Discussing Indonesia’s Proposal to be
A New Permanent Member of
UN Security Council

CAKA ALVERDI AWAL

Abstract.
Indonesia takes an initiative to put its candidacy for the permanent seat of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in the event of 59th General Assembly of the UN in 2004. This initiative emerged from the strong will of the UN members to not become a sitting duck anymore after witnessing the impotence of the UN in dealing with the latest US’ invasion towards Iraq. The inability of the UN in tackling and leading the latest Iraq’s issue demanded a thorough reformation of the UN system. The main thrust in the UN system is the security organ, the UNSC, because it is precisely in this organ the decision relating to international peace and security is taken, and once it has taken, it must be followed by all states. In other words, the binding resolution of the UNSC is the place where the power of the UN lies. Furthermore, in the UNSC, the power to pass a resolution lies in the hands of the five permanent members (the US, Britain, France, China, and Russia). Thus, the permanent membership reformation is the heart of UN reform. In this context, Indonesia, seeing itself as having the necessary requirements, seeks to occupy the permanent member seat. This essay will discuss Indonesia’s proposal to be the permanent member of the UN by comparing and contrasting it with other similar proposals from other countries (Germany, Japan, Brazil and India). It concludes that there is strong reason that can be the base of Indonesia’s candidacy.

Permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), particularly the UNSC reform agenda, is an important issue in the UN. It becomes an important issue since majority of the UN member states think that the present permanent members reflect and represent the reality of 1945, not of the 21st century.¹

In this context, UN member countries have been eager to suggest solutions on how to make UNSC more representative, effective, and, therefore, legitimate, in handling world security affairs. One suggestion is to expand the membership of the permanent seats. Such a suggestion has been reiterated as some countries identify other countries to be included as new permanent members; still others even promote themselves to be the permanent members.

In September 2004 Indonesia took the opportunity to promote itself to be a new permanent member of the UNSC. This initiative is interesting to discuss since this time Indonesia is seriously pushing for its membership, as proven by the intensive lobbies it has undertaken with other UN
members. This essay tries to assess the strengths of Indonesia’s proposal by comparing it with four similar proposals from Germany, Japan, India, and Brazil. It will be argued that while Indonesia’s reasons are not strong enough to be able to get a seat as permanent member, except for its Islam argument, Indonesia seems to have a bigger chance to be the most acceptable candidate, because its proposal faces the least resistance from other countries. Before going on to the discussion of the proposals, the importance of the expansion of UNSC permanent membership, in the context of UN reform in general, will be discussed to give a clear idea of why the proposals are put forward. The conclusion will include some possible steps that can be taken by Indonesia in claiming the UNSC permanent seat.

UNSC PERMANENT MEMBERS’ EXPANSION: WHY?

UNSC reform is a part of the UN reform. The need for UN reform was first felt particularly after the Cold War, because, on the one hand, UN was facing new challenges, such as new kinds of threats, financial crisis, and rapid change in international relations brought by globalization. On the other hand, UN mechanism has become too bureaucratic, inefficient, and, worse, not adaptable to the present conditions of the international political environment.

The latter issue triggering the discussions on the need for UN reform, that is the mechanism, has already been addressed by UN Secretary Generals, particularly Kofi Annan. He streamlined the secretariat by firing 14 top administrators and abolished a dozen operating units, to make coordination more effective and reduce spending. He appointed a top policy maker and communication expert as the UN Chief of Staff. Furthermore, Annan also tried to build relations between the UN and multinational business firms, in order to address the UN’s financial problem. As a result, Annan has transformed the UN from an organization adopting the bureaucratic governmental style to one which applies the modern management of companies, although it must be noted that further and deeper reform is still needed.

However, in terms of facing new threats and rapid changes in international relations, the UN has not achieved much. The idleness of the UN is rooted in the problem of the UNSC, the only UN organ entrusted with the duty to maintain world security and with the power to implement its decisions in every possible way until the target concurred.

Every UN members are obliged to follow the UNSC decision. There are 15 members in this Council in which five of them are permanent. They are the United States (US), Russia, China, France, and the United Kingdom (UK). The rest of the members are elected for a two-year term, without any chance of direct re-election. The permanent members, usually called the P5, have right to veto which enables each of them to cancel any agreement discussed in the Council. And it is the P5 and its right to veto which cause the problem of idleness in the UNSC.

P5 is seen as not reflecting the current reality of world politics. When the P5 was
formed in 1945, they were the ‘great powers’ that won the World War II. As great powers, it would seem strange at that time if they were outside the only organ that was formally responsible for achieving world peace. Thus, they decided to be permanent members of the UNSC. Furthermore, P5 also felt that they needed some kind of assurance which prevented them from fighting against each other, or even against the UN. Thus, the right to veto was invented and entrusted to them. By these two forms of privileges, P5 became the ‘untouchables’ in the UN system. Therefore, these two subjects are the main focus on the UNSC reform, and also the hardest one.

The difficulty of the issue on the P5 and their right to veto could be traced from three developments that followed the change in political context in 1990s as the result of the end of the Cold War which in turn brought the enthusiasm to reform the UNSC to a high level. First, Europe was becoming more united due to the increasing integration of the East into the West. Second, the UNSC was becoming more focused on internal conflicts and conducted more intervention, which created concerns from developing states since they cannot control the interventions. Third, two countries have gained economic power—that earned them great powers: Germany and Japan. Meanwhile, the power, especially economic, of two UNSC permanent members, France and the UK, have declined. Thus, Germany and Japan pressed for the permanent memberships to the UNSC to substitute UK and France, or, if not, to be added in the Council.

To respond to these developments, members of the UN agreed to establish an Open Ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council (in short the Working Group-WG) in 1993, to concretely discuss the UNSC reform. Since then, the WG annually submits its reports on the progress of the discussion to the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Basically, the reports contain two clusters of issues: cluster I discusses the memberships and veto power and cluster II discusses procedural matters. In terms of procedural matters, agreements can be reached to make the work of the Council more transparent and inclusive. In fact, some of the recommendations have been implemented, such as open consultations, the involvement of various actors in Council deliberations, publications of the Council agenda and debates, and creation of ad hoc missions of the Council to investigate various problems.

In contrast with cluster II, common position for the issues in cluster I is difficult to establish. The only common agreement is that there should be an expansion of UNSC. However, there is no agreement to what kind of expansion is needed and how the expansion will be carried out. There is also no agreement on what should be done with the veto power.

The latest attempt of the UN reform was the establishment of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (in short the Panel) by Kofi Annan. In its report, the Panel suggested two models of UNSC reform. Model A suggests that there will be six new permanent members without veto rights (two for each Africa and Asia Pacific regions and one for each Eu-
urope and America regions), and three two-year term of non-permanent members (one member each from Africa, Europe, and America). The other model, model B, suggests that there will not be any new permanent member, only addition of eight four-year renewable-term seats, which will be divided equally among four regional areas (Asia-Pacific, Africa, Europe, and America) and one new two-year non-permanent (and non-renewable) seat for Africa.

Furthermore, the Panel also recommended that ‘under any reform proposal, there should be no expansion of the veto.’ The Panel believed that veto was important to tie the hands of the powerful states so that they felt responsible to maintain international peace. The panel, however, proposed a system of ‘indicative voting’, in which the permanent members with the veto indicate publicly of their positions on a certain issue. The aim of this system is to find out the public reaction towards the position taken by the permanent members. Thus when the actual vote happens, it is hoped that the permanent members will take the public voice into consideration. In short, the indicative voting system is expected to make the permanent members more responsible before casting their veto.

The Panel’s recommendations, in a sense, focus the debate in the WG. The Panel limits the formula for the UNSC expansion. The Panel also realized that it is very unlikely to expand the veto power. It only hopes that there will be a more responsible veto.

Indeed the Panel’s recommendations, in terms of the expansion of the UNSC mem-

bership and veto power, are realistic because it is aware of the procedural obstacle and not-always-friendly relations among states. The procedural obstacle derives from the UN Charter which states that any kind of change in the Security Council has to be agreed by the P5.

The Panel also realized that the relations among states are not always friendly. In fact, relations among the present P5 and several strong candidates for the permanent members are competitive, if not hostile. For example, as elaborated in the next section, China has been known as not being a good friend of Japan, as well as the UK against Germany. Thus, it is very unlikely that China and the UK will vote in favor of UNSC expansion with the extension of veto right to Japan and Germany.

When a deeper observation is done, the veto right, while undemocratic-and-making-the-decision-hard-to-make arguments can be used, seems to be one strong reason why the UN still exist until now. There are five reasons of the positive sides of the veto power. First, it controls the number of operations the UN engages in; second, it guarantees that great powers will still be interested in the UN; third, it redresses the imbalances in the General Assembly, which is dominated by developing countries; fourth, it guarantees major power not to conflict against each other; and fifth, it guarantees the execution of decision.

Thus, the ideas of no new veto power and a more accountable veto by using indicative voting systems as proposed by the Panel are the most viable options. In case of the power of the new permanent members or semi-permanent (i.e. non-permanent but
renewable) members of the UNSC, if the UNSC reform takes place in the future, the power of those members can perhaps derive from the procedural matters of the UNSC, as in these matters the veto right has no effect. The procedure of the UNSC can be made so that when an issue is brought up by the new permanent or semi-permanent members, it should be paid an urgent attention from the Council. As an alternative, before a formal vote is conducted on a certain issue, the issue should procedurally have an informal discussion among the new (semi-) permanent members and, if possible, also with an informal endorsement of the ways to solve the issue. Therefore, new (semi-) permanent members will have some kind of power in the decision-making process in the Council.

In summary, this section shows that the UN reform will not mean much if the reform does not include the UNSC reform. The UNSC reform is focused on the expansion and veto problem. And because the veto is unlikely to change in the near future, thus presently, the most realistic and advanced UNSC reform is in terms of expanding its permanent memberships. As the report of The Panel stated, the focus of UNSC reform was on the expansion of the UNSC membership with two models of expansion without any significant modification of veto power. And as will be found below, this awareness of the limit of the UNSC reform is reflected on the proposals of the permanent membership candidatures from states. The proposals do not contain the idea of the veto power; they only contain the reasons of why a particular state deserves a permanent seat of the UNSC.

**INDONESIA'S PROPOSAL**

Indonesia has become a member of the UN since 1950. Since then Indonesia has been actively involved in various UN mechanisms, including the UNSC. In the UNSC, Indonesia seated as a UNSC non-permanent member for twice, in the periods of 1973-1974 and 1995-1996.

When the issue on UN reform came to fore in 2004, Indonesia proposed itself openly to be a permanent member of UNSC. There are three interrelated reasons of Indonesia's proposal: the fourth most populous nations and third largest democracy, the biggest Moslem-populated country, and good track record in maintaining international peace and security.

For the first reason—the fourth most populous country and third largest democracy, Indonesia's voice represents almost 250 million people of the world, which is more practical for the UNSC than having to include three or four countries to represent the same number of 250 million people. Furthermore, Indonesia can represent Asia and developing nations, which are said to be under-represented in the UNSC. Among the present permanent members, only one country represents Asia, i.e. China. The other four represents the western hemisphere, in which three of them represent Europe and one represents North America. Among the 191 UN members, two third of them are developing states, where there is only one representative in the Council, i.e. China. Thus, Indonesia, as a developing state, can make the Council more representative.
Being the third largest democracy in the world reinforces the legitimacy of Indonesia's voice in the world. It will also, consequently, reinforce her voice in the UNSC, if Indonesia becomes a permanent member. After the successful general elections in 1999 and especially in 2004, Indonesia succeeded in holding a direct presidential election, which was the biggest and most complicated one in the world. The success of elections in 1999 and 2004 prove that democracy in Indonesia has taken its root. Furthermore, the legitimate government is created through these elections. This kind of government, with a strong control from the parliament, will serve the people's needs. Thus, the proposal to claim a UNSC permanent seat is more legitimate because it comes from a democratically-elected government. If, world widely, democracy is said to be the most ideal form of government, the inclusion of one of the biggest democracy in the world would be a natural step to make in the UNSC. Moreover, one of the permanent members, China, while regarded as a representation of developing world, is not considered as a democratic nation.

However, the democracy in Indonesia is not good enough to pursue its permanent seat's intention because the democracy is relatively young and election is not the only parameter to measure democracy. As known, Indonesia began its democratization only in 1999 when the free election was held. It means that the tradition of democracy is only around five years old. In five years, democracy cannot be said to have undergone tests, such as scandals, coup attempts, or dictator's comeback attempts. It is still in the phase of euphoria. Furthermore, election is not the only factor that reflects democracy. Good governance, in the sense of the prominence of the rule of law and freedom from corruption, is also an important indicator to measure the level of democracy. In Indonesia, unfortunately, rule of law and corruption are still the acute problems. In sum, democracy seems to be a risky reason for Indonesia's claim.

The second reason, which states Indonesia as the most populous Moslem nation in the world, can be explained in two ways: quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, Moslem society, which constitutes 20% of world population, is not represented in the UNSC permanent membership. With Indonesia as a country having the most Moslems in the world, Moslems will be represented.

Qualitatively, Moslems' voices, especially the moderate ones, have to have a representation to express their opinions and concerns. Since 9/11 attacks, Islam has been under pressure since there is an assumption that terrorism and Islam are closely linked. The suspicion that an Islamic militant group, Al-Qaeda, is behind the attacks, has put Islam as the scapegoat of terrorism. Thus, Islam is portrayed as a violent religion which teaches its followers to conduct terrorism. Furthermore, Islam is also viewed as a religion which endorses authoritarianism and violation of human rights, and rejects modernization so that it is incompatible with the West. This view is endorsed by the confession of Osama bin Laden, the leader of Al-Qaeda, that he is the mastermind of 9/11 and several other terrorist attacks, and that he will fight against the US and declare US as the enemy of Islam.24 This phenomenon is also found in Southeast Asia (SEA) when the Singa-
porean police uncovered a regional terrorist organization, Jamaah Islamiyah (JI), that planned to bomb Western interests in SEA. The finding was confirmed when the police found that JI was behind a series of bombing in Indonesia, which occurred in Christmas 2000, the 2002 Bali bombing, 2003 Marriott Bombing in Jakarta, and the Australian embassy bombing in Jakarta 2004. Since the terrorists use Islam as their justification, Islam as a religion is portrayed as the most dangerous religion in the world.

This perception must be examined. It must be noted that Islam and the West, which is Christian-dominated society, has lived harmoniously with each other for centuries. Indeed, Christianity is recognized in Islam as a religion that comes before it. Therefore, the main thrust in both religion is similar: believe in one supreme God. The conflicts occur in terms of the interpretation of the religion. Islam and Christian had wars before in 15th Century, but since then both religions have lived relatively in peace.

In the present time, the voices of moderate and tolerant Moslems—ones which espouse the need to live harmoniously side by side like in the 15th century—are not heard. Since the present description of Islam is dominated by the militant-fundamentalist strain, the bigger portion of moderate Moslems feels that their voices have been hijacked by the fundamentalists. In order to give the moderate Moslems a voice in world affairs, it is important to accommodate a state which can bring that kind of voice in the UNSC permanent membership. In this sense, Indonesia fulfils that requirement.

Islam in Indonesia has been moderate from its inception. Islam entered Indonesia through peaceful assimilation, not through war. The fundamental face of Islam has never dominated Indonesia’s political system. The adoption of Pancasila which is the embodiment of Indonesia’s basic values promotes the tolerant and peaceful Islam.

In fact, in terms of democratization, Moslem society plays an important role in promoting democracy. In 1998, Moslem organizations pushed the government to fulfill the reform agenda. Leaders of Moslem organizations occupied high offices in the state as a result 1999 election. Some examples were Amien Rais, the leader of Muhammadiyah, the 2nd largest Moslem organization, who became the speaker of people’s assembly and Abdurrahman Wahid, the leader of Nahdlatul Ulama, the biggest Moslem organization, who became the president of Indonesia. Wahid, besides being famous as a religious leader, is also famous for his tolerance towards other religions. One example is that he becomes a member of Shimon Peres non-governmental organization in Israel.

In the present context, where Islam is not compatible with democracy, it is clear that Indonesia’s case proves that assumption wrong. By having this kind of governance, where democracy is strongly supported by Moslems, shows that democracy and Islam are compatible even strengthen each other.

In terms of foreign policy, the voice of Moderate Islam has influenced the planning and execution of Indonesia’s Foreign Policy (FP) in the sense that Indonesia has never associated itself as an Islamic country, but it also never associated itself as a
fully secular country which separates religion from FP. This idea is covered in the concepts of especially ‘independent’ and ‘active’ foreign policy.

‘Independent’ concept refers to the idea that Indonesia should not be dependent on any big power. Indonesia should be able to decide on its own to which direction it should go. In the Cold War Era, this policy was translated into non-alignment. Indonesia did not take side either with the Western or with Communism. Indonesia was of the opinion that by siding one bloc, it will aggravate the situation. In this context, Indonesia can put its own voice to the world, including the voice of the majority of Moslems in Indonesia, the moderate Moslems. Indeed, the voice of moderate Moslems can be seen from the intention to build peaceful relations with any kind of state in the world.

The third argument states that Indonesia has a good track record in promoting peace, security and international cooperation. The ‘active’ principle of Indonesia’s FP means that Indonesia should be active in promoting world peace. In the constitution, one of the goals of the state is to ‘create a world peace based on independence, eternal peace, and social justice.’ Thus, this requires that Indonesia has to be active by being involved in international issues and help finding the solutions.

In this context of FP conducts, Indonesia has been active in promoting peace in the region as well as in the world. In the region, Indonesia contributes to the maintenance of regional stability through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Before the establishment of ASEAN, the relationships among SEA countries were hostile. But, since ASEAN was formed, in which Indonesia was one of the founders, the stability in the region can be maintained. Furthermore, Indonesia took the initiative to settle the Cambodian conflict. In Cambodia, the end of Indonesia’s effort of reconciling warring parties was a peace agreement signed in Jakarta in 1990 and subsequently in Paris in 1991. France being the ex-colonial master was also responsible.

The latest Indonesian initiative in the region is the establishment of ASEAN Security Community (ASC). ASC is a breakthrough in the context of ASEAN cooperation. From the history of ASEAN until the idea of ASC emerges, ASEAN succeeded in maintaining the region’s peace and stability by avoiding conflict. Conflicts that arose among ASEAN members were delayed so that the importance would gradually diminish, while at the same time ASEAN members promoted cooperation of the areas that are not contentious. Therefore, the ASEAN cooperation in the economic and socio-cultural sectors, which were less contentious, was the backbones before ASC was formed. In 2003, Indonesia took an initiative to turn the ‘sweep under the carpet’ attitude toward facing the problems and finding ways to solve them. Indonesia thought the learning process of knowing each other as ASEAN members was enough and the spirit of we-ness had to be institutionalized in a community, the ASC. In the ASC, Indonesia proposed that regional problems had to be solved regionally, by not sweeping under the carpet, or, if the problem was highly important, by inviting third party mediation. This initiative was welcomed by
the region, so that the ASC was agreed.\textsuperscript{35} The latest development of ASC was that the ASC Plan of Action (PoA) had been agreed in the ASEAN Summit in November 2004 in Laos.

Besides promoting cooperation in South-east Asia, Indonesia is also active in promoting cooperation among six countries in the Pacific region (Indonesia, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, East Timor) through the establishment of Southwest Pacific Dialog (SwPD). This initiative has produced results such as the increase of understanding among those countries through cultural exchanges, scholarships and, more importantly, supports for Indonesia's integrity.

Furthermore, in the international level, Indonesia has contributed to various initiatives to maintain world peace. The initiative to establish the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was a major contribution to the maintenance of world peace during the Cold War. After the Cold War, NAM is directed to assist the economic development of its members. Indonesia as the NAM Chairman in 1992 had initiated the exchange of economic assistance among NAM members and other states.\textsuperscript{36} Indonesia is also active in other groupings such as G-77, G-15, D-8, and Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Indonesia also has positive records in its involvement in the UN Peacekeeping Missions. Indonesia has been involved in more than 30 peacekeeping missions, starting in the Middle-East in 1957 until today in Congo, Sierra Leone, and Georgia.\textsuperscript{37} Indonesia is one the biggest troops contributors to the PKF, in fact, the biggest among developing nations with a total of 1988 personnel.\textsuperscript{38} Furthermore, though Indonesia's financial contribution to the UN PKO is modest, Indonesia hardly has arrears; the financial contribution may be insufficient, but it is by no means insignificant. In addition, Indonesian troops gained much respect from the local people in conflict zones.\textsuperscript{39}

However, there are three factors that can inhibit Indonesia's proposal. They are economic crisis, human rights violation, and the separatism threat. In terms of economic crisis, the crisis is still felt by the Indonesians. Around 27\% of the population lives under the poverty line.\textsuperscript{40} But we should not put aside the fact that economic recovery has also given its positive signs. The economic growth keeps getting stronger: this year is expected 4.8\% and next year 5.5\%.\textsuperscript{41} World Bank has a positive outlook of Indonesia's economy for the coming years.\textsuperscript{42}

In terms of human rights violation by the military, Indonesia faces strong criticism with the conduct of military in Aceh, Papua, and East Timor. The grim realities seem to be still continuing today.\textsuperscript{43} However, Indonesia has also tried to reform its national army, the TNI so that it will be fully under civilian control. The new TNI bill shows that the reform is on the right track.\textsuperscript{44}

Lastly, about separatist movements in Aceh and Papua, while the demands of separatist movements gain momentum with the independence of East Timor, the government has done precautionary steps to halt them. Domestically, there are special arrangements for those areas.\textsuperscript{45} International-
ly, the support for the unity of Indonesia is obtained, even from East Timor itself.

Moreover, an important factor comes from other countries which show no objection to Indonesia’s nomination. Instead, Indonesia receives open supports from Australia and East Timor. In fact, Australia has pushed the candidacy since last year, and repeated its action for support in 2004. In the speeches at the 59th GA 2004 in New York, representatives of Australia and East Timor clearly stated that Indonesia was suitable to be a permanent member of UNSC along with some other countries. The reasons put forward are representativeness of developing country and, East Timor mentioned the Islam moderate argument. With these supports, the international and domestic burdens are eased.

In summary, Indonesia’s reasons to claim for a permanent seat in the UNSC seem natural, if not inevitable. From the point of representativeness, Indonesia can represent various categories: developing country, Asia-Pacific region, Islam, and population. Furthermore, the initiatives of Indonesia in maintaining international peace and security show that Indonesia has been very active in maintaining world peace. In short, Indonesia can be a prime candidate for the UNSC permanent membership.

OTHER COUNTRIES’ PROPOSALS

To assess the weight of Indonesia’s intention, a comparison with other proposals forwarded by other countries which have given their notice as well as their intention to be the permanent members of UNSC is needed. These countries are Germany, Japan, India, and Brazil. They in fact are having joint efforts to secure the seat.

GERMANY

Germany’s claim to the permanent seat in the UNSC is based on the reasons of its contributions to the maintenance of peace and security of the world. As Germany’s Chancellor, Gerard Schroder put it, “... we are ready to assume a greater responsibility.” Germany feels that its financial contributions should be recognized vis-a-vis decisions regarding permanent membership. Indeed, Germany has become the third largest contributor to UN budget with 130 million US dollars for the period of 2004-2006.

Germany’s economic status backs its intention. Currently, it is the strongest economy in the Europe with a GDP of around 1.94 trillion US dollars, the highest in Europe. In addition, Germany is the fifth largest economy in the world. Its status as a developed country has earned it a status of big power.

With its financial contributions, Germany is regularly consulted by the UNSC before the latter decided on a peacekeeping operation. However, Germany’s track record in sending PKF is not long. It just began sending troops since 1991 to Cambodia with the UNAMIC (UN Advanced Mission in Cambodia). Furthermore, Germany had been in the top ten of the most indebted states to the UN in terms of peacekeeping operations, which in 1992 reached almost 14.5 million US dollar.
Germany's proposal is supported by the US and the UK. The reason for the US to support Germany is to share the financial burden, because Germany has become a leading economic power. The UK supports Germany to balance the composition in the Council because Russia and France show the tendency of coordinating their position.

However in the region, Germany's intention seems to be getting a rejection, mainly from Italy. Italy feels that Germany is betraying efforts being made to establish EU as a political institution. It is noted that if the EU member countries agree with the EU constitution, EU will be a political unit like a state which will have a foreign minister. Thus, it is deemed better to wait until the EU is formed as a political entity, then a representative to be a permanent member of the UNSC can be appointed on behalf all European states. Thus, the representativeness of EU will be greater than if only Germany becomes a permanent member. By pointing to Germany's proposal, Italy accuses Germany of dividing EU. The idea of one EU permanent seat in the Council to represent the whole Europe had been suggested by Javier Solana, EU's high representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy in 2003. Thus, it may be expected that there are other European countries that will oppose Germany's proposal.

In sum, while Germany has valid reasons to be a permanent member due to its financial contributions and economic strength, the rejection from its own region seems too strong to be ignored. Italy seems willing to take any measure to halt the Germany's intention. Thus, it gives the idea that if the region will not support Germany, how can international community be convinced that Germany will always be able to promote peace and maintain world order?

JAPAN

Japan also vies for a permanent seat in the UNSC. The main reason is because Japan's contributions, especially financial, are the second largest after the US. This contribution should be reciprocated by giving Japan a permanent membership. Prime Minister Koizumi states:

"Countries with will and the resources to play a major role in international peace and security must always take part in the Council's decision-making process. ... Japan has made considerable resources available for United Nations peacekeeping operations, as well as for reconstruction efforts to assist in the consolidation of peace. ... Japan's role has thus become increasingly vital to the maintenance of international peace and security. ... We believe that the role Japan has played provides a solid basis for its assumption of permanent membership of the Security Council."
Japan has also been active in giving development aid, reaching 7 billion US dollars this year.\textsuperscript{60} Japan also donated US$ 5 billion for Iraqi reconstruction, provided 21 million US dollars humanitarian assistance for Darfur Conflict in Sudan, and hosted international conferences for Afghanistan’s reconstruction, and Africa’s development.\textsuperscript{61}

Japan’s various roles and initiatives in international peace and development seem rooted from its intention to embark into a more independent foreign policy.\textsuperscript{62} As known, Japanese foreign policy has been controlled by the US since the end of World War II. Thus, when its economy has become strong and it has earned a status of an economic superpower, Japan sought to expand its influence to political field and the most possible way to do it is through the UN. This is because if Japan wants to develop its military, it will face tremendous challenge from other states in the region or other big states such as China and the US. Besides, constitutionally Japan is not allowed to develop its military power. Thus, by being a promoter of peace, Japan wants to show the world that it has have political influence, besides the ability to influence that it gained from its economic power.

However, observed deeper, Japan’s contribution to world peace, though significant, has a short record. Japan only began to send PKF in 1992 to Cambodia.\textsuperscript{63} Moreover, Japan was recorded as one of the most indebted states to the UN regarding PKO.\textsuperscript{64} These facts may become the reasons to doubt Japan’s long-term commitment to UN peace operations.

In terms of other countries’ reaction, the US and the UK welcomed Japan’s intention mainly because they want to share the UN financial burden.\textsuperscript{65} However, Japan’s intention is predicted to get a challenge from China,\textsuperscript{66} which is the current permanent member of UNSC. The historical trauma seems still clouded on China’s argument. The latest development in Japan proves this idea: Japan is preparing toward China’s invasion.\textsuperscript{67}

Furthermore, Northeast Asia is already represented by China, thus, if there are two states from the same sub-region become the permanent member of UNSC, it will decrease the opportunity for states from other sub-regions to be represented in the UNSC.

In summary, again while economic power, in terms of financial contributions and aid, is seen as the most powerful factor that supports Japan’s proposal to be a permanent UNSC member, besides Japan’s ambition to play an important role in the international security, there is a huge obstacle coming from its region, especially from China. Japan needs to convince China of its good intention by becoming a permanent member because if it fails, China will surely block Japan’s nomination and there will be no permanent seat for Japan.

INDIA

India intends to secure permanent membership to the UNSC as well. Its main reason is that, as the biggest democracy in the world, it cannot be excluded from the
decision-making process in the most important institution in the world, the UNSC.

India’s Prime Minister, Singh, stated:

“An overwhelming majority of the world’s population cannot be excluded from an institution that today legislates on an increasing number of issues, with an ever-widening impact. ... The expansion of the Security Council, ..., and the inclusion of countries like India as permanent members, would be a first step in the process of making the United Nations a truly representative body.”

Indeed, it is hard to not agree with the common knowledge that India is the biggest democracy in the world. With around 1 billion people and a long tradition of freedom of speech, India is respected as one of the places where real democracy is practiced.

Furthermore, India also has a long-standing tradition of sending peacekeeping forces to conflicting areas. It has begun sending troops since 1957 to the Middle East. India has become a regular troop contributing countries to the UN until now. These two reasons—democracy and peacekeeping forces—are put forward as reasons of why India should occupy a permanent seat in the UNSC.

India’s intention receives support and challenge. The supports come from the UK, France, and Russia. Their support is mainly based on the India’s huge population, besides the fact that they want India’s support in the Council. However, India has an arch-rival, i.e. Pakistan. The war between India and Pakistan since 1947 has created deep animosity between the two countries. Indeed, one impact of the war was the creation of Pakistan as a separate state. The prolonged conflict between India and Pakistan worsened when both countries acquired nuclear weapons. This has not been solved until now and seems to be the reason of why Pakistan strongly rejected India’s proposal. In Pakistan’s words, “Pakistan is against the creation of new centers of privilege.” Moreover, it seems that China also objects India’s intention based on the suspicion of India’s regional ambition.

Thus, while India is a convincing candidate to be in the permanent member seat mainly due to population and troops contributions, rejections from its neighbors seem to be barriers. If by becoming a permanent member, the sub-continent is becoming more volatile, then it appears to be difficult by other countries to lend their supports to India.

BRAZIL

Brazil urges that the structure of UNSC should reflect the world politics today. The enlargement of UNSC permanent membership is a must. Brazil claims to be suitable to represent South America and population of the world.

In South America, Brazil is the biggest country in terms of area and economic size. It terms of area, Brazil occupies 8.5 million sq. km, the largest in South America. The population of Brazil is also the biggest, reaching 184 million people. Brazil is the 10th largest economy in the world with a GDP of 508 billion US dollars in 2003.
In terms of international initiatives, Brazil has been active in promoting social development and security issues, such as economic cooperation and environment. In terms of cooperation, Brazil is one of the promoters of Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). It initiated India, Brazil, and South Africa Cooperation (IBSA) in Africa. Brazil, with other countries in the region, has been involved in the stabilization of Haiti. Lastly, Brazil has been active in supplying PKO with its troops since 1956 (UNEF) to Middle East.

However, Brazil’s proposal seems to face a stumbling block created by its neighbors. Chile and Mexico will oppose the plan since they consider that like Brazil, they also should be legitimate representatives of the region.

In sum, Brazilian proposal faces criticism from its neighbors. Thus, as stated earlier, if the nomination of a state will endanger the stability of the region, it will be difficult to gain support from other countries of the world.

COMPARISON WITH INDONESIA’S PROPOSAL

Most reasons of Indonesia’s intention can easily be overrun, or at least matched, by one of these countries. The reason of population and democracy can easily be debunked by India’s and Brazil’s claims. The reason of the PKO records can be defeated by Japan and German in terms of financial contribution and by India and Brazil in terms of number of times of sending PKO, although in terms of total troops contribution, Indonesia outnum-

bered all of those countries.

The only reason that other countries cannot defeat is Indonesia’s moderate Islam argument. Other countries’ population are dominated by non-Moslems, mainly Christian. In the age of terrorism, especially Islamic terrorism, the voice of moderate Moslems is extremely important to stop the suspicion that Islam is a violent religion, and furthermore to stop the possibility of clash of civilizations. Thus, this argument can be the most compelling one that Indonesia can use when promoting its intention.

In addition, Indonesia is the country with the lowest resistance. Other countries are facing strong resistance, especially from their neighbors which in turn will cancel themselves out. Meanwhile, Indonesia is supported by its neighbor countries in the region. Perhaps the issue of human rights would have hampered Indonesia due to its record in East Timor, but now by East Timor support, it seems that the suspicion will die down. In sum, it looks like that Indonesia has more chance to be success in its proposal.

CONCLUSION

The permanent membership issue in the UNSC is an important one since UNSC is the heart of the UN system. UNSC is the only mechanism and institution endowed with the responsibility to maintain international peace and security. Furthermore, every UNSC’s decision should be obeyed by other members of the UN. It is the only organ that has a compelling authority. Therefore the UN reform has to touch the
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issue permanent membership issue in the UN.

Indonesia’s proposal to claim a seat in the UNSC permanent membership appears to have strong justifications. The strongest reason comes from the Islam moderate argument. Other reasons are acceptable but other countries which are vying for the same position have similar or more advantages than Indonesia. Therefore, Indonesia should play this Islam ‘card’ so that it can obtain supports from all of the P5 and developing countries.

Finally, while Indonesia’s proposal seems to be the most viable one, Indonesia should not forget that UN also needs a huge amount of material contribution. And since the countries which can fulfill these are the developed and rich countries such as Germany and Japan, Indonesia should also consider cooperating with them to secure its position. Furthermore, Indonesia can bank on the regional disagreement of the other developing nations, especially from similar regions. For instance, it may urge India to be patient for a while until its problem with Pakistan is solved, and, for the meantime, earn India’s support. This will be a big boost for the Indonesia’s proposal. In turn, Indonesia will have to address India-Pakistan issue seriously if it succeeds in its bid.

Lastly, while the competition of the permanent membership of UNSC seems will be tight, the main aim of the UN reform should not be forgotten. Whatever decision of the UNSC regarding reform in membership is made should be honored. Furthermore, the idea of reforming UN so that it will function better to handle world

problems should be kept and carried on. It is surely disappointing when one’s intention fails, but it is not the end of the world, the bid can be done in some other times or perhaps, the efforts to support the UN can be realized in another way than becoming a permanent member of the UNSC. As long as countries are persistent of their effort to build a safer world, these efforts must be valued by other parties.

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CATATAN BELAKANG


8 Originally, there were only 11 member of UNSC, but in 1956, six new non-permanent members were added due the increase of UN members. Thus since 1965, there are 15 members of UNSC. Sam Daws, The Reform of the UN Security Council: Introduction’, in Paul Taylor, Sam Daws, Ute Adamczyk-Gertzges (eds.), Documents on Reform of the United Nations. (Sydney: Dartmouth, 1997), p. 415.


11 Ibid., p. 214.


13 Mark W. Zacher, op cit., pp. 218-219 and Note by the President of the Security Council on Procedural


16 Ibid.

17 Ibid., p. 82.

18 Ibid.


27 Fareed Zakaria, Loc. Cit.

28 ‘Islam Radikal Bukan Masa Depan Muslim Indonesia,’ (Radical Islam is not Indonesia Muslims’ future), Kompas, 11 August 2004 and Zuhairi Misrawi, ‘Memaknai Realitas Islam Politik’ (To understand politics Islam reality), Kompas, 11 August 2004.

29 As commonly known, Israel is viewed as the enemy of Islam since it occupies the land of the Palestinians in the Middle-East.

30 Dr. N. Hassan Wirajuda, Op. Cit.


33 ASEAN in Brief, Jakarta: Directorate for ASEAN Cooperation, Department of Foreign Affairs, 2000, p. 21.


37 Dr. N. Hassan Wirajuda, Op. Cit.


39 Indeed, in general the UN PKF, blue helmets, is well-respected by the local people. In particular, the story on Indonesia’s PKF can be seen, for example, in “Indonesia dan Terompet Perdamaian PKO” (Indonesia and PKO Peace Trumpet) in Kompas, 3 September 2000.


especially part II and III. For Papua, see Peter King, West Papua and Indonesia since Suharto: Independence, Autonomy, or Chaos? (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2004), especially Ch. 4, 5, and 7.

44 There are restrictions for the military so that they cannot involve in any way in politics, there are regulations to make TNI business under state control, and there is a strong intention to put TNI under Ministry of Defense completely. See “RUU TNI Disahkan Jadi UU,” (TNI draft bill was passed), Kompas, 30 September 2004.

45 Aceh and Papua are now the special autonomy areas. The specialties are the recognition of cultural values to be the daily norms, and most of the revenues from the exploitation of resources goes back there.


58 Address by Mr. Junichiro Koizume, Prime Minister of Japan at the 59th UN General Assembly, September 2004.


61 Address by Mr. Junichiro Koizume, Prime Minister of Japan at the 59th UN General Assembly, September 2004.


64 Bo Huld, Op. Cit.


66 From the address of China’s Foreign Affairs Minister in the 59th General Assembly, he clearly stated that China only supported the addition of permanent members of UNSC from developing nations. This practically closed China’s support for Japan’s bid.

67 “Jepang dan Taiwan Waspada Cina,” (Japan and Taiwan aware of China), Kompas, 9 November 2004.


70 Address by General Pervez Musharraf, president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, at the 59th Session of


72 Address by Mr. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil at the 59th session of UN General Assembly, September 2004.


75 Address by Mr. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Op. Cit.
