

POLITICAL UPDATE 2010

Dirk Tomsa, La Trobe University

Presentation Outline



- Change or Continuity in SBY's Second Term?
- The Bank Century Scandal and Sri Mulyani
- The Joint Secretariat and Parliament-President Relations
- National Party Congresses
- The Passive President
- Concluding Remarks: Civil Society to the Rescue?

The Impetus for Change



- President
 - ▣ Often seen as indecisive and overly cautious
 - ▣ Nonetheless, unprecedented mandate in 2009
- Parliament
 - ▣ Neglect of core functions; poor legislation record
 - ▣ High turnover of DPR members after 2009
- Parties
 - ▣ Weakly institutionalized
 - ▣ Losses for Core Parties in 2009

The Bank Century Scandal

- ❑ The main players
- ❑ The charges
- ❑ The defence
- ❑ The outcome
- ❑ The consequences



Photo: Vivaneews

Setting the Tone for 2010



- In many ways, the Bank Century scandal was exemplary of political dynamics in Indonesia throughout 2010
 - ▣ President's failure to demonstrate leadership
 - ▣ Parliamentary paralysis
 - ▣ Lack of unity in coalition due to weak parties

The Dawn of a New Era?



Photo: Jakarta Post

- Establishment of joint secretariat in response to Bank Century scandal
- Aburizal Bakrie appointed chairman
- Quasi-PM?

Business as Usual in the DPR

- Joint secretariat hardly improved coalition unity
 - ▣ Dana aspirasi, Indonesia-Malaysia relations



Photo: detik.com



Photo: Jakarta Globe

- Consequence: parliament continues to neglect its core functions, especially legislation

Political Parties: Got the Message?

- 2009 results showed losses for all core parties

	1999	2004	2009
PD	--	7.5	20.8
Golkar	22.4	21.6	14.4
PDIP	33.7	18.5	14.0
PKS	1.4	7.3	7.9
PAN	7.1	6.4	6.0
PPP	10.7	8.2	5.3
PKB	12.6	10.6	4.9
Gerindra	--	--	4.5
Hanura	--	--	3.8

Party Congresses in 2010

- Leadership succession on top of agenda



Photo: Jakarta Globe



Photo: Aspinall

- Programmatic renewal absent

The New and Not so New Leaders



Photo: Vivanews



Photo: Waspada



Photo: Media Indonesia



Photo: news.okezone.com



Photo: Media Indonesia



Photo: Vivanews

Any Impact?

Support for political parties in 2010 (in %)

	April 2009	January 2010	April 2010	August 2010
PD	21	32	27	27
Golkar	14	11	11	12
PDIP	14	12	9	15
PKS	8	3	3	6
PAN	6	3	2	3
PPP	5	3	3	4
PKB	5	5	4	5
Gerindra	5	1	1	2
Hanura	4	1	1	1

Source: LSI

The President as Onlooker

- During most of the important developments in 2010 SBY watched passively from the palace
- Enduring popularity indicates that most Indonesians don't mind
- But criticism increased in recent months and passiveness has at times had negative consequences



Photo: The Age

SBY and the Bank Century Scandal

- ❑ Mulyani's resignation setback for fight against graft
- ❑ SBY's reluctance to defend her
- ❑ Attacks on Mulyani exposed SBY's failure of judgement about rainbow cabinet



Photo: detik.com

SBY and the Problem of Religious Intolerance



Photo: Jakarta Post



Photo: Matanews.com

- High number of attacks on churches and Ahmadiyah
- Perpetrators rarely prosecuted
- Minister's call for Ahmadiyah ban
- Danger of ministerial decrees

SBY and Papua

- ❑ Growing awareness that special autonomy has failed
- ❑ Financial vs. political autonomy
- ❑ Renewed protests and mass mobilization
- ❑ SBY's hands-off approach
- ❑ Towards further escalation?



Photo: Jakarta Globe

Explaining the Passive President



Photo: ABC.net.au

- Prevalence of political culture steeped in compromise and cooperation
- Successful first term
- Strategic positioning as benevolent father figure
- Benefits of electoral system

Concluding Remarks

- Continuity, not change marked Indonesian politics in 2010
- 2009 election results failed to generate reformist momentum amongst Jakarta elites
- But civil society groups have risen to the task and challenged president, parliament and parties over various policies
- Still, greater impact on elites necessary, otherwise prospects for coming years not bright