

# Jokowi's Victory: The End of the New Order in Indonesia?

Andreas Ufen\*



August 2014 **Asia Policy Brief** 2014 | 05

Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim-majority country. It is of immense importance for the security situation and economic integration in Pacific Asia. Political events in Indonesia have a profound impact on the whole region of Southeast Asia. Nevertheless, the 2014 parliamentary and presidential elections were hardly reported in the foreign media. The presidential elections in particular turned out to be a hard test for the young democracy.

## The Young Democracy and the Legacies of the New Order

Indonesia was long subjected to Dutch colonial rule and ultimately fought for independence in a war that lasted several years. Its independence was internationally recognized in 1949. The ensuing democratic phase ended after only a few years, because the communists, the Islamists and the followers of President Sukarno, the hero of the anti-colonial fight, all tried to enforce their own political models. The ensuing "Guided Democracy", an authoritarian, unstable formation under Sukarno, ended with a coup in the mid-1960s, in which General Suharto seized power. Suharto established the "New Order" (*Orde Baru*) and ruled with his protégés from 1966 onwards.

The military occupied key positions in the administration and was responsible for external as well as a broadly

defined internal security according to the doctrine of dual function (*dwifungsi*). It was only in May 1998 that President Suharto declared his resignation, during the great financial and global crisis ("Asian crisis"). In the wake of the crisis, the political system was completely reformed under President B.J. Habibie. In June 1999, the first essentially free and fair parliamentary elections since 1955 were conducted. The following parliamentary elections (2004, 2009, and 2014) and direct presidential elections, which were introduced in 2004, took place without problems as well. The risk of a coup by the military, which ruled the country for so long, is now low.

The year 2001 also saw the initiation of a radical decentralization of the administration, a process that was accelerated by the direct local elections held since 2005. Many important decisions are now no longer only made

\* Dr. Andreas Ufen is Senior Research Fellow at the GIGA Institute for Asian Studies in Hamburg and Adjunct Professor at the University of Hamburg.



in Jakarta. The civil wars – due, at least at first glance, to religious and/or ethnic tensions – in some parts of the country (Kalimantan, Poso, Ambon, etc.) have ended. The once-annexed province of East Timor has been granted independence, despite the bitter resistance of parts of the military. Aceh and Papua have been given special autonomy rights, which at least in Aceh have led to the settlement of a war of secession that had lasted for decades.

Islamist terrorists, responsible for several bomb attacks, such as the one in Bali in 2002, have been fought effectively. In recent years, the government of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has also been able to achieve an average GDP growth of 6 percent, to increase foreign investment, and to expand welfare measures – for example, through the introduction of a comprehensive social security system.

However, various concerns persist. Islamist terrorism has been weakened, but vigilante groups such as the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI, Front Pembela Islam) have been active for years and have forced Christian churches and mosques of the Islamic Ahmadiyah sect to close. Tacit support comes from parts of the highest levels of government. Moreover, an inefficient administration and a negatively perceived political elite are often viewed as being connected to widespread corruption.

The heritage of the New Order is still burdening the young democracy. This burden was reflected in the parliamentary and, specifically, the presidential elections of 2014. The defeat of ex-general Prabowo Subianto only just saved the country from possible disaster. Prabowo, the former son-in-law of Suharto and one of the central figures within the security apparatus of the New Order, is a reactionary nationalist, whose commitment to democracy is half-hearted at best. With Joko “Jokowi” Widodo, a new type of politician has prevailed. He was not a member of the New Order elite and he represents a pragmatic, reform-oriented policy approach. He may be able to strengthen the fragile democracy.

## The Parliamentary Elections as “Pre-Elections”

On 9 April 2014, elections were held for the national parliament (DPR, Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat). In addition, the representatives of 33 provincial assemblies, 497 district and city assemblies, and the second chamber (DPD, Dewan Perwakilan Daerah), which has only an advisory function, were elected. The 560 DPR members were directly chosen via open lists in 77 electoral districts. Almost 186 million Indonesians were called upon to cast their votes. The relatively unspectacular election campaigns were strongly dominated by the presidential elections planned for early July 2014 and therefore focused more on the designated presidential candidates, Prabowo and Jokowi, and less on parties and platforms.

The *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan (PDI-P)* prevailed with a small majority. The PDI-P is the nationalist opposition party led by Megawati Sukarnoputri, the daughter of Sukarno, and often tends to be liberal with regard to religious issues. The party was unable to profit from Jokowi’s popularity as much as most surveys had predicted. After a long and complicated decision-making process and only briefly ahead of the parliamentary elections, Jokowi had been declared the PDI-P candidate for the presidential elections.

The second-strongest force was the conservative *Partai Golkar*. Its chairman is one of the richest Indonesians, Aburizal Bakrie. During the New Order (1966–1998), it had acted as the state party, which always won at least two-thirds of the votes. The nationalist *Gerindra*, founded only a few years ago by Prabowo, gained particularly strongly. Gerindra has been able to mobilize enormous financial means in the last few years, and had a highly disputed presidential candidate in Prabowo, who is actually quite popular among certain parts of the population.

The *Partai Demokrat* of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the governing president until October 2014, and the Islamist *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS)* lost support. Some of their top functionaries have recently been involved in



spectacular corruption scandals, which have resulted in several high-ranking politicians being sentenced to prison. Three smaller Islamic parties, the *Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN)*, the *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB)*, and the *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP)*, as well as two split-

offs of the *Partai Golkar (Hanura and the Partai NasDem, which participated in elections for the first time)* were able to enter parliament. All in all, the party system is highly fragmented, something which will make it difficult to form stable coalitions.

Table 1: Results of Parliamentary Elections since 1999\*

Party	Votes in % (1999)	Seats (1999)	Votes in % (2004)	Seats (2004)	Votes in % (2009)	Seats (2009)	Votes in % (2014)	Seats (2014)
PDI-P	33.8	153	18.5	109	14.0	95	18.9	109
Golkar	22.5	120	21.6	128	14.4	107	14.7	91
Gerindra	–	–	–	–	4.5	26	11.8	73
PD	–	–	7.5	57	20,8	150	10.2	61
PKB	12.6	51	10.6	52	4.9	27	9.0	49
PAN	7.1	34	6.4	52	6.0	43	7.6	47
PKS	1.4	7	7.3	45	7.9	57	6.8	40
NasDem	–	–	–	–	–	–	6,7	39
PPP	10.7	58	8.2	58	5.3	37	6.5	35
Hanura	–	–	–	–	3.8	18	5.3	16
<b>total</b>		<b>500**</b>		<b>550</b>		<b>560</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>560</b>

**PDI-P** = Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle)

**Partai Golkar** = Partai Golongan Karya (Party of Functional Groups),

**Partai Gerindra** = Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya (Great Indonesia Movement Party),

**PKS** = Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Prosperous Justice Party),  
1999: PK = Partai Keadilan (Justice Party),

**PAN** = Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party),

**PD** = Partai Demokrat (Democratic Party),

**PPP** = Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party),

**PKB** = Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Awakening Party),

**Hanura** = Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat (People’s Conscience Party),

**PPP** = Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party),

**Partai NasDem** = Partai Nasional Demokrat (NasDem Party)

\* 1999 – 2009: Only the strongest parties and those that entered parliament in 2014

\*\* 1999: 38 seats went directly to the military



## The Duel of Jokowi versus Prabowo

Only parties or coalitions that received at least 25 percent of the votes or 20 percent of the mandates in the parliamentary elections were allowed to nominate candidate pairs for the presidential elections in July. Gerindra nominated Prabowo and coalesced with several Islamic parties to do so: PAN, which also appointed Hatta Rajasa as its vice presidential candidate; the Islamist PKS and PPP; and the less religious Partai Golkar. The Partai Demokrat also declared its support much later.

Jokowi was nominated by the PDI-P. His coalition consisted of a traditionalist Muslim party (PKB); the Partai NasDem of media czar Surya Paloh; and Hanura, led by the former commander of the armed forces, Wiranto. Jokowi had declared early on that he would not – as has been common in the past – automatically reward his coalition partners with ministerial positions. This decision is likely to have contributed to some parties' preference for Prabowo.

With only two candidate pairs, it was clear that there would only be one round of voting. In contrast to the direct presidential elections in 2004 and 2009, the polarization between the candidates was immense this time. Back then, the first rounds had seen five and three candidate pairs, respectively, face off. The differences between their camps were, however, not very strong. In both cases, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono had quickly turned out to be the clear favorite.

The restrained and very likable Javanese Jokowi does not come from a rich family. He likes heavy metal music and dresses simply. His trademark is his checkered shirts. Jokowi became famous as a politician because of his short trips to local markets and unannounced inspections of offices. He is considered highly pragmatic and incorruptible. He worked his way up to become a successful furniture trader with his diligence and skill.

Prabowo, in contrast, is the son of a former minister who was one of Indonesia's most influential economists. In the New Order, Prabowo was considered a promising candidate for the country's highest military office, and for

a while even as a possible successor to Suharto. As the commander of the notorious special forces, he enjoyed the doubtful reputation of an uncontrollable, brutal firebrand. He believes that the country needs a strong leader who would decisively counter corruption, recover the "dignity of Indonesia", and limit the excessive influence of foreign investors. Human rights and democracy, as his biography and his statements during the campaign suggested, are of subordinate importance to him. Prabowo wants to "return to the constitution of 1945." It was with this demand and supported by, amongst others, the military that Sukarno abolished democracy in 1959. The constitution of 1945 gave the president far-reaching rights that became the backbone of the closed authoritarian regime under Suharto from the mid-1960s onwards.

Prabowo considers much that has come from the West to be "un-Indonesian" and expressly opposes direct elections. This would affect hundreds of local polls as well as the presidential election itself. While Prabowo mostly represents a more protectionist (or "nationalist") policy platform that includes the special promotion of agriculture and the expansion of public debt, Jokowi supports not only limited protectionism, but also the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises, and a number of social policy measures (social insurance, better access to educational facilities, higher minimum wages, etc.), but also the continuation of budget consolidation, which includes the further reduction of energy subsidies.

In the campaign, the parties were only partially able to rely on the loyalty of their voters; many followers of the Partai Demokrat and Golkar preferred Jokowi – the latter probably mostly because of his partner, Jusuf Kalla. Jokowi seemed to be irrevocably in the lead just a few weeks before the elections. However, his lead dwindled and the campaign ultimately became more and more dramatic. The media were instrumentalized in a glaring fashion. A typical example was the smear campaign against Jokowi, who was accused in a special edition of a tabloid ("Obor Rakyat") of not being a Javanese Muslim but actu-



Table 2: Profile of the Candidate Pairs

	Prabowo Subianto / Hatta Rajasa	Joko Widodo ("Jokowi") / Jusuf Kalla
Candidates	Ex-general and former son-in-law of Suharto (Gerindra) / Chairman of PAN and Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs from 2009 to 2014	Governor of Jakarta (PDI-P) / Vice President from 2004 to 2009 (Golkar)
Supporting coalition of the parties represented in the parliament	Gerindra; PAN; PKS; Golkar; PPP; at the last minute also PD; together 63 percent of the mandates	PDI-P; PKB; Hanura; Partai NasDem; together 37 percent of the mandates
Campaign themes	Calling Jokowi a "puppet" of Megawati Sukarnoputri; elements of smear campaign (Jokowi supposedly a Christian of Chinese descent; alleged connections between him and PDI-P with the PKI); stressing the qualities of Prabowo as a leader in an aggressive campaign; emphasis on an Islamic identity by coalition partners	Jokowi's proximity to the people, his simple origins and his success as a local politician stressed; stronger emphasis on multi-religious identity, at the same time proximity to traditionalist Islam as represented by PKB and Jusuf Kalla; generally less professionally conducted campaign than that of Prabowo
Program	Prabowo represents stronger protectionism and, in part, aggressive nationalism; wants much higher public debt; strong promotion of farmers; speaks of a "return to the constitution of 1945"; refers to Sukarno and Suharto alike	Jokowi supports slight protectionism, efficient bureaucracy, improvement of investment conditions, promotion of SMEs, budget consolidation and fight against corruption; prosecution of past human rights violations; refers to Sukarno

ally a Christian of Chinese descent. Later, the TV channel TVOne reported on the alleged connections of the PDI-P and Jokowi to the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), which was crushed by the new regime under Suharto in the mid-1960s.

The four factors that decided Jokowi's victory in the final phase were, according to him, the house-to-house campaigning by thousands of volunteers in the last days before the election; the insulting statement of PKS politician Fahri Hamzah, who had called Jokowi's idea of introducing a day to honor Muslim scholars (a "Hari Santri") "crazy" ("sinting"); the last TV debate between the presidential candidates; and, specifically, the "Salam 2 Jari" concert in the Bung Karno Stadium on 5 July, which had been supported by many pop stars.

### Prabowo: A Sore Loser

Just a few hours after the polling stations had closed, something previously unimaginable happened. Prabowo's team, which was advised, surprisingly, by Rob Allyn, a controversial "spin doctor" from the US, referred to the quick counts of four previously almost unknown pollsters, all of which saw Prabowo and Hatta in the lead. In contrast to this, eight survey institutes, including the most reliable of the country, which had often predicted election results with great accuracy, each predicted the victory of Jokowi and Kalla by a majority of approximately five percentage points. Briefly after the elections and a bit prematurely, Jokowi therefore declared himself the victor, but Prabowo also showed himself convinced in interviews – based on the forecast by the four pollsters – that the counting of votes would end in his favor.



It was shocking that the team around Prabowo pretended for days to have won the elections, although even the most gullible people must have realized that the quick counts by the apparently well-paid survey institutes were nonsensical, especially since they were unwilling to disclose their methodology. When Prabowo realized that the Election Commission (KPU) would in the end come to the same result as the reliable survey institutes, he changed his tactic, attacking the KPU and also speaking of “massive, systematic” election fraud.

In the following days, the votes were counted further and Prabowo’s defeat became more and more undeniable. Just before the final announcement of the results, Prabowo made another unpredictable move. He read a declaration in which he continued to speak of election fraud and announced that he did not intend to continue his involvement in the election process. His partner, Hatta Rajasa, was not present and had not signed the declaration. The situation in Jakarta was very tense, and observers feared riots.

On 22 July, KPU announced the official final result: With a voter turnout of almost 71 percent, Jokowi and Kalla had received 53.15 percent of the votes; Prabowo and Hatta had received 46.85 percent. Thus, Jokowi and Kalla had a majority of approximately 8.4 million votes. Even then, Prabowo insisted that his own data, collected by the PKS, were correct. On 23 July, Tantowi Yahya, the spokesman for Prabowo’s team, declared that Prabowo had not withdrawn from the election process (which would have been contrary to legal provisions), but only from the vote-counting process. He also spoke of irregularities at 52,000 polling stations, which had supposedly affected 21 million votes. In contrast, the former chief justice of the Constitutional Court, Mahfud MD, who had in the meantime stepped down as Prabowo’s campaign manager, declared that the PKS had never been able to provide any data. The dubious *real count* of the PKS, a party otherwise known for its professionalism, is expected to dissolve into thin air.

On 23 July, Prabowo’s new campaign manager, ex-general Yunus Yosfiah, reported to the surprise of many

observers that 37 hackers from China and South Korea had manipulated four million votes that had not been cast. A day later, it emerged that these hackers did exist but that they had been arrested for entirely different offenses that had nothing at all to do with the elections. On 25 July, Prabowo filed a claim with the constitutional court. His team of 95 lawyers submitted its own calculation of the election results. According to them, Prabowo and Hatta received 50.25 percent of the votes. The court is expected to announce its decision in this case by 22 August. This judgment cannot be appealed.

The constitutional court has made headlines lately because of a high-profile corruption case; nevertheless, it is assumed that the judges will not be swayed in this case. In light of the obviously scant “proof”, it can be expected that the claim will be rejected and that Jokowi and Jusuf Kalla will be inaugurated on 20 October.

### What Does Jokowi’s Victory Mean?

In contrast to the previous elections, this year’s presidential elections showed – for the first time – how fragile Indonesia’s electoral democracy still is. Prabowo, an unpredictable candidate who virtually represented the authoritarianism of the New Order, was supported by a wide coalition, specifically the Islamic and Islamist parties and the former regime party Golkar. He continues to attempt to seize power by almost any means. With nationalist slogans and his image as an unrelenting, determined (“tegas”) man of action, he received the support of almost 47 percent of the voters, against a candidate deemed close to the people who has disassociated himself from the New Order, performed outstandingly successfully as a politician, and has never been seriously linked to corruption.

At the moment, the much-quoted “permanent coalition” behind Prabowo still has a relatively high majority of 63 percent of the mandates behind it. However, hints of disintegration are showing up more and more frequently. The spokesman of the Partai Demokrat has already openly considered supporting Jokowi. In addition, the PPP had



followed its chairman Suryadharma Ali into the coalition with Prabowo only reluctantly. Since Suryadharma Ali is suspected of corruption, the PPP may soon switch sides as well. Within the ranks of Golkar, demands for an extraordinary party congress to depose Chairman Aburizal Bakrie have been made repeatedly in the last few weeks.

In 2004, the then newly elected President Yudhoyono faced a similar problem. At that time, Jusuf Kalla, then vice president for the first time, assumed the chairman's office from Golkar and led the party into the ruling coalition. Due to the pragmatic – one could also say opportunist – behavior of many party politicians, Jokowi may soon be able to enlarge his coalition.

Jokowi also depends heavily on the support of his own coalition, specifically the PDI-P. This party is ruled by Megawati together with her daughter Puan. Puan considers the PDI-P to be the property of this dynasty and allegedly found Jokowi's nomination hard to accept. The PDI-P expects that as the party that won the parliamentary elections and nominated Jokowi, it will play a leading role in the government.

Besides the PDI-P, there are parties in Jokowi's coalition that are not considered reform-friendly. Hanura is led by the former commander of the armed forces, Wiranto. He was, like the founder of the Partai NasDem, Surya Paloh, part of the New Order elite. The Islamic PKB, which was instrumental to Jokowi getting the votes of Muslim voters in rural Java, has belonged to the conservative cartel of political parties in recent years. The extent to which Jokowi needs to incorporate questionable characters was already apparent when he included former generals Hendropriyono and Ryamizard Ryacudu in his campaign team.

Jokowi's victory may still be the beginning of a new era in Indonesian politics, if he manages to free himself from the embrace of his coalition partners. With a reform cabinet, he could be able to enforce the fight against corruption, push infrastructure projects, and slowly come to terms with the still-virulent legacies of the New Order.

This could be a wake-up call for the entire region of Southeast Asia, where most countries are ruled by more or less authoritarian regimes. Thailand recently experienced another military coup, and the Philippines have been dominated by a small oligarchy for a long time. Indonesia could become the regional example of a relatively successful transition to democracy.





## Further reading:

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ISSN 2195-0485

## Responsible according to German press law

Bertelsmann Stiftung  
Carl-Bertelsmann-Straße 256  
D-33311 Gütersloh

Stephan Vopel  
[stephan.vopel@bertelsmann-stiftung.de](mailto:stephan.vopel@bertelsmann-stiftung.de)

Dr. Peter Walkenhorst  
[peter.walkenhorst@bertelsmann-stiftung.de](mailto:peter.walkenhorst@bertelsmann-stiftung.de)