

There are many signs that post-election Indonesia is more likely to be more stable. Expectations for the new national leadership are now running high in Indonesia. Therefore, one of the most important keys for SBY-JK to get ever stronger support from the people is their ability to form a cabinet that could win the widest possible public acceptability. To this end, SBY-JK must form a cabinet that consists of people who have credibility, accountability, and professionalism in their field. SBY-JK should resist doing any "horse trading" with interested parties, particularly political parties. So far is so good for SBY; he is able to keep momentum alive, and seems to be leading in the right way. One of his greatest challenges is the possible tension and conflict between him and the "Nation Coalition" which dominates the seats in the Parliament (DPR). But, one has to admit, the Nation Coalition is indeed very fragile. The interest or opportunist politics among Parliament members and party politics makes it possible for the SBY government to run with minimum opposition from and conflict with the DPR. The SBY theme of K2A (*Konsiliasi, Konsolidasi, Aksi, or Conciliation, Consolidation, and Action*) could be very appropriate and a smart move for SBY to anticipate maneuvers against him from the DPR.

And finally, with regard to consolidation, the period of the next five years is indeed the period of consolidation for Indonesia. The SBY government needs not only to consolidate efforts to solve Indonesia's huge internal problems, but also to reconsolidate the very fabric of Indonesian society. There is now an increasing need to reconsolidate civil society and NGOs as pillars of democracy. In the last election—as was the case since the fall of Soeharto—civil society and NGOs at large have been pulled into power politics. This is particularly true with the NU when its national chief Hasyim Muzadi decided to run as the Vice-Presidential candidate of Megawati Soekarnoputri. Tension and conflict resulting from Hasyim's candidacy need to be resolved. Otherwise, this largest Muslim organization in Indonesia will not be able to function effectively for a better ordering of Muslim society.

DISCUSSION

Q: This may not be directly related to Indonesian politics but it is international. What is the new government's stand on the US election?