

that had been adopted in 1999 which divided Papua into three provinces. That became the cornerstone of her policies after January 2003 when she issued a decree to implement this law. And furthermore in parallel to this, one of the key institutions that were going to be formed in Papua under special autonomy, the Majelis Rakyat Papua, the Papuan People's Assembly, or the MRP. There was a continued delay to form this assembly because it was seen as possibly being a new podium from which Papuans might seek to voice some support for independence. So all these issues, the division of the three provinces, as well as the formation of the assembly, were caught in a legal morass, about whether the laws are contradictory and whether one could go ahead with the division of the province without the approval of MRP, which is yet to be formed.

So this is the state of what's happening in Papua. In the meantime, the increased military presence, particularly in the border areas with Papua New Guinea and increased pressure on the OPM, the Free Papua Movement, which is barely a threat. It's not nearly the major issue in Papua at the moment. Again, this approach is failing to win the trust from Papuans and undermines the credibility of special autonomy. This will be a challenge for SBY.

Let me conclude with a few comments about national unity. National unity is, needless to say, going to be one of the biggest challenges for SBY. Actually in Papua, as in Aceh, the situation has deteriorated under Megawati and was part of the reason as well for the fall of Abdurrahman Wahid, who was perceived as being too weak or unable to solve these problems. He had been willing to give some concessions and this was perceived as a weakness, which contributed in part to his fall. There has been a perception among the Indonesian elite that one needs to have a strong hand for these kinds of conflicts and that concessions are therefore equal to weakness. I would like to suggest that this mindset has been counterproductive in Aceh and Papua. This may be something that should be kept in mind in the future. I would also like to suggest that only compromise and negotiation will allow for a political solution to be found. The military of course cannot continue to be given a free hand in these conflicts. This has been part of the problem, with the military continuing to hold more power, and blanket power, to solve some of the issues. This means the problem with civilian control of the military goes hand in hand with resolving the issue of national unity. That's why I suggest this will be very important indeed.