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*After Jokowi's First Term*

## **Jokowi's New Cabinet: Guiding Two Visions of Indonesia to 2024**

*By Jefferson Ng and Adhi Priamarizki*

### **SYNOPSIS**

*President Joko Widodo (Jokowi)'s second cabinet looks to the future and it sees both trouble and promise ahead for Indonesia.*

### **COMMENTARY**

PRESIDENT JOKOWI'S new cabinet welds two different visions of Indonesia together. One vision sees a bright future—for Indonesia to transform itself into a major economic power and bring prosperity to millions of Indonesians. Another vision looks at the near future—and it foresees troubled waters ahead.

The new cabinet is a balance between both visions. Fresh entrants and energetic individuals like former GO-JEK CEO Nadiem Makarim, former NET TV CEO Wishnutama, and Eric Thohrir, as well as steady hands like Luhut B. Pandjaitan (Coordinating Minister of Maritime Affairs and Investment) and Sri Mulyani (Minister of Finance), represent Jokowi's aspiration to promote economic stability and address human capital challenges for investments and businesses.

On the other hand, the inclusion of 6 ministers with military backgrounds and 1 minister with a police background reflect the continued reliance on security personnel and apparatus to address challenges on the horizon. Similarly, the inclusion of a hitherto unprecedented number of political party appointees signal the re-patrimonialisation of the state. Both developments hint at what the President considers to be major challenges in the next 5 years.

## **Re-Patrimonialism: Responding to Increased Political Party Pressure**

Jokowi's new cabinet (*Kabinet Indonesia Maju*: Indonesia Onwards Cabinet) is an inclusivist cabinet designed to co-opt major political factions to maintain political stability and safeguard the state. The 38 member cabinet comprises 18 political party appointees, 2 appointees (Tito Karnavian and Teten Masduki) who enjoy close ties to President Jokowi and the Indonesian Democratic of Struggle Party (PDI-P), and 18 non-party appointees.

The PDI-P takes the largest share with 5 ministerial positions, Golkar is allocated 4 ministerial positions, the National Democrats (Nasdem) and the National Awakening Party (PKB) are allocated 3 ministries each, the Gerindra Party holds 2 ministries, and the United Development Party (PPP) one ministry.

The total number of political party appointees is equal or higher (18+2) than President Yudhoyono's 2nd term (18), indicating that Jokowi faces strong pressure from political parties to access state resources. Unlike the start of his first term, Jokowi is cognisant of the difficulties of governing without a political party that he controls. As a result, he has opted to absorb and balance multiple competing factions, so that he will not be dominated by one set of interests.

Indeed, the prevailing political climate appears hostile—with the Parliament pushing through controversial revisions to the Anti-Corruption Commission, as well as pressure from political parties for more cabinet positions. In late August 2019, the President was further reminded of his Achilles heel by a proposed constitutional amendment that will restore the power to determine state policy to the legislature.

Based on the cabinet representation, the original 5-party government coalition along with Gerindra accounts for 74% of seats in the House of Representatives (*DPR*). Despite this large legislative majority, Jokowi cannot assume automatic support from the political parties, and policy transactionalism will likely dilute the effectiveness of Jokowi's developmentalist agenda.

### **Continued Reliance on Security Personnel**

The recent knife stabbing of ex-Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs Wiranto is a reminder of the serious threat posed by Islamic radicalism in Indonesia. The new cabinet composition indicates that Jokowi is relying on security personnel to address these challenges.

The cabinet has 6 individuals coming from a military background and 1 minister from a police background. Three individuals stand out. First, Prabowo Subianto, Jokowi's presidential rival, has joined Jokowi's cabinet as the new Minister of Defence. Prabowo is charismatic and ambitious, and now wields significant influence as both party chairman of the Gerindra Party (3rd largest in Parliament) and defence minister. He is a nationalist and may push for a more assertive defence policy, having repeatedly expressed his desire to build up Indonesia's defence capabilities.

Second, the appointment of Fahrul Razi, a former Deputy Commander of the TNI, as the new Minister of Religious Affairs, indicates potentially tougher measures and inter-

ministerial coordination against Islamic radicalism. The portfolio is usually held by an individual with close ties with Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's largest Muslim organisation. Third, ex-Police Chief Tito Karnavian has been appointed as the Minister of Home Affairs, who is well-placed to bring his expertise in terrorism and radicalisation to bear.

### **Potential Implications for 2024**

The composition of the new cabinet reflects Jokowi's assessment of the type of challenges that Indonesia will be facing in the next 5 years. Jokowi intends to accommodate oligarchic and party interests so that they will not veto his economic reform agenda, while his approach to addressing future terrorist and radical threats is heavily reliant on security apparatus.

The concern is that allotting a large chunk of cabinet positions to political party appointees and powerful businessmen will perpetuate the continued dominance of established political parties and figures. Indeed, the new cabinet includes three political party chairmen—Airlangga Hartarto (Golkar), Prabowo Subianto (Gerindra), and Suharso Monoarfa (PPP).

This is balanced by the fact that some of the new ministers, such as Nadiem Makarim and Wishnutama, could potentially generate fresh ideas and inject new dynamism to politics and policymaking. Ministerial posts also provide governing experience and name recognition, which could open the field for more presidential race contenders in 2024.

President Jokowi has the difficult and unenviable task of steering Indonesia through troubled waters while keeping sight of the rainbow on the horizon. The bottom line is that the gap between intentions and outcomes will depend on the ability to run a tight ship and bring about measured progress with an eye on the dangers ahead for Indonesia.

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