

# Indonesia

## Background

- 2.1 The Indonesian archipelago comprises over 17 000 islands, covering a land area of 1 905 000 square kilometres. Indonesia has the fourth largest population in the world, with a 2010 census figure of 237.6 million people. The majority of Indonesians identify as Muslim, with smaller communities of Christians, Hindus and non-specified groups.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.2 Indonesia is the largest economy in South East Asia. Despite the recent global financial crisis the Indonesian economy has continued to grow. The International Monetary Fund forecast Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product for 2011 as US\$ 834.3 billion. Indonesia's largest trading partners are China, Japan and the United States. The Indonesian Government has a Master Plan for the Acceleration and Expansion of Indonesia's Economic Development 2011-2025, with a goal of becoming one of the top ten global economies by 2025. Economic growth has enabled millions of Indonesians to rise from poverty. However, Indonesia faces some significant challenges, for example, 49 per cent of Indonesians are living on less than US\$2 a day.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.3 The Republic of Indonesia gained independence in 1945. In 1998, after decades of authoritarian rule, Indonesia began its transition to democracy, spurred by the economic crisis of 1997-1998. The democratisation process involved amending the Constitution, with changes including:

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1 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Indonesia country brief*, <<http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/indonesia/>>, viewed 2 April 2012.

2 AusAID, *Australia Indonesia Partnership Country Strategy 2008-13*, 2008, p. 2.

- the direct election of the President and Vice-President;
- stronger checks and balances mechanisms;
- restraining the executive's power and increasing the parliament's power;
- establishing two houses of parliament; and
- a commitment of 20 per cent of the budget to education.<sup>3</sup>

2.4 More than a decade since moving to democracy, Indonesia has made significant progress. However, it is a relatively young democracy, and still faces political, economic and social development challenges. Economic growth and addressing corruption, legal system weaknesses and financial accountability are some of the country's key priorities.

2.5 Political changes in Indonesia have included a process of decentralisation, which has involved transferring certain powers of public expenditure and service delivery from the central government to over 450 provincial and local governments.

2.6 Indonesia is a unitary state. The President and Vice President are directly elected for a five year term, and govern with the assistance of an appointed Cabinet. There is a bicameral parliamentary system in Indonesia. The People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) is the primary representative body, which is comprised of two houses: the 560-member House of Representatives (DPR) and the 132-member Regional Representative Council (DPD). Members are elected for five years by proportional representation. The DPR is a legislative and monitoring body of the executive arm, while the DPD has oversight of region matters, with members representing Indonesian provinces.<sup>4</sup>

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3 Secretariat General of DPD RI, *DPD RI (Senate) in the Parliament of Indonesia*, p. 1.

4 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Indonesia country brief*, <<http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/indonesia/>>, viewed 2 April 2012.

## Elections

- 2.7 As the world's third largest democracy, after India and the United States, Indonesian elections are conducted on a huge scale. Voting is not compulsory in Indonesia. Elections are held every five years. In its move to democracy, three national elections have been held in Indonesia (1999, 2004 and 2009). The next national election will be in 2014.
- 2.8 Significant changes to electoral law were made in 2007 and 2008, which affected electoral processes for the 2009 national election. Reviews of Indonesia's electoral law have occurred since and led to legislative changes earlier this year. However, as these changes represent a compromise on certain issues, some feel that the changes are not significant reforms.<sup>5</sup> The 2012 amendments to the General Elections Law include:
- increasing the parliamentary threshold from 2.5 to 3.5 per cent for the upcoming 2014 general election;
  - adopting the open-list electoral system, under which electors can vote for specific candidates rather than parties; and
  - the allocation of parliamentary seats for each region.
- 2.9 In the last national election in 2009, there were 171 265 442 voters, with 519 920 polling stations manned by 4 679 280 staff.<sup>6</sup> The election was complicated by changes to the procedures for voting and the determination of successful candidates.
- 2.10 Elections are held to directly elect representatives for the various levels of government. There are a large number of elections held in Indonesia. For example, in 2010 there were more than 240 local elections conducted. As well as being important to the administration of a given area, local elections are significant as they can be a litmus test for the national election.
- 2.11 The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) stated:
- ...problems evident in the 2009 national elections have not been resolved, and may be worsening. Violence was associate with

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5 Jakarta Post, Articles: < <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/04/13/editorial-higher-threshold.html>>, <<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/04/16/new-election-law-gets-mixed-reviews.html>> and <<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/04/12/new-election-law-makes-no-progress-critics.html>>, viewed 30 April 2012.

6 Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU), *The 2009 Elections in numbers*, 2010, p. 3.

approximately 10% of elections, 80% of results were disputed in the Constitutional Court, and parliamentary revisions to essential electoral legislation have been delayed.<sup>7</sup>

- 2.12 Electoral managers in Indonesia must address a number of issues, including the cost of elections and geographic and logistical challenges. Also, while voter turnout has been exceptionally high, it is now dropping. It was suggested to the delegation that this could be an indication of voter fatigue due to the high number of elections in the country.
- 2.13 The delegation heard that Indonesians at all levels of society engage in public debates on issues during the election period.
- 2.14 The General Election Commission, *Komisi Pemilihan Umum* (KPU), is made up of seven commissioners who serve for a five year period. The current commission period will end in 2012.
- 2.15 In August 2010 the International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) contracted the Polling Center of Jakarta to conduct a nationwide public opinion survey on elections. There were 2 500 people surveyed across the 33 provinces. The goal was for responses to be representative of eligible electors across Indonesia. Key findings included:
- 59 per cent of respondents believed the country was 'going in the right direction';
  - Respondents identified inflation and unemployment as the biggest problems facing Indonesians;
  - 78 per cent of respondents viewed voting as a way to influence decision making in Indonesia (this figure comprised of 74 per cent 'somewhat agree' and 4 per cent 'strongly agree');
  - 65 per cent of respondents believed that the results issued by the Indonesian electoral commission reflected the actual vote, with 9 per cent disagreeing, and 26 per cent responding they did not know;
  - When asked what it means to live in a democracy, 38 per cent of responses referred to freedom, but 41 per cent did not give an answer;
  - 64 per cent of respondents indicated they had received a visit at their home in the past to check the registration status of their families. Visiting homes for registration purposes is not a requirement in Indonesia, as the onus is on the elector to verify their registration status;

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7 AusAID, *Annual program performance report 2010: Indonesia*, p. 43.

- 41 per cent of respondents indicated that they had checked to see if their name was on the voters list;
- 78 per cent of respondents indicated they had received little or no information in relation to the local elections that took place that year; and
- 77 per cent of respondents were not concerned about violence at the local elections.<sup>8</sup>

## Voter registration

- 2.16 Concerns were raised about inaccuracies in the voter list used for the 2009 national election. It was estimated that a high number of voters were omitted (possibly over 20 per cent). There were also textual errors, voters allocated to the wrong area, and cases of multiple registration.
- 2.17 These problems were attributed to the legislative requirement that the KPU develop the 2009 voter list from population data provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), rather than using the 2004 list as the basis. It was suggested to the delegation that the quality and format of the data was not conducive to forming the basis of an accurate voter list.
- 2.18 The delegation heard that the Government's eKTP initiative should improve the quality of the population data and serve as the basis for future voter lists. The KPU has also launched an initiative to develop and implement a new country-wide voter registration system. The KPU aimed to introduce a comprehensive plan in March 2012. A Steering Committee on Voter Registration was established, comprised of KPU Commissioners, KPU Secretariat, KPU Provinces, MoHA, the Research Center for Biotechnology, civil society and academia. The steering committee engaged to meet fortnightly to oversee the design of the new voter registration system.
- 2.19 There is also a Voter Registration Expert Group, with a membership of six Indonesian experts, dedicated to the research, analysis and design of the new voting registration system. IFES is facilitating the work of this group by: providing administrative and logistical support on the initiative; coordinating legal review and advocacy efforts; providing expertise on comparative voting registration systems; and providing electoral administration advice.

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8 International Foundation for Electoral Systems, *IFES Indonesia: Electoral Survey 2010*, November 2010, pp. 3-5.

## Australia and Indonesia

- 2.20 Indonesia is one of Australia's closest neighbours, and the countries are linked in a number of ways. There are high level exchanges between governments, parliaments and prominent leaders in these two countries. Australia and Indonesia have a productive working relationship on political, governance, security, commercial, environmental and cultural issues. They cooperate on a number of international and regional issues, including counter-terrorism, people smuggling, climate change and interfaith dialogue.
- 2.21 Australia has strong bilateral ties with Indonesia, these are expressed through a variety of programs and agreements, which include:
- Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement;
  - Agreement between the Republic of Indonesia and Australia on the Framework for Security Cooperation, initiated in 2006;
  - Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia, initiated in 2005;
  - The Australia-Indonesia Trade and Investment Framework, initiated in 2005; and
  - Australia-Indonesia Ministerial Forum, leading to outcomes such as the Joint Statement on People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons.
- 2.22 Australia and Indonesia have a two-way trade and investment relationship. In 2010-2011 Australia imported AUD\$5 755 million in goods from Indonesia (primarily petroleum, gold and wood), and exported AUD\$4 780 million in goods to Indonesia (primarily wheat, petroleum, livestock and aluminium).<sup>9</sup>
- 2.23 Indonesia receives the largest proportion of Australia's overseas aid. It is estimated that Australia's Overseas Development Assistance to Indonesia for 2011-2012 will be AUD\$558 million.<sup>10</sup> Development programs operate within the Australia Indonesia Partnership agreement.
- 2.24 Development priorities for Indonesia include: education and scholarships; health; economic growth; climate change and environmental

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9 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Indonesia: Fact Sheet*, <<http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs/indo.pdf>>, viewed 2 April 2012.

10 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Indonesia country brief*, <<http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/indonesia/>>, viewed 2 April 2012.

sustainability; civil society, justice and democracy; economic and public sector reform; and humanitarian assistance.

## Electoral assistance

- 2.25 As part of its governance programs in the Asia Pacific region, Australia provides electoral specific support to Indonesia, including supporting the last three national elections in 1999, 2004 and 2009. The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), DFAT and AusAID cooperate in the provision of electoral assistance in Indonesia. This assistance is aimed at strengthening electoral bodies and increasing elector participation through education.
- 2.26 Australia provided Indonesia with AUD\$14.3 million assistance in the lead up to the 1999 national election. The electoral assistance package included voter education and support for election monitoring by non-government organisations. There were 25 Australian observers involved in monitoring the election.<sup>11</sup>
- 2.27 In 2003-2004 AusAID provided AUD\$15 million in electoral assistance to Indonesia. This support included voter education, commission staff training, AEC capacity building with the Indonesian electoral commission, and sending election observer teams.<sup>12</sup>
- 2.28 A number of problems emerged in relation to the 2009 national election, including: inaccuracies in the voter list, leading to millions of voters being disenfranchised; errors in vote calculations; and a high level of invalid votes. Following the election, Australia committed to assist Indonesian electoral managers to address these issues.
- 2.29 There is an Australia Indonesia Partnership for Electoral Support. AusAID works in partnership with civil society organisations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the AEC to provide electoral support programs. AusAID reported the following achievements in electoral support to Indonesia in 2010:
- Support for the Electoral Resources Information Centre that laid the groundwork for the Electoral Commission to make election information (such as election results) publicly available and meet responsibilities under the 2008 Freedom of Information Law for the first time.
  - Training the local electoral commissions in five provinces that improved their ability to manage the voters list, confirmed the

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11 AusAID, *Annual Report 1998-1999*, pp. 48-49.

12 AusAID, *Annual Report 2003-2004*, p. 62.

right to vote for 38 million people, and increased public confidence in the voter registry.

- The first standardised manual for polling officials working on sub-national elections across the country to ensure that all polling officials are able to consistently manage local elections.
- Production of evidence-based research on election financing, women's candidacy and elections monitoring to inform amendments to the elections management law and local elections law. These have been favourably received by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Parliament.
- Elections financing research that was the first of its kind. It will assist increased transparency in elections budgeting, advise decision-makers of potential cost savings in the conduct of elections, and inform electoral legislation revisions.<sup>13</sup>

2.30 AusAID is working with KPU to address some of the issues evident in the 2009 election prior to the next national election in 2014.

2.31 AusAID's longer-term Australia Indonesia Electoral Support Program commenced in 2011, and aims to improve the conduct of elections in Indonesia by developing manuals, providing training to election officials, and assisting with the preparations of a national voter registration system in preparation for the 2014 election.<sup>14</sup>

2.32 The AEC is one of the five partners in the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) program. The BRIDGE program partners are the AEC, International IDEA, IFES, UNDP and the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division. The program aims are to: promote internationally accepted principles of democracy and good electoral practice; enhance confidence in electoral processes; electoral capacity building; and develop a support network for stakeholders to encourage a culture of sharing information and best practice electoral processes. The courses include providing training for polling staff.

2.33 BRIDGE programs are conducted throughout the world. A BRIDGE course has been customised for Indonesia. The delegation received feedback that the BRIDGE programs had been very beneficial for Indonesia. There is an emphasis on enabling those who receive training to transfer their skills to others.

2.34 Since 2009 the AEC has maintained a permanent presence in Indonesia, with an officer assisting with electoral affairs and maintaining

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13 AusAID, *Annual program performance report 2010: Indonesia*, p. 44.

14 AusAID website, <<http://www.aid.gov.au/country/trans-indonesia/civ-soc-just-dem-init2.cfm>>, viewed 2 April 2012.



relationships with Indonesian electoral officials on an ongoing basis. The delegation received a tour of the AEC's Jakarta office and met the local staff.

- 2.35 Recent AEC electoral assistance has included helping KPU to develop and edit a manual for polling station staff at local government elections, which are in the local language. The delegation was provided with copies translated into English. The manual included a detailed outline of the election process and polling staff responsibilities. Appendix B depicts staff roles at polling stations.

Figure 2.1 Delegation visit to the AEC office in Jakarta



## Yogyakarta mayoral election

2.36 On Sunday, 25 September 2011 the delegation had the opportunity to observe a local government election held in Yogyakarta to select the Mayor and Vice Mayor of Yogyakarta City. Mayors serve for five year terms. The candidate teams are depicted in Figure 2.2. The election was conducted by the KPU Yogyakarta City.

Figure 2.2 Candidates for the Yogyakarta City Head and Vice Head of Local Government



Source Provided by AusAID

2.37 Of the 322 840 eligible electors, 200 753 (approximately 62 per cent) voted at the Yogyakarta mayoral election. The KPU had 839 polling stations for the election, including one at the prison.

2.38 While the count for these local elections take place at the polling place after polling closes, the ballots are sent to sub district officers for rechecking. All ballot boxes and documentation then go to the city before the winner is determined.

2.39 The Haryardi Suyuti-Imam Prioyono pairing received 97 074 votes (48.3 per cent), the Hanafi Rais-Tri Harjun Ismaji pairing 84 122 votes (41.9 per cent), and the Zuhri Hudaya-Aulia Reza Bastian pairing 19 557 votes (9.7 per cent).

- 2.40 KPU regulations provide that the successful candidate will receive more than 50 per cent of the vote, or if no candidate receives more than 50 per cent, then a candidate with more than 30 per cent will be declared the winner. However, if two candidates each receive more than 30 per cent of all votes then the winner will be determined by examining the total votes by sub district. The candidates who secures the greater number of sub districts will be the winner. If no candidates gains more than 30 per cent of all votes, then there will be a second round election. In some Indonesian local elections there is a run-off election even if more than 30 per cent of the vote is secured.
- 2.41 In Yogyakarta the sub district approach is applied. As two of the candidate pairings (Haryardi Suyuti-Imam Priyono and Hanafi Rais-Tri Harjun Ismaji) secured more than 30 per cent of the vote, the KPU examined the sub district results. The final result was determined on 4 October 2011. Dr Haryard Suyuti and Dr Imam Priyono were the successful candidates, and will hold the positions of Mayor and Vice Mayor of Yogyakarta until 2016.
- 2.42 The AEC in Jakarta advised that the ten day delay between the election on 25 September and the formal announcement of results on 4 October was normal for local elections.
- 2.43 Electors receive 'invitation letters' five days prior to the election day. Eligible people can attend a polling booth and vote without a letter, if they satisfy certain identification requirements. However, it is easier to present their letter and vote. The ballot paper contains a picture of all the candidates, on which the elector will indicate their preferred candidate pairing. Once an elector has voted, one of their fingers is marked with ink (see Figure 2.4). This serves as a means of combating multiple voting.
- 2.44 The delegation heard about Indonesia's national identification number program, under which all Indonesians will be issued with a unique number. This can be used for identification purposes when voting. It is anticipated that by the end of 2012 every Indonesian will have a national identity number.
- 2.45 The delegation was accompanied by KPU, AEC, DFAT and AusAID representatives during its visit to a number of different polling stations in Yogyakarta.

Figure 2.3 Delegation visiting a polling booth in Yogyakarta



Figure 2.4 Elector displaying finger ink after voting in Yogyakarta election



Figure 2.5 Ballot count for the Yogyakarta election



## General observations

- 2.46 A recurring theme in discussions during the visit was that while Indonesians can be proud of what they have already achieved, there is still work to be done to consolidate and grow their democracy. Discussions reflected an appreciation that while democracy is a shared destination, countries sometimes take different roads. Indonesia realises that it is important to learn from the experiences of other countries, but also develop its own unique form of democracy.
- 2.47 Australia and Indonesia place importance on improving participation in the electoral process. A proportion of the electoral work in Indonesia is focused on educating the population about the electoral process. Democracy becomes a viable option over civil unrest or violence when people have confidence in the independence and transparency of electoral processes and can see the Parliament having an effective role in change.
- 2.48 The holding of free and fair elections is essential to a successful democracy. Australia's electoral assistance to Indonesia is important. The delegation was impressed with the work that DFAT, AusAID and the AEC has been doing in Indonesia to build the capacity of Indonesia's electoral management bodies. The permanent AEC presence in Indonesia since 2009 is illustrative of the strong relationship between the two countries, and the shared commitment to enhancing electoral processes.
- 2.49 The delegation greatly appreciated the range of meetings arranged for its visit, from high level Indonesian leaders and officials, to personnel

working on the day to day conduct of elections. Delegates benefited from being able to observe the Yogyakarta mayoral election, and learn about Indonesians' experiences of voting, the democratic transition, and their aspirations for Indonesia's future.