

# Navigating Through Domestic Impediments: Suharto and Indonesia's Leadership in ASEAN

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This paper focuses on the implementation of Indonesia's free and active foreign policy in Southeast Asia, during the presidency of Suharto. It looks at a wide range of study cases from 1967-1998 that reflect how Indonesia's free and active policy has shaped most of its interaction in the Southeast Asian region during the Cold War. The research adopts analytical-descriptive research methodology in interpreting Suharto's policies in responding to the Southeast Asian political landscape. The paper concludes that the success of Indonesia's free and active foreign policy in Southeast Asia during Suharto's rule is based on (1) historical aspects of Indonesian kingdom dominance in Southeast Asia, (2) the political culture of Javanese ethnicity, (3) increasing military support that strengthened the regime's power, and (4) aligned policies with dominant domestic institutions in Indonesia.

**Key words:** *ASEAN, Foreign policy, Indonesian foreign policy, Suharto, Southeast Asian regionalism.*

## Introduction

Since ASEAN was established in 1967, the Southeast Asia region has experienced significant developments. These developments are not only in the economic, social and political fields, but also in the dimensions of regional security cooperation. The success of the collaboration was the result of hard work by the initiating countries of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore.

During the New Order period, Indonesia has made the Southeast Asian region the main arena for achieving national interests, by playing an important role in advancing ASEAN. Indonesia's success in ASEAN is strongly influenced by several internal factors (Novani, Basuki, Rahmwati, 2020). This is in line with the views of the reviewers of Neoclassical

Realism, which emphasises the importance of historical factors, leadership, ideology, state institutions, political culture, media and political culture in influencing a country's foreign policy.

This article is based on analytical-descriptive research methodology. Given the nature of the subject, the required information was collected through library and internet research. This article outlines a series of efforts by Indonesia to realise ASEAN as a regional collaborator and its role in developing this organisation in various fields. Also to be discussed in detail are the internal factors that greatly influence the success of Indonesian foreign policy in Southeast Asia, such as history, doctrine and leadership, as well as the main principles of Indonesian foreign policy that were in place when the Old Order regime came to power. This article also outlines the details of how political culture, the support of the army, the strength of state institutions, ideology and leadership influenced the successful implementation of Indonesian foreign policy in Southeast Asia during Suharto's leadership.

### **Literature Review**

This study uses the Neoclassical Realism approach in analysing changes in Indonesian foreign policy in ASEAN. The Neoclassical Approach of Realism is part of a school of realism, which focuses more on the importance of external and internal factors in the analysis of changes in a country's foreign policy. The Neoclassical Realism Approach was first introduced by Gideon Rose (1998), which was later developed by academics including Randall Schweller (1996), Fareed Zakaria (1998) and William C. Wohlforth (2002). In contrast to other realist adherents who emphasise the importance of external factors rather than internal factors in foreign decision making, these experts do not agree to separate these two factors in foreign decision making.

The teachings of Neoclassical Realism emphasise that the formation of one-country foreign policy is always based on the dynamics of internal and external factors, because these two factors are very important in determining the foreign policy of one country. Rose holds that the Neoclassical Realism theory provides different analytical tools in examining domestic and foreign phenomena that are related to the determination of current foreign policy (Rose, 1998).

The emergence of the Neoclassical Realism approach is the result of debates among supporters of the realist school in an effort to build a general theory that can be used in analysing one country's foreign policy. The importance of the role of external and internal factors in determining the direction of a country's foreign policy is the main dominant issue in the discourse. This debate began with the emergence of Innocent Politics, which was also the first school in the study of foreign policy that emphasised the importance of the influence of

domestic factors and the international political system on changes in foreign policy (Rathbun, 2008). This school assumes that foreign policy originates from a country's internal factors such as ideology, politics, economics, national character, political system and socio-economic structure, and that these are very decisive in the implementation of foreign affairs.

Rose believes that there are many variations in the Innocent Political approach. Each variation offers a different free element, but still uses the general view that foreign policy can be understood as part of a country's internal dynamics because domestic factors can influence the country to take actions that are different from other countries (Rose, 1998).

However, the Innocent Political Theory approach cannot explain the role of domestic factors in maximising the implementation of foreign policy. This theory proves difficult in explaining why countries with domestic systems are the same, yet always differ in foreign policy, and why countries that have different domestic systems, sometimes act the same. Some Neorealists try to avoid this problem by using such a model or way of thinking on the behaviour of each country and also the behaviour of the international system. The powerlessness of Innepolytic theory explains that this phenomenon raises another approach, called Offensive Realism, or more recognisably as the second school.

In the understanding of supporters of Offensive Realism, the state tries to realise security by creating conflict with other countries. According to John Mearsheimer, an offensive state is caused by an anarchic structure of international relations (Mearsheimer, 2001). The high pressure on the system of relations between nations makes the country more influenced by external factors in determining its foreign policy without having to pay attention to their internal characteristics. According to this view, a country's foreign policy activities can be better understood by examining the efforts of a country and the development of the surrounding region, because these two elements will be used as the main considerations in determining the direction and changes in the foreign policy of one country (Rose, 1998).

The third school (Third School) in foreign policy studies is also known as Defensive Realism, which holds that international system factors can influence the emergence of a country's behaviour. This approach also assumes that anarchy in a system between nations tends to be softer and can be resolved using the power possessed by a country (Rose, 1998). In the view of supporting this approach, countries that rationally create security in more relaxed ways prepare themselves only to provide action against external threats, which are very rare. Retaliatory actions at the right time are generally only for the sake of creating a balanced state, which later will hinder all threats and get rid of potential conflicts. According to this view, foreign political activity is how a country acts appropriately to eliminate the negative potential of a system, when the state will enter conflict if state security is no longer maintained (Rose, 1998).

In the view of Neoclassical Realism, Innocent Politics is a misleading Neoclassical theory, because although there are dominant factors that shape a country's foreign policy pattern, it is a form of their material power vis-a-vis the international system, and from this, foreign policy analysis begins (Rose, 1998). Proponents also criticise the Defensive Realism theory, which was considered as too stressed on the importance of state retaliation against external threats but ignored the fact that the perception of the threat of one party is usually formed by the relative power of material from the other party.

Therefore, for advocates of Neoclassical Realism, the three approaches mentioned earlier, Innocent politics, Offensive Realism, and Defensive Realism, are expressed as incomplete approaches because their views ignore the actual behaviour of the state, which influences followers to place their explanations on variables in the domestic level without a clear basis. Although all of the above approaches emphasise the importance of external and internal factors in the implementation of a country's foreign policy, Neoclassical Realism overlaps with internal problems and places them as an intermediary variable in explaining changes in a country's foreign policy. The experts of Neoclassical Realism argue that the implementation of one country's foreign policy is largely determined by the capabilities of the country concerned. The state can maximise the elements of its national strength, such as military power, economic capacity and technology, to achieve national interests.

Meanwhile, the importance of the relationship between cause and effect between foreign policy and internal factors in Neoclassical Realism is expressed by Stephen Walt in his article entitled, 'The Enduring Relevance of the Realist Tradition'. Walt (2003) said the relationship between cause and effect in Neoclassical Realism places domestic political issues as mediating variables in the billing of power that can influence foreign policy behaviour. These political elements include the behaviour of leaders or political experts of a country as an intermediary variable in seeing the collection of international power (Walt, 2003).

Randall Schweller strongly criticises the structural realism of Waltz, especially in the potential bias of the 'status-quo' found in the structure of the international system (Schweller, 1996). Schweller emphasizes that the Waltz rationale for the importance of security used by all countries in an international system is historically incorrect. According to Schweller, Waltz's view of the tendency of each country to gather power for the creation of safety as a primary interest is to reflect a biased status quo (Schweller, 1996).

As a supporter of Neoclassical Realism, Schweller reminded Waltz that Germany had acted as a revisionist state in the 1930s and also became a status quo state after World War II (Schweller, 1996), and this fact indicated that state behaviour was not only different in interests that would be achieved, but also not the same in its ability when directing the resources of the people it leads. Furthermore, Schweller said that Waltz avoided state

grouping because of Waltz's large belief in unit (level) explanations, which, according to Schweller, tended to be reductionist. If some countries have predatory states and some other countries do not, the best explanation for knowing these behaviours lies in their character, and not because of the nature of the system. In fact, now the country only wants the minimum power to get a sense of security and is more likely to concentrate on the defensive rather than the offensive. This contradicts the maximisation of power (power-maximisation) proposed by Waltz and also other supporters of Structural Realism.

A description of Neoclassical thought becomes relevant in this article because changes in Indonesian foreign policy are not only influenced by external factors but also influenced by the environment that has arisen in Indonesia since the 1997/1988 financial crisis.

The factors that influence changes in Indonesia's foreign policy in Southeast Asia or ASEAN are not only caused by the momentum of changes that occur in the environment of the international system, but also because of changes in the domestic environment, especially when Indonesia experienced the 1997 monetary crisis, which caused various impacts. The cases that occurred in Indonesia are contrary to Waltz's statement that international politics is not something unique because of the order that occurs due to war and conflict in an international system of anarchy. Why is that? Because the self-help mechanism is the basis of a state action to provide security for itself and other countries around it (Waltz, Bull & Butterfield, 1979). Therefore, Indonesia's foreign policy cannot be separated from the factors of domestic leadership after the fall of Suharto. Since then, there has been a need to form a more democratic Indonesia through the process of changing leadership. The author argues that changes in Indonesia's foreign policy are directly related to the election of several presidents after Suharto, namely Habibie, Gus Dur, Megawati and SBY.

When domestic conflicts subsided during the presidencies of Habibie, Gus Dur and Megawati, Indonesia succeeded in moving the domestic will to shape the character of Indonesia's new foreign policy. Even since the leadership of SBY in the second half, Indonesia has tried to use its position in ASEAN to take a role in the G20. That is, Indonesia under SBY no longer showed deep concern to ASEAN, as had been demonstrated by Suharto, but rather aimed for a broader forum.

### **Results and Discussion: Supporting Factors to Indonesia's Foreign Policy Success towards ASEAN**

During the New Order, Indonesia's foreign policy underwent major changes and transformations. Soekarno's era of Indonesian foreign policy tends to be closed, aggressive and considers the development of the outside world as a threat that has the potential to reduce the integrity of the nation. In contrast, the Suharto era's Indonesian foreign policy was more

open and cooperated with the surrounding region. The perceived threat to the integrity of the Indonesian nation is more likely to come from within the country. With a more open foreign policy, Indonesia succeeded in convincing neighbouring countries and other Western countries to establish mutually beneficial cooperation. These changes were greeted well by Western countries, especially the USA and its allies. They were willing to provide economic assistance through international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI), the World Bank and other financial institutions, for Indonesia's economic development.

The success of Indonesian foreign policy under the Suharto regime was influenced by several factors, both from internal and external factors. These factors greatly influenced the decision making and implementation of Indonesia's foreign policy. This part outlines what and how the influential elements, starting from the elements of history, political culture, elite perceptions of domestic political threats and stability. However, external factors are more influenced by changes in Indonesia's global environment in the era of World War II to the Cold War, when ideological battles dominated the discourse of international politics.

Eventually, however, Suharto's focus on establishing regional security and order in Southeast Asia can be attributed to his success in developing the economy of Indonesia. Despite issues of corruption and repression, especially leading up to Suharto's resignation in May 1998, he was able to achieve consistent economic growth through his planned 25 years of economic reforms and stabilisation. The Indonesian population flourished with the surmountable agricultural productivities, and the employment opportunities provided in a time of chaos during the Cold War.

### ***History and Leadership Factors***

Since independence, the leaders of Indonesia have been greatly influenced by the history of the glorious past of the kingdoms, especially the era of the Kingdom of Sriwijaya and Majapahit. The two kingdoms not only had a wide and vast area but also symbolised the glory of the kingdoms at that time, so that the leaders of the nation always referred to both in looking at the boundaries of Indonesia. Muhammad Yamin, for example, proposed the concept of Indonesia Raya inspired by Karya Prapanca in the fourth century, which stated that the scope of the Majapahit region included the Dutch East Indies, Malaya (Malaysia), Kalimantan, Timor Leste and Papua - areas that Indonesia should have after independence. This perception is often a reference for the Indonesian political elite in strategic decision making, as reflected in the implementation of Soekarno's foreign policy.

The revolutionary approach of Indonesian foreign policy in opposing Western countries, the series of attempts to seize Irian Jaya, and the confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia

were also inspired by the glory of Indonesia's past, including the Suharto era. The past glory of the two kingdoms continues to be a reference for the nation's leaders to raise the spirit of Indonesian unity by making Majapahit and Gadjahmada a symbol of the unification of the territory of the Republic of Indonesia. The name Majapahit and Gajahmada, for example, are used as names of state institutions such as the army, police, and even the first university in Indonesia, Gadjahmada University.

In addition to the glory of the past, the spirit of the struggle for national heroes was also very influential in Indonesia's foreign policy. The struggle of the Indonesian people against the Dutch sacrificed lives and priceless possessions. Torture and inhuman oppression encourage foreign policy that opposes all forms of occupation over its territory. The foreign policy that is anti-colonialism and (anti-)imperialism is carried out by Indonesia in various international forums, including Indonesia opposing the Israeli occupation of Palestine (Weatherbee, 2005).

### ***Political and Cultural Factors***

The second factor is the political culture of the Indonesian elite. Although the Indonesian people are diverse, the Javanese political culture is very dominant. This is because the Javanese are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia. Likewise, like with the political elite, most of them are from Java. It is not surprising that Javanese political culture greatly influences the decision-making process in various fields, including Indonesia's foreign policy making (Anwar, 2010).

The Indonesian political culture, among others, is the concept of "abangan" and "santri," derived from the concept of Islamic political culture embraced by Javanese society. Broadly speaking, the "abangan" community is embraced by a Javanese society that is simpler, while "santri" are those who adhere to strict and authoritarian Islam.

Because of that difference, there is often conflict between the two communities regarding religion, ideology and state matters. The santri want to make Islam the state ideology, but the abangan community opposes Islam as the principle of the Indonesian state. Political elites wanted to make Indonesia a secular state after independence in 1945. The ideological differences between the collection of abangans and santrians, which were getting stronger, made it difficult for President Soekarno to formulate the Pancasila ideology and the 1945 Constitution as a state principle. Pancasila is a reflection of the abangan concept, which recognises religious pluralism in a more liberal Indonesia (Hefner, 2001).

In Indonesian political history, Pancasila is the only state ideology since the New Order came to power. Pancasila also became the basis for the implementation of Indonesian foreign policy based on the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly (MPRS) in 1966. Therefore,



the New Order regime emphasised the importance of Pancasila in Indonesian political life and society. This ideology is at the same time, the only direction that can be used by all elements of the nation in carrying out political and social activities in Indonesia in 1978.

The establishment of the Pancasila ideology as a single principle in political life in Indonesia also affected the implementation of Indonesian foreign policy. Although the majority of the population is Muslim, Indonesia refuses to be called an Islamic state. Indonesia tends to be known as a Neutral State (non-align) rather than an Islamic state. This attitude was the reason Indonesia refused to join as a member of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (Islamic Conference or OIC Organisations). However, in the end, looking at its national interests, Indonesia became a member of the OIC in 1972. Indonesia's involvement in the OIC, in addition to implementing free-foreign policy, was also to take advantage that the OIC could support Indonesia's economic and trade development with Arabic countries.

Since the transition of power from the Old Order to the New Order, which was anti-communism in 1966, Indonesia not only experienced an economic crisis and domestic political turmoil, but its image declined in the eyes of the world. Therefore, Indonesia's foreign policy during the Suharto period focused more on improving the economy and stabilising domestic politics by improving its image internationally (Ghoshal, 2004).

To make this happen, Indonesia actively improves its relations with Western countries, especially with the USA and Britain. Indonesia also rejoined the United Nations after leaving during the Soekarno era. In the Southeast and East Asia region, Indonesia practices the bases of living well with neighbouring countries (good neighbourhood policy). This was manifested by resolving the confrontation with Malaysia in order to foster the stability of the Southeast Asia region. The New Order regime held that regional security was important as the beginning of designing Indonesia's economic development (Ghoshal, 2004).

In order to achieve this, the New Order government tried to improve the stability of Indonesia's domestic politics and reaffirmed the ideologies of the State, Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, as the basis of an important state, and to guide the implementation of a free and active Indonesian foreign policy. Both principles contain the noble values of the people who have entrusted the government with creating social justice for all Indonesian people. Thus, the main mission of the New Order regime is to improve national development in all areas formulated in overseas politics that tend to the West. This is an effort to fulfil Indonesia's national interest, especially the improvement of economic development through external assistance.

### ***Military Support***

In the early ruling, Suharto encouraged economic recovery and political stability. For President Suharto, the achievement of political stability and domestic security was important as the start of Indonesia's economic development. Therefore, he emphasised the attention of domestic political reforms, especially in harmonising the relations between the army and other political elites. For example, Suharto made the army (Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia, ABRI) one of the political forces that could support the implementation of the planned development. In view of the New Order regime, besides being a major element of national development security, the ABRI has the potential to strengthen the regime's powers. His history, the transfer of power from the Old Order to the New Order's hands, is a result of the split in the army that occurred in 1965.

At the same time, the involvement of the army in Indonesian politics is inseparable from the Indonesian military function of the Dwi Fungsi doctrine proposed by General AH Nasution in 1958. In this doctrine, ABRI has dual functions, namely, besides acting as state security guards, it also functions as a source of strength to social politics (Jenkins, 1983). The doctrine provides an opportunity to establish an army service in guarding Indonesia as a sovereign country since its proclamation.

Thus, the army has the legitimacy of holding political positions in the government of the New Order and is present in the executive, legislative and judicial institutions. Another factor that brought the New Order regime closer to the army was the emergence of perceptions of threats, both from within and outside the country, especially related to the issue of communism. After the tragedy of the September 30th Movement (G30S) and at the expense of some of Indonesia's best generals, the Suharto regime placed communism as the main threat. The perception of the threat arose because many former members of the communist movement still lived in Indonesia. In addition, potential threats also came from outside, especially from the Soviet Union, China and Vietnam. The Soviet Union and China were two large communist countries that had strategies to spread communism in Southeast Asia, and had also been directly involved in the development of the communist movement in Indonesia during the Soekarno era. China was also considered the most dangerous communist threat after the country was involved in the G30S incident in 1965, utilising Chinese migrants in Indonesia as a tool for Beijing to spread communism in Indonesia (Liu, 2011). The perceived threat caused the Suharto regime to involve the army in guarding Indonesia's national interests in various fields, including outside relations.

Therefore, the efforts of the New Order government to distance themselves from the communist state (the Eastern Bloc) and get closer to the West (the Western Bloc) were also investigated by the role of the army. Improving relations with the Western Bloc, especially

with the USA and Britain, which also have interests in the Southeast Asia region, had two directions and goals: for the sake of security and for the needs of Indonesia's economic development.

Changes in pro-Western foreign policy and becoming oriented to economic development were positively welcomed by various parties, especially the USA and its allies (Weinstein 1976: 328). Some Western countries then wanted to provide economic assistance to Indonesia. The USA, for example, was willing to direct external loans, as well as provide economic assistance through the IMF and World Bank in February 1967. In the same year, several countries advocated the establishment of the IGGI in 1968, aimed at helping Indonesia's economic development, which had experienced a crisis since the Soekarno government. The economic support was not only from the West but also from Japan. This country has had an interest in supporting the US global strategy, its closest ally, which is the containment of the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. In addition, Japan also wanted to create an economic market share in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia. The USA and Japan were the biggest supporters of economic aid in Indonesia until the end of the New Order regime.

Western countries were increasingly wavering about regional security regarding the issue of the spread of communism after the communist regime came to power in Vietnam in 1975. Indonesia was then expected to play a role in guarding regional security. The West focused on Suharto because Indonesia is the largest non-communist country in the region that can play an important role in preventing the spread of communism. Therefore, the USA and its allies such as Australia, Britain, France, Germany and the Netherlands provided economic assistance to the Suharto government for economic development in the region. The support not only helped Indonesia's economic development but also made Indonesia a new force in the region after long deteriorating throughout the Old Order.

### ***The Power of State Institutions***

The fourth factor that influenced the success of the implementation of Indonesian foreign policy during the New Order regime was the existence of several state institutions involved in the formulation of the country's foreign policy. At the beginning of the New Order's ruling, Suharto was not directly involved in making foreign political decisions. Suharto felt incompetent and was not interested in international relations issues. Therefore, Suharto gave freedom to several state institutions to carry out Indonesia's foreign policy decision-making processes. These institutions are: the Ministry of Defense and Security (HANKAM), the National Defense Institute (LEMHANAS), the State Intelligence Coordination Agency (BAKIN) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU). These three institutions are tasked

with providing views and directing the basic formulation outside, especially those relating to national security issues.

In the process of normalising relations between Indonesia and China, for example, the three institutions play an important role in maintaining the freeze and reopening of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Actually, the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is very minimal in the process of foreign political decision making, although this institution has been and is led by great and recognised diplomats, such as Adam Malik, Muchtar Kusumaatmadja and Ali Alatas. But the three ministers could not do much in the face of military domination in Indonesia's foreign policy decision making (Anwar, 2010). The army unilaterally intervened and took over foreign policy decisions that had been taken over by the Department of Foreign Affairs for reasons of state security (Anwar, 1994). Therefore, the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is only limited to implementing foreign relations.

Other non-military institutions that have an important role in foreign policy making are Bappenas (National Development Planning Agency), State Secretariat (Sekneg) and the Commission I of the DPR. Bapenas was founded in 1963 as a thinker organisation of the government to guide the government in order to improve the economy and national development. Bappenas was initially filled with alumni economic technocrats from the University of Berkeley who had close relations with the IMF and world financial institutions. Letters issued by these institutions not only concern economic issues but also relate to the outside basis, especially with the issue of investment in Indonesia.

Another institution that plays an urgent role in the matter of Indonesian foreign policy is the State Secretariat. This institution is often the spokesperson representing the government of the New Order era. The Secretary of State also took over the role of the Department of Foreign Affairs in responding to international problems, especially those relating to Indonesia's national security. During the New Order in power, the position was always led by high-ranking military staff, such as the Secretary of State, led by Major General Murdiono for a decade (1988-1998) during the Suharto Government (Ensiklopedi Tokoh Indonesia Online 2012), while Commission I of the House of Representatives is a legislative institution that was a partner of the government in overseeing foreign affairs and the implementation of foreign policy. Its main task was to give views and endorsement and to oversee the implementation of Indonesian foreign policy. In addition, the agency also approved the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' expenditure and gave approval for the inauguration of an ambassador who would be assigned abroad. Even so, Commission I, which consisted of representatives of political parties — such as the United Development Party (PPP), the Golongan Karya (Golkar) and the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) — only functioned to ratify the New Order policy, without giving input or criticism towards government (Evans, 2003).

Another actor who greatly influenced the New Order's foreign policy was Islamic organisations. Since independence, these organisations have become an important element in Indonesia's political development. Islamic parties, especially the Islamic Party (PSI), which was founded in 1913, and the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in 1926, had an important role in driving away from the invaders. They have contributed much to the development of Indonesian politics. After Indonesia's independence, Islamic movement organisations, together with ABRI, played a role in helping the New Order dissolve the Communist Party and communism in Indonesia. But at the beginning of the New Order government, military relations with Islamic organisations were not good, so the role of Islamic organisations was very limited. The military suspected that they supported the Darul Islam (DI) rebellion in West Java, Aceh and Sulawesi, which demanded the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia. Suspicion of the military made the New Order regime limit Islamic organisations involved in Indonesian politics. The government tried to make Pancasila the only ideology, which became the main foundation of Indonesia's foreign policy attitude towards Islamic countries in the Middle East. This gives the impression that although Indonesia is the largest Muslim population in the world, it still reflects a secular state, not an Islamic state (Sukma, 1995).

In the 1990s, however, Indonesia's political stability improved as the global political stage changed. Suharto began to recognise the presence of Islamic organisations and make them part of the instrument for achieving national interests. This is marked by the increasing number of Muslim academic experts who excelled, both in government and in non-government institutions such as the Association of Indonesian Muslim Scholars (ICMI). Changes in the attitude of the New Order towards certain Islamic organisations raised the image of the regime in the eyes of the Indonesian people. The establishment of the Islamic Youth Movement to ICMI contributed positively to the implementation of Indonesian foreign policy relating to Muslims in the Middle East, especially regarding the Palestinian issue and the capture of foreign military forces in the Middle East, to the problem of Bosnia.

## **Conclusion**

Indonesia's foreign policy since the Soekarno era was based on the principle "Free and Active." This means that Indonesia is free, is not involved in the military alliances of major countries, is active in opposing all forms of colonialism and is participating in creating world peace. The long history of Indonesia, which has experienced colonialism, has also affected the principle of foreign policy. The Indonesian nation highly respects the right of a country to be independent and regulate its own territory, so that the basis outside Indonesia strongly opposes colonialism and imperialism in the world.

After Indonesia's independence, the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy has undergone changes. This is due to the high pressure of the surrounding region and in the country, so that Indonesia must change according to foreign policy in order to achieve national interests. At the beginning of Soekarno's leadership, Indonesia's foreign policy was more reliant on efforts to fight for Indonesian sovereignty. When it was reached, Soekarno wanted Indonesia to act more as the leader of Third World countries, especially in breaking away from the influence and pressure of Western countries. Soekarno's leadership reached its peak when Indonesia carried out the Asian-African Conference in Bandung in 1955. Indonesia's foreign policy changed more radically when Soekarno was disappointed in allied countries that did not provide support in efforts to reclaim West Irian. Soekarno also launched a confrontation with Malaysia and ceased to be a member of the United Nations. The change in Indonesian foreign policy in the Old Order era was no longer based on the principle of "free-acting" and eroded Soekarno's leadership image.

Indonesia's foreign policy shone again when Suharto took power. When the New Order came to power, Indonesia placed the Southeast Asian region as the arena for the implementation of foreign policy to restore the good name and image of Indonesia in the world. Indonesia sought to improve relations with its neighbours. Indonesia, together with Southeast Asian countries, then formed regional cooperation, namely ASEAN in 1967. Indonesia played an important role in the history of ASEAN development so that the regional organisation became a regional collaboration that succeeded in all fields.

The firmness of Indonesia's foreign policy towards ASEAN in the Suharto era was supported by several factors. First, the history of the glory of the era of the Kingdom of Sriwijaya and Majapahit which influenced the minds of Indonesian leaders in carrying out foreign policy. Secondly, the factors of a political culture dominated by Javanese ethnicity also contributed to the decision-making process of Indonesian leaders. Third, increased military support strengthened the regime's power. Suharto's arena involved the military in the process of nation-building. Suharto's assertiveness was also supported by state institutions that were strong enough to give a view to the regime to strengthen its influence. These factors convinced and strengthened Suharto to be firm in carrying out Indonesian foreign policy.

Another factor that was influential in the implementation of Indonesian foreign policy was idiosyncratic and ideology, especially in the era of the Old Order and the New Order. Indonesia, under Soekarno's leadership, carried out Indonesian foreign policy, which was more inclined to Eastern Bloc countries and more radically revolutionary. This political attitude was inseparable from his experience with Western countries in his efforts to fight for Indonesian independence. Soekarno's view against imperialism was not only shared with communist countries but also tried to fight imperialist countries with their allies through the concepts of OLDEFOS and DEFOS.



Meanwhile, Suharto carried out his leadership as greatly influenced by the ideology of Pancasila and a Javanese political culture that was gentle and polite. This was different from Soekarno, as Suharto carried out Indonesian foreign policy with a low profile and tried to establish good relations with Southeast Asian countries and Western countries, so that the Suharto leadership gained support from many parties related to Indonesia's economic development - while at the same time Indonesia was trying to maintain Indonesian independence politics internationally.

The attitude of the Suharto leadership can be seen from the fact that Indonesia, through ASEAN, rejected the presence of Western military forces in the Southeast Asian region. Based on the discussion in this chapter, it can be concluded that ideological factors and leader ideology such as perception and character play an important role in analysing Indonesian foreign policy between 1946 and 1996.



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