

# Globethics Repository

The logo for Globethics, featuring the word "Globethics" in white, lowercase, sans-serif font centered within a solid blue rectangular background.

## Democracy, Tolerance and Civil Society

This page was generated automatically upon download from the Globethics Repository. More information on Globethics see <https://www.globethics.net>. Data and content policy of Globethics Repository see <https://repository.globethics.net/pages/policy>.

Item Type	Book chapter
Authors	Wiratmoko, Nick T.
Publisher	Globethics.net
Rights	Creative Commons Copyright (CC 2.5)
Download date	2026-07-05 09:59:38
Link to Item	<a href="http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/173576">http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/173576</a>

## 6

# DEMOCRACY, TOLERANCE AND CIVIL- SOCIETY – FUNDAMENTALISM AND ETHICS IN INDONESIAN POLITICS

*Nick T. Wiratmoko, Indonesia*

### **Introduction**

The question that appears, when people talk about democracy, is how to build the most democratic governmental order in a third world country like Indonesia. Various writings concerning this topic mention that from the time of its independence day in 1945, Indonesia has decided to be a democratic-secular country. History proves that to build a nation that pledges itself to give priority to democracy above all matters, that a nation needs an immense and tremendous commitment from all its political elites as well as its state.

From 1945 until today, observing Indonesia from the models of its ruling regime, the colours of democracy exercised are far from being similar or identical. From the 1940s until the middle of 1960s, Indonesian democracy was one of guided democracy. From the mid 1960s until the end of the 1990s, the democracy under Suharto's regime was that of promoting the tradition of authoritarian democracy. After the fall of Suharto's regime, which was preceded by the monetary and economic

## *112 Overcoming Fundamentalism*

crisis of the year of 1997, Indonesia has not come to a definite shape of democracy.

For political observers, Indonesian democracy could be defined as being in the era of transition towards democracy. The reason lies in the fact that during the two longest ruling regimes in Indonesia, the democratic pillars couldn't be perfectly and ideally placed. This means, that democratic praxis, either electoral or deliberative, only applied to those groups of political elites and state bureaucracies, while, civil society, the group representing the people, acted as spectators, marginalised by the political processes.

What is the correct model for, or terminology of, democracy for a third world country? Would it be similar to that of a democratic country in the Western world? What transition takes place that makes the-not-yet-independent-country become a democratic-independent-one? What should be the choice of the third world country? Is it the electoral or deliberative or the blend of both electoral-deliberative models of democracy? Does the contrasting background of the Western countries, with majorities that are secular or Christian, as opposed to Indonesia as a nation with Muslim majority matter? Will Islam interfere with Indonesia's commitment to being a democratic nation?

Second, Indonesia claims to be democratic by virtue of the pluralism of its ethnic, religious and diverse cultural composition. In this condition, then, pluralism is unavoidable, even though in its reality, in order to possess such pluralism, collisions often occur between the majority and minority. The challenge for Indonesia is to have pluralism confront religious leaders, the intellectuals, politicians and bureaucracy elites, who do not have adequate capacity for promoting it. Therefore, it is worth questioning whether the mutual trust among the various parts of the society has been built. What about the public space which has to be maintained to guarantee egalitarianism in building up dialectics? Has the sustainability of the regulations by which they govern been entirely

given to the authority of the state, or is it still the claim of certain religious groups, which, for example, are promoting a *shari'a*-based religious state instead of a secular one? On what grounds do they base such efforts, and why do they choose such narrow-minded fundamentalism as the basis of their struggle? Concerning the public service provided by the government and impersonal bureaucracy, have women got equal access in dealing with the two agendas above?

Thirdly, in the dynamic of a democratic country, a tangible and significant presence of the civil society is an imperative. The questions, then, are: How has the civil society discourse been perceived by the state and the democratic actors? In the electoral democracy, has civil society been involved in all processes of political education or has it only been an instrument to give the claims of democracy legitimacy? If such is the case, how is a real response expected when the election comes? In the way authority is exercised, does the state try to take advantage of the principles characteristics of the civil society by making them part of state corporatism or does the civil society grow independently?

From the three groups of problems mentioned above, the three words of democracy, tolerance and civil society are where this paper will begin its focus.

## **1. In Search of Democracy Transition**

Soekarno's era implemented guided democracy. Suharto's era developed authoritarian democracy to maintain the growth of the macro economy. Those two types of democracy failed to develop extensive democracy awareness in Indonesia. Despite the fact that both regimes tried to introduce the practice of democracy, unfortunately, both were centralized on each of the state leaders, Soekarno, at least, had conducted the procedural pattern of democracy in the form of democratic elections in 1955. The 2004 election was a very similar type of democ-

## *114 Overcoming Fundamentalism*

matic procedure. The model of democracy that Suharto tried to implement did not last long, failing when he was forced to step down from his presidential position in 1998. After 1998, during the presidency of the four presidents succeeding Suharto (they are: B J Habibie, Megawati Soekarnoputri, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono), Indonesia has been understood as being in a transition towards democracy.

Democracy in Western countries was initiated by the industrial revolution. Furthermore, competitive capitalism supports democratic life. Indicators for democracy would be procedural-electoral democracy and the growth of deliberative democracy. In Indonesia during Suharto's regime they believed in the correlation between the growth of economy and the growth of a democracy. Samuel Huntington, emphasising the principle, stated that:

The first wave of democratisation in 19<sup>th</sup> century until early 20<sup>th</sup> century, generally emerged in Europe and America when their GNP per capita was between \$ 300 until \$ 500 (middle income). In the context of the third wave of democratisation, there were four countries with income between \$ 300 until \$ 500 which were experiencing transition towards democracy.<sup>1</sup>

Even though Huntington traced the pattern of correlation between the growth of economy and the presence of democracy, the principle does not always work in every context. Guillermo O'Donnell is a critic who strongly opposes the notion of a high correlation between economic growth and democracy. His observation in Latin America in 1970 showed that when a country demonstrates its inclination to further develop the industrial field and accelerate economic growth, what happens

---

<sup>1</sup> See Eko, Sutoro, "Introduction – Democracy Consolidation Lesson for Indonesia," in: Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy towards Consolidation*, (Yogyakarta: IRE Press, 2003), p. xxv.

as a consequence is the emergence of bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes, marked with the domination of military power, technocrat-bureaucrats, and also international business societies. The phenomenon of economic growth in East Asia, such as in Taiwan, proves that the success of a country's development is greatly influenced by the significant role of the interventionist-authoritarian state, rather than of the police-passive state.<sup>2</sup>

In Suharto's era, Indonesia reached US\$ 815 GNP per capita in 1990. This number was included in the World Bank's middle income standard. By comparing it to the standard of GNP stated by Huntington, logically the transition towards the democracy ought to have happened. However, here is what actually took place in the monetary crisis in 1997. First, the construction of capitalism and corporations, that Suharto had undertaken, turned out to be built on collusion and nepotistic practices. Yoshihara Kunio, for example, calls such capitalism "*Ersatz* capitalism" or "pseudo capitalism".

Second, industrial-based development set its priority on the principle of an authoritarian regime, which claims to enforce growth and provide equality of job opportunities.

Third, the regime of Suharto developed a dominant political party named *Golongan Karya* (the Work Group), and left political space for only 2 complementary parties at that time (PDI / Indonesian Democratic Party and *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* / Development Unity Party). Under the special condition of "floating-mass", the policy enabled Golkar to be the only political party to reach even the lowest level of the villages. The policy that was implemented at that time promoted the bureaucracy's full supports for Golkar. Under such conditions, it is obvious that the dominant interests of the bureaucratic-technocratic elites, sustained by the military, interfered with the national political arena. In the 1999 and 2004 elections, bureaucracy has been released

---

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Eko, Sutoro, *ibid.*, pp. xxv-xxvi.

from the political arena. Yet, the last two elections left an intact conclusion that the existing democracy is an insufficient democracy, which perfectly reflects the fact that democracy is still dominated by the role of the political and state elites in the arena of politics.

However, it is undeniably true, as research edited by John Higley and Richard Gunther demonstrates, that economic welfare is able to enhance elite convergence to institutionalise and consolidate the democracy.<sup>3</sup> Southern European and Latin American countries are successful in institutionalising democratic regimes, despite their insufficient growth and welfare of the economy. Economic-based approaches for democracy studies can be categorised in the area of substantive democracy theory.

Other approaches in the mass-structure are structural and class conflicts, which were ideas pioneered by Barrington Moore.<sup>4</sup> He studied the relation of the middle class to democracy. The presence of the middle class in Western Europe was believed to have contributed towards the fall of the domination of the feudalism of the land owners. The bourgeois or the middle class community consisted of individuals or groups which possessed independence both politically and economically, like journalists, professional associations, artists, and intellectual academics. According to the belief of the bourgeois, who focused on the society approach, their resistance to bring feudal values or the old order down was to increase collective awareness and action. Unfortunately in the post-Suharto era in Indonesia, the collective awareness among the grass-roots classes, like farmers, is still dominated by the bourgeois, who apply disadvantageous agricultural policies to farmers, and hence only advantage the urban community.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, even though work-

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. xxvi.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> For the policy on agriculture, especially rice, the government tends to ignore the poor farmers and takes no concern in protecting their interests. Once again, it gives more advantages to the urban community. Most Indonesian farmers nowadays are having minus NTP (Farmer's exchange values), which means that the cost of production is higher than the harvest price. On top of that, the areas

ers collective awareness has significantly been increasing, demands for fairer salaries and social charges have caused many capitalists to consider relocating their manufacturing to Vietnam and China<sup>6</sup>.

## 2. Pancasila and Muslim Fundamentalism

In the Indonesian context, implementing democracy implies several important points. Firstly, plurality is recognised, being proven by the national creed *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which indicates that Indonesian plurality be acknowledged, even though its realisation still has a long way to go. The idea that this creed carries has promoted the idea of multiculturalism, as it admits that in spite of existing differences, people should remain unified. This idea is often misunderstood as blending the differences into one. On the other hand, it may be perceived as promoting uniformity instead of enhancing plurality.

In addition to that, ideologically, Indonesian people have been united by the national foundation *Pancasila* (the five principles).<sup>7</sup> Historically speaking, the establishment of *Pancasila* as a set of ideological principles which Indonesian people have to follow and adopt, had previously

---

where farmers grow rice which should have been protected by strict regulations on import policy, in reality are violated and displaced for industrial locations. Such policy then promoted the substitute policy of a million acres of rice field provision in Central Kalimantan, which ended up causing severe environmental deterioration.

<sup>6</sup> The labour policy that supports industrialisation cannot free itself from the corporate policy which tends to be exploitative towards labour. On the other hand, labour's awareness of underpayment has forced them to strike for a raise. This condition has, in the end, forced the corporations to relocate their manufacturing factories to China or Vietnam where labour costs are much cheaper. Unattractive Indonesian industrial policies, other than the high cost of labour, include high over-head costs or other payments not related to industrial activities. The result is that the products are not competitive compared to those made in Vietnam or China.

<sup>7</sup> *Pancasila* consists of: [1] admitting one and only God, [2] just and civilized humanity, [3] the unity of Indonesia, [4] the representation of the people, and [5] social justice.

## 118 *Overcoming Fundamentalism*

strongly debates, sacrificing the *Piagam Jakarta* (The Jakarta Charter) in the process - that is a draft of a constitutional document demanding the putting in place of Islamic *shari'a* for Muslims. *Pancasila* functions as a binding ideology that holds together the ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and even territorial plural realities of each of Indonesia's citizens.

Even in the Suharto era in 1971, *Pancasila* had also been the only principle for political organisations.<sup>8</sup> With such assumptions and ideological supports tolerance is a must and it should have been able to manage Indonesian pluralism. However, does it prevail in reality for the Indonesian people? Constitutionally, the *Piagam Jakarta* has not brought back to Indonesian people's life discourse extensively through strong controversial debates and discussions in 2001 and 2002 People Council meetings. *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) and *Muhammadiyah* as two of the biggest Islamic organizations in Indonesia are strongly against the integration of *Piagam Jakarta* in the constitution. Does it make those parties aim to integrate the Islamic *shari'a* into constitution lessening their efforts? Yet, the objective to implement *shari'a* has been conducted through expansion of authority in regional parliaments under the regional autonomy policy where *shari'a* is placed as part of the regional regulations. The Islamic bureaucrats and the law ministry have been reported to have prepared a number of legal modifications with a significant number of them aiming to put the Islamisation process into effect.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Abdurrahman Wahid, Islam, Pluralism and Democracy in <http://www.smu.edu/asianstudies/>.

<sup>9</sup> Martin van Bruinessen Utrecht University, 2003. Post Suharto Muslim Engagement with Civil Society and Democratization. A paper presented at the Third International Conference and Workshop "Indonesia in Transition," organized by the KNAW and Labsosio, Universitas Indonesia, August 24-28, 2003, Universitas Indonesia, Depok. Check on: <http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/>

Second, it is high time to really make the creed true. With the recognition that plurality in Indonesia consists of different religions, ethnicities, races and cultures, tolerance should be contextualised in order to enter the public arena, which enables every citizen to perform democratically.

Third, when each member of the plural community implements tolerance towards the other parties, they should also be able to maintain their uniqueness. Even though it is difficult to realise it in many contexts, including in Indonesia, as there is a tendency that when two cultures meet, there is always a possibility for them to blend, it is worth promoting.

What is suggested above is often confronted with problems which are derived from the state's interference which tries to dominate the discourse in this area.<sup>10</sup> First, the state, especially under Suharto's regime, tried to impose and interfere with people's private life, in this case marriage and religious life. They released marriage regulations that prohibited inter-religious marriage. Religious organisations had to include *Pancasila* as one of their basic principles.<sup>11</sup> State recognition of religion was determined by the religion's acceptance of the first principle of *Pancasila*. It means that when a religion did not apply the idea of the principle, it was not legally recognised.<sup>12</sup> It left a long "scar" in the

---

<sup>10</sup> Michel Foucault suggests that power is often discursive in terms that in order that they maintain their powerful position, they create discourse(s) to shape people's mind. This seems to happen in Indonesia whenever we talk about religious relations, which eventually becomes one of the sensitive areas of difference between Indonesian people know as SARA (Suku, Agama, dan Ras – Ethnic, Religion, and Race (differences).

<sup>11</sup> An intervention was made in North Sumatera HKPB's leadership under Ephorus SAE Nababan and also in the leadership of Nahdlatul Ulama in their election in Cipasung, where the role of the state in intervening in a religion's affairs was apparent.

<sup>12</sup> There used to be only five religions legally acknowledged by the state. They are: Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Religions such as Kong Fu Tse, Confucianism, and native-ethnic religions were not acknowledged as legal religions.

## *120 Overcoming Fundamentalism*

life of Indonesian people into the post Suharto era, even though the state no longer acts in this way, believers of different religions still find it difficult to apprehend the meaning of being tolerant. This is proven by the conflict in Ambon, for instance, which obviously reflects the concept of “otherness” in perceiving plurality, in which one group considered itself as better than the other. As a consequence, one of the parties tried to demolish the other as they attempted to gain power in society.

Second, the state spread inconsistent interpretations of *Pancasila*. Very often, it was only used to win the powerful by twisting its meaning as a binding ideology. *Pancasila* tended to be twisted when a group of people or an organisation criticised the government or conducted an action that the government thought was threatening. These people would be considered as subversive and the reason often used to condemn them was that they violated *Pancasila*. It was never clear how they did so. The accusation was often absurd. Thus, *Pancasila* was used by the state as a means of repressing people. For example studying or discussing Marxism or even Karl Marx would be considered as anarchy and it was a reason to be sent to jail.

Third, despite its success in developing the country physically, Suharto’s regime failed to promote just and fair economic development. In order to raise a group’s economic success development often pushed another group aside. It resulted in economic disparity that increased jealousy from the marginalised. The case of the bloody dispute<sup>13</sup> between the native Dayak people and the migrant Madura-nese in Kalimantan (particularly in West Kalimantan) proves that economic disparity created jealousy of the local people towards the migrants, as they

---

<sup>13</sup> Gerry van Klinken, 2002, “Indonesia’s new Ethnic Elites” in Henk SchulteNordholt and Irwan Abdulla (Eds), *Indonesia in Search of Transition*. Yogyakarta, Pustaka Pelajar, pp. 67-105. In Sampit conflict (Central Kalimantan), the number of murdered Madurese was 500 people. 100,000 people were fleeing out of the area inhabited by around 1.8 million people. The occurrence itself was considered to be an ethnic cleansing as part of the horizontal violence.

were marginalised economically by the migrants who were getting richer. Conflict prevailed. The anger and disappointment of the Dayaknese, which was only one of the examples of Indonesian people's *amok* "behaviour", may have been reinforced by the New Order in terms of the following three important points: (1) cultural marginalisation, (2) cultural aggressiveness, and (3) collective hardness.<sup>14</sup>

Fourth, Indonesia is very weak at implementing secularism in the life of its citizens in the midst of the international discourse of *jihad* and *shari'a*. Even though *Nahdlatul Ulama* and *Muhammadiyah* (two big Moslem Civil Society Organisations CSOs) are convinced that the law of *shari'a* has been accommodated and even reflected in the state's legal or secular principles, there remains a strong tendency of some local Muslim communities to attempt to impose Islamic laws and principles as the basic regulation for Indonesia.

Some other Islamic groups consider the post-Suharto era as a good moment to proclaim *jihad* and *shari'a* at the same time when this discourse is globally acknowledged.<sup>15</sup> The *jihad* movement that appeared in the post Suharto era was the *Laskar Jihad Ahlus Sunna wal Jammah* led by Al-Ustaz Ja'far Umar Thalib, an Afganistani war veteran who graduated from Islamic education in Pakistan. The movement has now faded away, yet more radical fundamentalist movements emerged after the September 11 attack in the World Trade Centre in New York. The movements were the Amrozi group, which bombed Kuta in Bali (October 12, 2002)<sup>16</sup> and the group of Nurdin M Top, which bombed Jimbaran in October 1, 2005 (Bali)<sup>17</sup> and JW Marriot Hotel in August 4, 2003 (Jakarta).<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 89

<sup>15</sup> Mark R Woodward, *Indonesia, Islam and the Prospect of Democracy*, Department of Religious Studies in <http://www.smu.edu/asianstudies/>

<sup>16</sup> 202 people were dead. Almost of them were Australian.

<sup>17</sup> 31 people dead and 50 people were injured.

<sup>18</sup> Mass media reported that almost 12 people dead and 52 people were injured.

## 122 *Overcoming Fundamentalism*

The same fundamentalism has reached the implementation of a number of *shari'a*-based local regulations (*Peraturan Daerah – Perda*) in 36 provinces in Indonesia. Although people protested it, the protest went unheard. It means that people's disagreement or disappointment regarding the *Perda* did not stop the issuing of the regulations. However, they are allowed to bring the issue to court. How is the fundamentalist movement significant in this tension? For the fundamentalist community, the objective law applied is the *shari'a* order, in the aspects of leadership, law, or social-political relationship. Inconsistency with *shari'a* principles will be considered as threatening the existence of Islam. The essence of fundamentalism as noted by Abdul Munir Mulkhan is illustrated as follows:

A struggle through political parties or social movement "to take control of" various strategic positions to influence political policies, which are conducive towards the realisation of the *shari'a* regulations, is taken as a religious duty. This is called the doctrine of "*amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*", which means that whoever conducts it, they are struggling in Lord's way or "*sabilillah*", which in certain cases when the person is deceased in the action, then they are believed to be "*mati syahid*" (martyr) and they will get into heaven."<sup>19</sup>

Radical-fundamentalist movements will appear when there is support from society, the help of *shari'a* experts or people believed to have the expertise in convincing their followers. On the other hand, such movements could also lose their popularity whenever its followers are able to anticipate social change towards a more modern domain.<sup>20</sup> Fundamen-

---

<sup>19</sup> Mulkhan, Abdul Munir, 1999, pp. 152-153

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Quoted from Sartono Kartodirdjo (1984) and was referred by Abdul Munir Mulkhan, 1999. "The Root of Fundamentalism in Islamic Movement in Indonesia" in *Journal Wacana*, No II edition, 1999, p. 53; also check on the statement of Abdul Munir Mulkhan in Minutes Meeting "Serial Discussion on Fundamentalism Problems in Indonesia. Salatiga: Percik Foundation, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2002

talism derives from at least six recorded ideological ideas<sup>21</sup>: 1) They believe that *shari'a* regulations are able to comprehensively govern socio-political life; 2) all aspects of worldly profane life, including politics, have to show how God's law as stated in the Quran is implemented as it has been entirely stated in the *shari'a*; 3) the Islamic movement regeneration centres itself in the *shari'a*, hence fundamentalism is related closely to this kind of movement; 4) fundamentalism is also apparent when it is perceived that everything stated by the *ulama* is universal and basically unable to change, and this becomes the "dogma"; 5) elitism in the Islamic movement makes the *shari'a* experts the only authorities in charge of interpreting Islamic teachings; and 6) their psychological condition deems them as "being vulnerable and threatened" by other religious powers, local traditions (especially the Javanese) and secular movements.

What does the pro *shari'a* community consist of? A survey quoted by Martin van Brunessen showed that the followers and supporters of *shari'a* are often close to people in the rural areas, have lower education and lower social-economic backgrounds. It shows that it is more about social disparity than is generally supposed with Islamic radicalism. Islamic radicals in many places tend to have relatively good education, to come from lower-middle class social status in the process of social climbing. In conclusion, this study found that "the high percentage of

---

which states that one of the determining factors in the emergence of fundamentalism is the non-existence of renewals in the religious doctrines which are still maintaining its scholastic or middle age formulation, In times when the world was full of terrors and wars. See the minutes of the meeting of "Discussion Serials on Fundamentalism's Problems in Indonesia". Salatiga: Percik Foundation, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2002; Whereas Aristarchus mentioned that the reason for fundamentalism is the tendency of religions to only understand things in the light of their holy scriptures. See Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Mulkhan, 1999:159.

## 124 *Overcoming Fundamentalism*

pro *shari'a* responses appears to reflect a general rural conservatism rather than support for an Islamic revolution.”<sup>22</sup>

What does such a phenomenon imply? The phenomenon shows that the state is in a weak position in its function as the guardian of the principles of secularism. Whereas, if *shari'a* is implemented by local government, the legal implication is that other religions are alienated and considered to be non-existent.<sup>23</sup> In this case, it should be noted that religions have failed to implement the universal agendas of fighting poverty, law supremacy enforcement and freedom of expression. A religion is able to adopt these universal agendas only when they are able to put the priority on serving the community regardless of their cultural background. When it prevails, and only when this prevails, can the liberation function (*tahrir*) can operate.

For Islam, this last role is defined only in the implementation form of *rahmatan lil-alamin* – that is, a blessing for all living creatures.<sup>24</sup>

Fifth, tolerance is also defined as part of the public service the government gives, which requires equality in access to it and equality in decision-making participation. This premise implies that the state is obliged to provide non-discriminative public service, especially towards women. In its practice, women are facing marginalisation and discrimination, in the following aspects: 1) lower participation of women in the political arena, especially in realising the 30percent goal of women representation in legislative bodies/parliaments; 2) in many cases of

---

<sup>22</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, Utrecht University, 2003. Post Suharto Muslim engagements with civil society and democratization. Paper presented at the Third International and Workshop “Indonesia in Transition” organized by the KNAW and Labsosio, Universitas Indonesia, August 24-28, 2003, Universitas Indonesia, Depok. Check on: <http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/>

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Abdurrahman Wahid, “Religions and Democracy” Democracy” in Elga Sarapung, Alfred B Jogo Ena, and Noegroho Agoeng, 2004. *New Spirituality: Religions and People’s Aspirations*. Yogyakarta: Institute of Dian Interfidei, p. 329-336.

<sup>24</sup> Abdurrahman Wahid, *Islam, Pluralism and Democracy*  
<http://www.smu.edu/asianstudies/>

decision-making in development, men still play dominant roles. Bapena's policy and the Presidential Instruction to carry out gender mainstreaming are only responded to at a certain level of the bureaucracy, like in provinces or cities and regions. It means that strategic policies are only for the strategic bureaucracy and have never had a significant impact on women's empowerment. The result is that women's and children's aspirations in the development field are not well reflected in political decision-making.

### **3. The Role of Civil Society as an Agent of Reformation**

Regarding civil society, we should not disregard the development of the concept of civil society itself, which is related to the development of the economy and politics. It is undeniable that the economic and social transformation in the last decade has helped bring the authoritarian regime down, as well as seeing the rise of democratic institutions in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia. In particular, in the development of civil society in Asia, the ultimate democratic model is indicated by the rise of Civil Society Organisations which offer new methods in the provision of public services which have been carried out by nations and markets in ways that are questionable. The fall of socialist regimes in Eastern Europe, the rise of financial crisis, the increase of centralised economic integration in China and Vietnam towards the open capitalist economy, according to Porio (2002: 107-108), reflect the end of Cold War politics in super power countries, and the importance of finding an alternative development paradigm. In this era, civil society and civil society organisations play a very significant role.

Diamond (1994:5) states that:

Civil society is ... the realm of organised social life that is voluntary, self-generating, (largely) self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by a

## *126 Overcoming Fundamentalism*

legal order or a set of shared rules. It is distinct from “society” in general in that it involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interest, passions, and ideas, exchange information, achieve mutual goals, make demands on the state, and hold state officials accountable. Civil society is an intermediary entity, standing between the private sphere and the state.<sup>25</sup>

Borrowing the formulation of civil society developed by Diamond as mentioned above, civil society stresses voluntarism, self-generation, self-support, autonomy from the state, and obedience to the law. Civil society is not part of political parties, private spheres or the State. The other formulation, as Porio quoting Habermas stated, is that civil society is conceptualised as an intersection between the State and society.<sup>26</sup> In the Indonesian context, the formulation of civil society was stated by Rocamora et al (1998), which mentioned that the growth of civil society is understandable in four levels of inter-relation: the state, political society, civil society and international actors. With such references, then it is imaginable that civil society and civil society organisations have become an alternative power authority in developing democracy at the national and political level.<sup>27</sup> According to Willem Wolters, the role of civil society could be to help support a number of functions for democracy, they are:

1) protecting the citizens against state arbitrariness; 2) maintaining a balance between society and the state, based on the rule of law; 3) disseminating the democratic values of tolerance, honesty and mutual acceptance; 4) the creation of public sphere of discussion; 5) and finally that of moderating social conflicts,

---

<sup>25</sup> Emma Porio, *Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*

by creating overlapping networks of organisations and crisscrossing socio-cultural loyalties.<sup>28</sup>

In implementing the strategy on how the Civil Society Organisations (CSO's) are playing their roles, in the Suharto era many of them placed themselves as opponents of the state. In contrast, in the era of Habibie and Abdurrahman Wahid, most CSO movements positioned themselves either as opponents of the state or they started using a negotiation strategy. In Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's era, many CSOs use strategies which focus on negotiation and facilitation of a number of empowerment programs and public awareness and/or by involving foreign donors. In the perspective of pre-election procedural democracy, for instance, many CSOs are initiating voter education programmes, and in the process of the election itself, the CSOs would monitor the process.

CSOs which promote democracy are not only coming from the secular groups, but also some of them are coming from religious groups, like Islam. Western donors which work through the issue of neutralisation of fundamentalism in Indonesia include USAID, the Asia Foundation and the Ford Foundation. The issue of Fundamentalism is emerging and rising out of the notion that some radical Islamic groups take on the Christian groups and the spreading of Christian teachings.

Anti-Christian conspiracy is deeply rooted in Indonesian history. Christianity as part of the missionary actions in the Dutch colonial era was and is associated with colonialism. Furthermore, it was reinforced by the perception of mass conversion to Christianity as the result of the 1965–1966 violence. According to Martin van Bruinessen, many Islamic leaders worry that similar to the Western intention to roll back communism, the same would be attempted to destroy the power of Islamic politics in Indonesia.<sup>29</sup> Three strategies that support these views are:<sup>30</sup> 1)

---

<sup>28</sup> Walter, Willem, 202, pp 133-138.

<sup>29</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, *Ibid*.

## 128 *Overcoming Fundamentalism*

Christianisation through the expansion of Christian institutions and conversion among Muslims; 2) The stress on Islamic de-politicisation and de-Islamisation from the state apparatus in the early New Order led by Ali Murtopo and Catholic-Chinese intellectuals in CSIS; 3) Many parties were convinced by the controversial ideas of Nurcholish Madjid and his circle, who got a lot of press coverage in 1970, sponsored by Suharto regime to bring the “true” Islam down.

What is the challenge for CSOs in the future in their inter-sections with the state and market? The challenging agenda for the CSOs are:<sup>31</sup>

1) Developing consensus about values among groups of plural and internally-heterogeneous civil societies. In this context, the implementation of something like the example of the CSO communities in the Philippines which have developed a code of ethics between CSOs and state-civil society will be the evidence of confidence in Indonesia. In Indonesia, since the 1990s, many Islamic CSOs have grown. They prove to be open-minded towards the non-Muslim groups, and they are expected to be able to get involved in inter-religious dialogue and work in partnership with other religious groups in many sectors of activity. Most activists think that it is easier to cooperate with the non-Muslim CSOs compared to the Muslim ones;<sup>32</sup> 2) CSOs will have to deal with international CSOs, the global economy, political society and the state; 3) Creating social institutions that aim at expanding the space for public debates on issues and values; 4) Giving attention to reducing poverty, promoting good governance, as well as strengthening the capacity and capability of the CSOs.

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Emma Porio, 2002, Ibid, pp. 124-125.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Martin van Bruinessen, *Ibid*

## References

- van Bruinessen, Martin, *Post Suharto Muslim engagements with civil society and democratization*. Paper presented at the Third International Conference and Workshop "Indonesia in Transition", organised by the KNAW and Labsosio, Universitas Indonesia, August 24-28, 2003. Depok: Universitas Indonesia, 2003 see <http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/>
- Cammack, Paul, *Capitalism and Democracy in the Third World – The Doctrine for Political Development*. London: Leicester University Press, 1997.
- Diamond, Larry, *Developing Democracy Towards Consolidation*. Yogyakarta: IRE Press, 2003.
- Eko, Sutoro, "Introduction – Democracy Consolidation Lesson for Indonesia", in Larry Diamond. *Developing Democracy towards Consolidation*. Yogyakarta: IRE Press, 2003, pp. xxv-xxvi.
- Harriss, John, Kristian Stokke and Törnquist, Olle, *The Politization of New Local Politic Democracy* (Indonesian translation). Jakarta: Demos Publisher, 2005.
- van Klinken, Gerry, "Indonesia's New Ethnic Elites" in Nordholt, Henk Schulte and Abdullah, Irwan (eds.), *Indonesia in search of transition*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2002.
- Mulkhan, Abdul Munir, "Roots of Fundamentalism in Islamic Movement in Indonesia" in: Journal of *Wacana*, – *Democracy Projects*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1<sup>st</sup> year, 1999. Yogyakarta: Insist, 1999, pp. 151-172.
- Mulkhan, Abdul Munir, Minutes Meeting "Seri Diskusi tentang Masalah-masalah Fundamentalisme di Indonesia" (Serial Discussion on Fundamentalism Problems in Indonesia) Salatiga: Percik Foundation, 29 November 2002.
- Nordholt, Henk Schulte and Irwan Abdullah (Eds.) *Indonesia in search of transition*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2002

*130 Overcoming Fundamentalism*

Porio, Emma “Civil Society and Democratization in Asia: Prospect and Challenges in the new millenium” in Henk Schulte Nordholt and Irwan Abdullah (eds.), *Indonesia in Search of Transition*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2002.

Sorensen, Georg, *Democracy and Democratization*, Tadjoeidin Noer Effendi (Editing and Forewords). Yogyakarta: Center for Critical Social Studies and Pustaka Pelajar, 2003.

Wahid, Abdurahman, “Religions and Democracy” in: Elga Sarapung, et al, *New Spirituality: Religions and People’s Aspirations*, Yogyakarta: Institut Dian Interfidae, 2004, pp. 329-336.

Wahid, Abdurrahman, *Islam, Pluralism and Democracy* in <http://www.smu.edu/asianstudies/>

Wolters, Willem, “The Making of Civil Society in Historical Perspective” in: Henk Schulte Nordholt and Abdullah, Irwan (eds.). *Indonesia in Search of Transition*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2002.

Woodward, Mark. R, *Indonesia, Islam and the Prospect of Democracy*, Department of Religious Studies in <http://www.smu.edu/asianstudies/>

Uhlen, Anders, “Democratization in Indonesia: Challenges and Opportunities” in: *Journal of Wacana, – Democracy Projects*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1<sup>st</sup> year, Yogyakarta: Insist, 1999, pp. 75-99.