpiling or selling the rice to another province.¹⁹ Despite the large-scale deployment of soldiers for the job, the partnership failed to achieve its goal, and rice imports actually rose.²⁰

The government justified its dependence on military support for infrastructure development by pointing to the lack of resources in many rural districts. In 2015, for example, the PUPR ministry and the TNI collaborated through an MoU on a program called “TNI’s Unity with People in Village Development” (*TNI Manunggal Membangun Desa*). It sounded very much like a Soeharto-era program, but this one was designed more to use the TNI for the

¹⁶ Moeldoko became chair of HKTI in 2017. In January 2018, Jokowi appointed Moeldoko as the new Chief of Staff. The Ministry of Law and Human Rights approved Moeldoko’s chairmanship of HKTI over Prabowo. After he retired, Moeldoko started a farming business with his new company called M-Tani Group, which owned several subsidiary companies that develop new varieties for staple food commodities such as rice, corn and sorghum. M-Tani Group became the official partner of the HKTI network across Indonesia.

¹⁷ A think-tank organisation focuses on security sector reform, Imparsial, reported that there were only eight MoUs signed between 2004 to early 2014, compared to 32 MoUs between 2014 to early 2019. See Imparsial, “Peran Internal Militer: Problem Tugas Perbantuan TNI, 2020, p. 135.

¹⁸ “Swasembada Pangan Gagal, KSAD Siap Dicotop,” *Republika*, 13 January. For an analysis of Soeharto’s rice self-sufficiency program, see Chris Manning, “Public Policy, Rice Production and Income Distribution: A Review of Indonesia’s Rice Self-Sufficiency Program,” *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, Vol 15, No.1, pp.66-82.

¹⁹ In March 2018, soldiers from a Kodim in Maros, South Sulawesi seized 140 tonnes of rice from local merchants because the local Bulog had only filled 77 per cent of its storage during the harvest season. “TNI Razia Padi di Sulsel, 140 Ton Gabah Diamankan,” *detiknews.com*, 14 March 2018.

²⁰ The Trade Ministry complained that the report made by the Agriculture Ministry did not match realities on the ground. The latter reported that 16.4 million hectares of land were cultivated as rice farms and had yielded 2.85 million tonnes of rice within three years, but the Trade Ministry found that rice production in 2018 was only 900,000 tonnes, which was 1.3 million tonnes less than the annual average of 2.4 million tonnes of rice consumption. As a result, the Trade Ministry had to import 2 million tonnes of rice from Vietnam to prevent economic inflation caused by food shortages. “Surplus Dulu Minus Kemudian,” *Majalah Tempo*, 28 January 2018 and “Menteri Perdagangan: Impor Beras tidak Terkait Pemilu,” *Republika*, 27 August 2018.

construction of bridges, roads, irrigation and sanitation facilities in rural regions and border provinces than for security purposes.²¹

In Papua, however, military involvement in infrastructure development inevitably served a security purpose as well. It also sparked violent resistance in the Central Highlands. In 2015, in an effort to finish construction of the Trans-Papua Highway, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing collaborated with the Army Engineering Division's Combat Engineer Detachment (*Detasemen Zeni Tempur*).²² As a result, pro-independence insurgents began to target construction workers as they believed all must have links to the military, even if some did not. In December 2018, in Nduga, Egianus Kogoya, then a teenaged rebel commander, killed 21 workers on the Trans-Papuan highway in a massacre that continued to have reverberations into mid-2023 – and the highway, targeted for completion in 2019, remained unfinished.²³

C. The Second Term: The Prabowo Appointment

Jokowi's surprising appointment of his defeated arch-rival Prabowo to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) served to further weaken civilian oversight, but it also showed what little interest the president had in exercising it.

Even though the reconciliation took place at Prabowo's initiative, the president was strongly attracted to the idea of having no opposition.²⁴ It could help ensure support for his business and investment projects, chief among which was his determination to build a new capital. He was also interested in weakening the hardline Islamists who had supported Prabowo in the 2019 election by wooing away their political leader (and indeed, many of these Islamists felt betrayed when Prabowo joined what they saw as the enemy camp). The main impact of the appointment, however, was to remove most of the remaining shreds of civilian control over MOD and give an autocratically-inclined retired officer a powerful platform from which to launch a final bid for the presidency in 2024. The appointment did not directly serve TNI interests because Prabowo was interested more in enhancing his own influence than reinforcing the military's, but it may have indirectly spurred the latter to define its interests more explicitly. It did so in a draft revision of the 2004 TNI law that was leaked in March 2023 and that would, if adopted, remove the MOD completely from the military planning and budgeting process.

Jokowi had already ended the post-Soeharto practice of appointing civilian defence ministers when he let Megawati persuade him to appoint Ryamizard in 2014.²⁵ Prabowo,

²¹ During Soeharto's New Order government, the army had a program called "Armed Forces Come to the Village" (*ABRI Masuk Desa*), designed more to serve security goals than development objectives, with village-based soldiers tasked with monitoring residents for any sign of dissent or subversion.

²² "Jokowi Vows to Finish 4,000-km Trans-Papua Highway," *Jakarta Globe*, 11 May 2015 and "TNI Bangun Trans Papua Sepanjang 4.325 Km," *tni.mil.id*, 19 June 2017.

²³ IPAC, "Escalating Armed Conflict and a New Security Approach in Papua," Report. No. 77, 13 July 2022.

²⁴ "Jokowi Menjawab soal Kabinet: Alasan Masuknya Prabowo, Terawan, hingga Nadiem Makarim," *Kompas.com*, 25 October 2019.

²⁵ The latter was associated primarily with what was supposed to be a voluntary program called "Defend the Nation" (*Bela Negara*) that combined citizenship education with military training and was aimed at giving the populace the wherewithal to

however, went far further than Ryamizard in trying to turn the ministry into a private fiefdom. As long as his party, Gerindra, backed Jokowi on key legislative issues, Jokowi seemed willing to give him free rein, even as he overspent his budget and tried to keep the details secret, including from the parliament and finance minister.²⁶ A long-time observer of military affairs described Prabowo as a “solo fighter” when it came to the procurement of military equipment for the TNI.²⁷ Rather than following the bottom-up process where service branches submitted their list of operational requirements to TNI headquarters and then passed it to the MOD, Prabowo made his own shopping list that was not in line with guidelines that had been in effect since 2010.²⁸ This created tension with the TNI, in part because the weapons Prabowo bought, whether new or used, were not always interoperable with existing weapon systems, and because many officers were convinced that many of these multi-million-dollar deals only benefited Prabowo’s party and allies in the MOD rather than the TNI’s upper echelons.²⁹

Prabowo then expanded his reach into food security. In April 2020, Jokowi instructed his cabinet to formulate a food security program in response to a UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) warning on a potential global food shortage caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. In July 2020, he inaugurated the Food Estate program, with the aim of finding more land for the cultivation of staple foods in several provinces, including North Sumatra, Central Kalimantan, Nusa Tenggara Timur, and Papua.³⁰ Prabowo convinced the president that MOD should run the program instead of the Ministry of Agriculture, saying that it was a matter of security as rising food prices historically had been linked with social unrest. He could also point to his long tenure as chair of the Indonesian Farmers Union (Himpunan Kerukunan Tani Indonesia, HKTI), an important component of his political base.³¹ As part of this effort, the MOD set up new agencies and a for-profit company, PT Agro-Industry Nasional (PT Agrinas).³² There was concern that the program, which predictably failed, would destroy

withstand eight different threats ranging from terrorism to foreign cultures and values. See IPAC, “Update on the Indonesian Military’s Influence,” Report No.26, 11 March 2016, p.11.

²⁶ “Prabowo Tak Mau Ditekan Bahas Anggaran di DPR Secara Terbuka,” *cncbindonesia.com*, 11 November 2019.

²⁷ IPAC interview with a senior journalist and co-founder of the Indonesian Strategic and Defence Studies, Edna C. Pattisina, Jakarta, 26 May 2023.

²⁸ The Minimum Essential Forces (MEF) was formulated by the civilian Defence Minister Juwono during President SBY’s administration. The MEF has been the roadmap for the Indonesian military posture which was set to be achieved in 2024 through three phases of procurement started from 2010-2014 (1st Phase), 2015-2019 (2nd Phase) and 2020-2024 (3rd Phase). “Pencapaian MEF Indonesia,” *Kompas*, 27 May 2021.

²⁹ The Navy reportedly opposed Prabowo’s decision to purchase battlefield management equipment from Turkey rather than France, the Navy opposed the plan because it already had more than 40 years of partnership with the France-based Thales Group. Defence justified the change to lessen TNI’s dependency on Thales and to save money, but it may equally have been because Navy admirals were beneficiaries of the French deal while Prabowo’s people benefited from the Turkish deal. IPAC interview with Edna C. Pattisina, Jakarta, 26 May 2023. Prabowo’s successful procurements for the past 2 years are including: 42 Rafale fighter jets (cost \$8.1 billion), 12 Mirage fighter jets (\$734.5 million), 13 units of Radar GM403 (\$384.8 million), and two aircraft carriers A400M (\$160 million). Alman Helvas Ali, “Menilik Belanja Pertahanan Via Pinjaman Luar Negeri Tahun Ini [Op-ed],” *CNBC Indonesia*, 26 December 2022.

³⁰ “Mentan targetkan penambahan beras 900.000-ton dari cetak sawah baru,” *Antara*, 5 May 2020.

³¹ “Ini Alasan Jokowi Tunjuk Prabowo Pimpin Proyek Lumbung Pangan,” *Kompas.com*, 14 July 2020.

³² MOD established a new agency called Strategic Logistic Reserve Agency (*Badan Cadangan Logistik Strategis*, BCLS) that would be responsible for storing food in the regions concerned; mapping other land that could be integrated into the program; and distributing food reserves as needed to other areas. PT. Agrinas ran for-profit activities in agriculture, fisheries and carbon trading.³² Most of the PT. Agrinas board members and executives were either Gerindra functionaries or Prabowo’s former subordinates in the army. Among them were four retired generals, Brig. Gen. Andreas Purwoko Bhakti, Maj. Gen. Ari Sujono, Lt. Gen. Nugroho Widyotomo, and Brig. Gen. Surya Dharma.

valuable peatland and result in other serious environmental damage.³³ Prabowo, however, blamed the failure on the local bureaucracy and indicated that he wanted it to continue.

Prabowo also tried to take advantage of a new law on Managing National Resources for State Defence (PSDN) to try and expand his sway.³⁴ The law, the brainchild of his predecessor Ryamizard, was passed on 26 September 2019, a month before he was appointed Defence Minister, but it provided for a civilian reservist force, known by its Indonesian acronym Komcad, that would bring with it a big budget for recruitment, training and equipment. Plans to set up a civilian reserve force had periodically been floated after 1998, only to be shelved after public opposition. The new law was adopted with little public discussion or input and was immediately subjected to a barrage of criticism on procedural, legal and human rights grounds.³⁵

The first training program for reservists was scheduled for June 2020, with Prabowo aiming for 25,000 recruits a year, a reservist battalion in every province, and an annual budget of Rp.2.8 trillion. However, the Covid pandemic brought recruitment to a screeching halt just a few weeks after it was launched, and by 2021, when it resumed, opposition to Prabowo's plans had grown, especially from PDI-P lawmakers who feared that the reservists could be misused by Prabowo to support his presidential bid in 2024.³⁶ In the end, a much-reduced program went ahead.³⁷ The MOD still overspent its budget, however, and in the process procured approximately Rp. 235.26 billion worth of equipment through off-budget loan contracts signed without approval by the other government stakeholders.³⁸ The National Audit Board found many irregularities in the program and suspected that officials involved had marked up the cost of equipment and programs, while the budget itself had not yet been finalised.³⁹ President Jokowi, however, instead of ordering an investigation, said that misappropriation happened in other ministries and simply instructed the MOD to be more careful in the future.⁴⁰ He clearly intended to keep Prabowo onside as the election drew nearer.

³³ The program's architects should have learned from the failure of the 1995 one million-ha project in Kalimantan in 1995. See "Hentikan Proyek Cetak Sawah/Food Estate di Lahan Gambut di Kalimantan Tengah," *walhi.or.id*, 14 June 2020.

³⁴ The previous Defence Minister, Ryamizard Ryacudu, pushed the law to provide legal underpinning for his signature project, a nationalist education and training program called State Defence (*Bela Negara*). The program became mandatory for all civil servants after the PSDN law was passed. "DPR Sahkan RUU Pengelolaan Sumber Daya Nasional," 26 September 2019.

³⁵ "UU PSDN yang Mengatur Komponen Cadangan Digugat ke MK, Kenapa?" *imparsial.org*, 31 May 2021 and "UU PSDN Dinilai Bermasalah dari Awal", *Republika*, 23 April 2022.

³⁶ IPAC Interview with PDI-P legislator, Jakarta, 17 January 2023.

³⁷ IPAC Interview with Dirjen Strahan Keamanan Kemenhan, Dr. Brig. Gen. Rodon Pedrason, Jakarta, 12 April 2023. Both the parliament and the Defence Ministry agreed that only 2,500 reservists could be recruited each year and the budget was slashed to less than 10 per cent of the initial proposal. The first batch of 3,103 Komcad recruits completed their training in January 2021, with a total of six battalions formed (five in Java, one in West Kalimantan). The second batch was launched in mid-2022, with 6,077 recruits. See "Perkuat Bela Negara, ASN Masuk Komponen Cadangan," *menpan.go.id*, 28 December 2021.

³⁸ In fact, the Audit Board reported that in 2021, the MOD had spent Rp531.96 billion (\$ 35.4 million) worth of procurement with off-budget loan contracts, half of it was spent for Komcad-related programs and equipment. "BPK soal Temuan Pengadaan Komcad Kemenhan: Bisa Diperbaiki, Sedang Proses," *tempo.co*, 1 November 2022.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ "Jokowi soal Temuan BPK Komcad: Seperti itu di Kementerian Selalu Ada," *liputan6.com*, 2 November 2022.

IV. MILITARY INTERESTS

The military's interests as an institution include finding ways to address the oversupply of officers; preserving the territorial command structure; reclaiming as many internal security roles as it can from the police; gaining access to state-of-the-art equipment; and promoting itself as premier inculcator of patriotism. Many of these interests overlap.

A. *Ending the Officer Logjam*

The oversupply of officers is not new, though it has grown more acute over time, and goes back both to the military reforms undertaken after 1998, when active-duty officers were largely banned from civilian positions in the public and private sectors, and to chronic problems in personnel management.⁴¹

The 2004 TNI law also increased the retirement age for officers at the rank of colonel and above from 55 to 58, meaning high-ranking officers served longer, and the middle ranks had to wait longer to move up. Once in the TNI, guaranteed job security made it economically and professionally hard to leave, so many without clear positions chose to sit out the time to retirement, not being productive but closing off vacancies for others.⁴² With a limited number of senior jobs available, a logjam was the result, and it was particularly apparent in the army.

Good solutions came from within the TNI, but they were largely ignored. One officer suggested that for the short term, the minimum age for promotion for colonels be increased until the logjam for the higher ranks eased. Another recommendation was that enrolment in SESKOs be adjusted proportionally according to the designated posts available.⁴³

Jokowi tried to address the problem in 2016 by revising the TNI's organisational structure, adding dozens of new positions for high-ranking officers.⁴⁴ His government's other favourite remedy was to whittle away at the division between civilian and military by gradually increasing the number of civilian positions that active-duty officers could hold. Article 47 of the 2004 TNI law stated that officers could only fill civilian jobs after resigning or retiring from the military, with several ministries and agencies (including the Ministry of Defence) cited as exceptions.⁴⁵ Before the 2019 elections, then TNI commander Hadi Tjahjo

⁴¹ Evan Laksamana, 'Reshuffling the Deck? Military Corporatism, Promotional Logjams and Post-Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations in Indonesia', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 4 July 2019.

⁴² Interview with Brig. Gen. Rodon Pedrason, Sentul, 12 April 2023.

⁴³ Brig. Gen Sisiradi, Kemhan, "Upaya Menyelesaikan Masalah Kelebihan PATI dan Kolonel Secara Menyeluruh dan Permanen," *Wira: Media Informasi Kementerian Pertahanan*, March-April 2018.

⁴⁴ By 2017, there were 777 officers above the rank of colonel with only 636 positions available for them. It was worse for colonels, where there were 790 more officers than jobs. The revisions were mandated in Presidential Decree No. 62/2016. Another presidential decree, No. 42/2019, added 78 new positions for high-ranking officers. "Struktur TNI Makin Gemuk, Jabatan Wakil Panglima Dihidupkan," *Kompas*, 6 November 2019.

⁴⁵ As per Article 47, these ministries and agencies included the Coordinating Ministry for Politics, Legal and Security (Kemenkopolhukam), Minister of Defence (MoD), Military Secretariat for the President, Intelligence Agency (BIN), Crypto and Cyber Agency (BSSN), Search and Rescue Agency (Basarnas), Anti-Drugs Agency (BNN), the National Defence Institute

suggested eliminating Article 47 entirely. Hadi's suggestion was endorsed by Luhut Pandjaitan, also who recommended that Jokowi add six new security-related institutions that could employ military officers which the latter agreed to do.⁴⁶ Other non-security related ministries and state-owned-enterprises began to employ military officers as well.⁴⁷ Even with all these new outlets, however, the logjam remained unresolved.

Then the pandemic struck, and Jokowi appointed Lt. Gen. Doni Munardo, former Kopassus commander, to head a national Covid-19 taskforce. Doni, an active duty officer, was serving at the time as head of the National Disaster Agency (BNPB). Between the national and local Covid task forces, some 200 military officers were taken on in senior positions.⁴⁸ At the same time, the then head of the armed forces, Gen. Andika Prakasa, used the pandemic to justify the upgrading of 47 Korems (sub provincial territorial commands) to be filled by one-star generals instead of colonels. The upgrading meant new promotions for many soon-to-retire officers, going some way to reduce mounting frustrations, especially in the army.⁴⁹

B. Preserving and Expanding the Territorial Command Structure

The military has long seen the territorial command structure (*komando territorial*, KOTER) as critical to its self-image as people's defence, to its popular legitimacy and to maintaining a role in internal security, even after the police became the lead agency for law and order in democratic Indonesia. It is therefore in its interests to preserve and expand the structure. As Defence Minister, Prabowo was a strong advocate for having a regional military division (KODAM) in every province of Indonesia, meaning an expansion from 15 to 38 KODAMs to try to keep pace with the creation of new provinces and districts as part of Indonesia's decentralisation program. While critics have cited expense, duplication of police, and unnecessary militarisation as arguments against this expansion, it could become part of Prabowo's security agenda if he becomes president.

Even without the new KODAMs, Jokowi significantly expanded TNI's organisational structure at multiple levels during his second term. New regulations reintroduced the TNI deputy chief commander position and added more staff members for high-ranking officers.⁵⁰ Dozens of commands were upgraded so that the commander posts would be filled by Colonels and

(Lemhanas), National Defence Council, and the Supreme Court. "Panglima Hadi Tjahjanto Ingin Revisi UU TNI, Ini Lima Faktanya," *tempo.co*, 7 February 2019.

⁴⁶ These new agencies included new security-related institutions that were created after the 2004 TNI law was passed, namely: the Coordinating Minister of Maritime Affairs and Investment, Presidential Staff Office, National Counterterrorism Agencies, National Border Management Agency (BNPP), and National Maritime Security Agency (Bakamla). "Luhut Yakinkan Jokowi untuk Penempatan Perwira TNI di Kementerian/Lembaga," *kompas.com*, 10 February 2019.

⁴⁷ In 2019, Minister of ESDM Ignasius Jonan appointed Air Force Colonel Roy Rassy Fay N. Bait as the head of human resources in the ministry. The Minister for Tourism and Creative Economy, Sandiaga Uno, appointed a National State Intelligence officer Brig. Gen. Ario Prawiseso as special staff for tourist site protection and strategic issues. In 2020, Ombudsman reported that 65 per cent of BUMN board members were dominated by TNI (27 officers) followed by Polri (13 officers), Supreme Court (12 officials), regional administrators (11 officials), BIN (10 officials), and the National Finance and Development Supervising Agency/BPKP (10 officials). "Ombudsman RI: 397 Komisaris BUMN Terindikasi Rangkap Jabatan pada 2019," *ombudsman.go.id*, 29 June 2019.

⁴⁸ Jun Honna, "Military Politics in Pandemic Indonesia," *Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol.18, No.15, 1 August 2020.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ The position of TNI deputy chief commander was removed in 2000 with the Army General Fachrul Razi as the last officer who attained that rank.

Brigadier Generals respectively.⁵¹ Three joint regional defence commands (*komando gabungan wilayah pertahanan*, Kogabwilhan), composed of army, navy and air force units, that had been initially authorised by Yudhoyono, were set up by Jokowi in 2019 in Tanjung Pinang, Riau; Kutai Kartanegara, East Kalimantan, and Timika, Papua Tengah. Other units expanded the naval and air force presence.⁵²

Expansion of KOTER serves several institutional interests of the TNI: absorption of excess military personnel; expansion of functions as more soldiers are assigned to non-military jobs through MoUs; new opportunities for rent-seeking; and more opportunities to challenge the police.

C. Regaining Internal Security Functions

The military has made little secret of its resentment towards the police, not just for usurping its old role but for doing so without what the TNI saw as its own level of competence and professionalism.⁵³ One of its major interests, then, has been to regain as much of an internal security role as it can, with all the accompanying perks.

Two early arenas for this competition were protection of vital objects and counter-terrorism, but a new president might try to expand these to other “grey areas” where the division of labour between police and military remains unclear. These include human trafficking, narcotics interdiction and counter-insurgency.⁵⁴

The TNI has systematically encroached on the task assigned police under a 2004 presidential decree to provide security and protection for most “vital national objects”.⁵⁵ In signing MoUs with ministries, the TNI has taken on more and more of this protection role for itself, most notably in a 2015 MoU with the Ministry of Transportation to provide security at airports, seaports and rail stations.

On counter-terrorism, the military has been trying to gain a foothold since the 2002 Bali bombs, but it made more headway under Jokowi than any of his post-Soeharto predecessors. Jokowi insisted in late 2015 that the TNI work together with the police to finally stop the extremist Poso insurgent leader, Santoso, who was then killed by an army patrol in 2016. The military’s efforts to take on a role beyond Poso bore no fruit until a new, strengthened counter-terrorism role was passed in the aftermath of the 2018 Surabaya bombings. The new law mandated that a presidential regulation be passed defining the military’s role. A draft regulation has long been rumoured to be on the president’s desk, but thus far, it has not been signed and Jokowi is unlikely to make it a priority before he leaves

⁵¹ For the second highest level of *Resor* Military Command (Korem), the type B command bases which had been commanded by Lt. Colonel are now led by Colonel, while the type A Korem is led by Brig. Gen. The type A district military command (Kodim) is now commanded by Colonel, while the type B Kodim led by Lt. Colonel.

⁵² The Kogabwilhan were established through Presidential Decision (Kepres) No. 27/2019.

⁵³ Many sources attest to TNI’s friction with the police. See IPAC, “Expanding Role of the Indonesian Military”, op. cit., p.2-3; “Serious efforts’ needed to end bitter TNI-National Police rivalry: observers,” *Jakarta Post*, 3 September 2020.

⁵⁴ IPAC, “Expanding Role of the Indonesian Military,” op. cit.

⁵⁵ The decree was Kepres 63/2004. The exceptions were military facilities, the presidential palaces and the vice-presidential residence. See “Expanding Role of the Indonesian Military”, p. 12.

office. One version of it would have restricted the TNI's efforts to handling seven kinds of specific terrorist acts, such as rescuing Indonesian ships on the high seas and handling takeovers of Indonesian embassies abroad. Another would have been broader and more far-reaching. Again, a Prabowo presidency could secure this long-sought goal of the military's in a way that that opens the door to other encroachments on police powers and as such weakens democracy.

D. The 2023 TNI Bill

Many of the TNI's interests converge in a draft revision of the 2004 TNI law that leaked in early May 2023. The content, prepared by the TNI legal drafting department, was concerning enough to many media, civil society organizations, and scholars to accuse the TNI of attempting to roll back post-1998 reforms.

There are several proposed revisions in the leaked bill that would remove most remaining civilian controls over the military if applied:

1. The stipulation would be removed that 'all military use and deployment is coordinated under the President'; the bill merely states that the TNI sits under the President, not that the president coordinates all military activity;
2. MOD would no longer have the authority to approve military budgets. This would remove one more check on military planning, procurement and budgeting.
3. Additional "military operations other than war" would be added to the 14 listed in the 2004 law.⁵⁶
4. The number of non-military ministries and agencies in which active military officers could serve without leaving their military careers would be expanded, bringing the total to 18.⁵⁷ (Article 47).
5. All soldiers would be tried in military courts for all crimes, including non-military ones. (Article 65). This is current practice, even though the 2004 law called for soldiers suspected of non-military crimes to be tried in civilian courts.⁵⁸

Some of the proposed changes can be seen as attempts to legalise precedents established during Jokowi's administration. The bill, however, puts an effective end to the notion of civil-military separation by providing that *any* ministries or agencies that wish to employ military officers can do so as long as both parties and the president give their consent.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ The 14 are overcoming armed separatism, armed rebellion, and terrorism; securing borders; protecting strategic national objects; undertaking global peacekeeping duties in accordance with Indonesian foreign policy; protecting the President and Vice-President and their families; empowering regional defense; assisting with local government; assisting the police with law and order duties as set forth in law; assisting visiting heads of state and ministers while in Indonesia; handling natural disasters and providing humanitarian aid; search and rescue missions; assisting the government to protect ships and planes against hijacking, piracy and smuggling. Indonesian Law No.34/2004, Article 7.

⁵⁷ The eight additional ministries/agencies cited in the draft are the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Investment, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, the Presidential Staff Office, the National Counterterrorism Agency, the National Agency for Disaster Management, the National Agency for Border Management, the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency and the Attorney General Office.

⁵⁸ Notwithstanding Article 65 of the 2004 law, as long as the Law on Military Courts (UU 31/ 1997) is still in force, the old Criminal Code for the Military (KUHPM, Law No. 34/1947) will continue to serve as the guide for prosecuting active soldiers.

⁵⁹ Presidential consent would take the form of a presidential decree or decision, which can be issued without parliamentary approval.

V. CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AFTER JOKOWI: SOME POSSIBILITIES

Three salient factors emerge from this report. First, civil-military relations have steadily weakened under Jokowi, laying the groundwork for a less accountable military and MOD in the post-Jokowi era. Second, this came about in part because of the convergence of presidential political interests with TNI corporate interests and the personal political ambitions of one politician, Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto. And third, any new president will find it harder to reassert civilian control given the damage that has been done, assuming any of the three current candidates has an interest in doing so – and there is no suggestion that any does.

All three declared candidates Anies Baswedan, the current governor of Jakarta; Ganjar Pranowo, governor of Central Java; and Prabowo Subianto, Defence Minister have reached out to military factions, all three present themselves as defenders of Indonesia's nationalist vision, and none would gain any political advantage with the public by championing a policy to put the military back in its post-*reformasi* box.

At the same time, there is no indication that Ganjar has any particular interest in further expanding the military's role. He just would not expend valuable political capital in trying to promote reductions in military budgets, more civilians in key defence positions, restrictions on active-duty officers in civilian positions or greater accountability for the military and police. He might be willing to defend the current status quo of keeping the police under the president, rather than placing them under the Justice or Home Affairs Ministry, but not to roll back TNI gains already secured. At the same time, however, he will need all the allies that he can get to keep Megawati from trying to control him politically, and this could lead him to extra efforts to keep the military on side.

Anies' natural allies lie with conservative nationalists, both Islamist and secular. Since he has often let himself be blown where political winds are strongest, he might well be willing to accommodate some of the TNI demands outlined in the TNI draft law, including in an expansion of the definition of "operations other than war". This is the rubric that has brought soldiers back into a wide range of non-military jobs. As of mid-2023, his chances to secure the presidency seemed slim, but Indonesian presidential politics are notoriously unpredictable, and the election is still more than six months away.

The biggest danger for civil-military relations lies with a Prabowo presidency. Prabowo has no interest in civilian control and will be determined to put his own people at top levels of both the TNI and the MOD and control both. Whether he could control parliamentary oversight of the budgeting process is not clear, but he would certainly try. He might well sign the long-delayed decree to specify the TNI's role in counter-terrorism, and he might well make a move to bring the police under a ministry. Neither of the other two candidates have any particular interest in expanding the territorial command structure, but Prabowo would

certainly try. As Defence Minister, Prabowo has occasionally tried to make his own foreign policy without reference to the Foreign Ministry. If he were to be elected president, the question is who would effectively check his powers?

The Indonesian military may be an increasingly popular institution but it is also an increasingly frustrated one, even with all the efforts Jokowi has made to find jobs for senior officers. It remains resentful of the police over internal security, and particularly of Jokowi's appointment of two top ex-police to jobs once thought to be military preserves: Head of State Intelligence and Minister of Home Affairs. The logjam in promotions has not helped. That frustration will lead to demands on the new president, and the likelihood is that we will again see a convergence of personal and institutional interests as we have under Jokowi. Whatever other legacy Jokowi leaves behind, his acquiescence in the steady decline of civilian control will be one of his most damaging.

The best hope for restored civilian control may lie in getting Commission I of the national parliament to do its job with strong advocacy from civil society. Recent presidents have tried to build political coalitions so broad that they eliminate any real political opposition. To advance civil-military relations in Indonesia, and democracy more generally, a strong opposition is essential.

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