Chapter One

— ❖ —

Indonesia's Held Back Democracy and Beyond Introduction and Executive Briefing:
Advances, setbacks and options, 2003-2007

Olle Törnquist (University of Oslo)

This book has been produced jointly by Demos' researchers, co-ordinated by Willy P. Samadhi and a team of senior democracy scholars at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), Indonesia, co-ordinated by Dr. Nicolaas Warouw, in co-operation with myself. It is dedicated to the 'end of the beginning' of three processes.

Firstly, it marks the 'end of the beginning' of attempts to re-build fruitful relations between public academia and civil society. The book has its roots in the collective work of the early 1990s, the work of scholars and activists on democratisation; a collective work which soon however had to take refuge in civic organisations because of the lack of academic freedom.

The first book, *Aktor Demokrasi*, (Budiman and Törnquist 2001) was researched and distributed in drafted versions during the dismantling of the Soeharto regime. The second book on the *Post-*

Soeharto Democracy Movement (Prasetyo et.al. 2003) drew attention to the paradoxical marginalisation of pro-democrats in the then building of democracy. Thus the results called for more comprehensive analysis of the political dynamics. This would be to generate better knowledge as a basis for deliberation and improvement.

The organisation 'Demos' was formed to facilitate the work. The aim was to generate research-based democracy promotion through participatory surveys. Participatory surveys of how some 900 experienced activists from the frontlines of all crucial efforts at democracy in all provinces assessed the problems of and options for democracy. A rigorous analytical framework with hundreds of theoretically-based questions was developed and applied. While it is true that support was always there from a handful of scholars, it is only the joint work with the current book that marks the successful conclusion of a first round of broader co-operation.

Secondly, the book is dedicated to the 'end of the beginning' of attempts to establish both a theoretically and an empirically solid basis for the analysis of Indonesian democracy. Most analyses of democracy are driven by the needs of government offices and foreign supporters to prepare and evaluate their policies and projects. The democracy movement, however, in addition to any serious scholar and student, needs more theoretically and empirically inclusive and impartial assessments. This is to make it possible to consider the pros and cons of a wider spectrum of arguments as well as to extend the sources of information beyond the established elite to the experienced democrats in the field.

While a more solid foundation for the analyses of democracy has been generated through Demos' surveys, this book also makes an effort to include crucial results from dispersed already existing studies as well as new research of major problems. Much of this work has been conducted within a new international education and research programme on *Power Conflict and Democracy* using theoretical and comparative perspectives. The founding partners are UGM with Demos, University of Colombo and University of Oslo (UiO) who, in their joint efforts, seek to foster the 'local' needs and priorities of students and scholars in South- and Southeast Asia and their close partners.

In the future, the academic effort with UGM in co-operation with Demos may provide the impartial and legitimate public sphere that is needed to discuss and share in a transparent way results from donor- and government driven assessments of democratic challenges; assessments that may both add crucial insights as well as themselves benefiting from independent analyses.

Thirdly, the book is of course dedicated to what one may hope is the 'end of the beginning' of Indonesia's transition from authoritarian to meaningful democratic rule. Ten years ago, Soeharto's 'New Order' began to be replaced by the world's largest 'New Democracy'. It is time to evaluate advances and setbacks, and to identify options for the future.

In the present book, the results from the all-Indonesia re-survey—a continuation from the original survey held in 2003—which was carried out in 2007, are analysed in view of the data from the first survey which was conducted in two rounds in 2003/2004 and which are available in Priyono et.al (2007). Being a new democracy in constant transformation, Indonesia requires resurveys of the problems and options as frequently as the general elections.

The theoretical and methodological approach and framework is presented and discussed in detail in chapter two. It has also been subject to a separate academically critical self evaluation. (Törnquist 2008b). The full questionnaire is available in the appendix. The lead sponsors – in addition to major sections of the democracy movement and scholars at the UiO and UGM with associates – is the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through its embassy in Indonesia, with Sida (the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency) and other partners, including the Ford Foundation. The commitment and support of the Scandinavian sponsors as well as their policy of non-interventionism in academic matters has been crucial to the success of this project.

In brief, the re-survey and supplementary research reveals that between 2003/04 and 2007 Indonesia has developed into a consolidated top-down democracy dominated by its powerful elites. The standard of governance-related instruments of democracy (such as rule-of law, anti-corruption and accountability) has improved – though from very low levels. A country-wide political community is evolving as a substitute for the crumbling Jakarta driven nation-state – though the new polity remains constrained by elitist and localised identity politics and economic globalisation. The military is on the retreat from politics, and a majority of the widened and localised establishment make use of formally democratic rules of the game – though clearly to their own benefit and only sometimes in favour of the aims of democracy.

Much of the comparatively successful democracy-building is thus built on loose foundations. Compared to four years earlier, most of the relatively impressive freedoms and rights that were observed at that time are stagnating and backsliding. The sections of the powerful elite that rarely win elections seem to be interested in a partial return to the old idea of promoting stability and economic growth ahead of popular freedoms and sovereignty.

This was once labelled 'politics of order' (Huntington 1965) and used to legitimise the rise of the 'New Order'. Now it has been baptised as 'sequencing democracy' (e.g. Mansfield and Snyder 2005). Most seriously, however, organised politics is exclusionary. Most people are not integrated from below, only, at best, incorporated from above.

In spite of attempts by pro-democrats to the contrary, there is a lack of representation by people themselves and of basic issues and interests related to the middle classes, women, labour, farmers and fisher-folks, urban poor and indigenous populations. While voting is free, running in elections is only for the well financed and the powerful. Hence the world's largest new democracy is held back. And since the party system is closed to actors without economic and cohesive power, and since popular organisation remains weak, there is a need for popular and civic organisations to form Democratic Political Blocs behind basic platforms on local and central levels, to thus foster and control 'least worst candidates' who can facilitate more meaningful democracy by which people can improve their social relations and standard of living.

Design versus Structure

The generally accepted meaning of democracy is popular control of public affairs on the basis of political equality. How far has Indonesia moved towards this ideal? And how much further will it now go? Put differently: how much of the old Soeharto-era oligarchy remains in place, still governing, but doing so via formally democratic elections? What, if any, are the chances of advancing towards more meaningful democracy, in terms of sufficiently favourable means and capacities of ordinary people to really control public affairs and thus promote development in accordance with their own priorities?

There are two predominant and rather extreme kinds of answers to these questions. The first comes from the 'designers'. Beginning in the global third wave of democracy, from the late 1970s onwards, some concerned scholars and practitioners placed their faith in the design of a limited number of institutions. Get the institutions rights, such people argued, and democracy will flourish.

The institutions they had in mind related to civil and political liberties, the rule of law, free and fair elections, and 'good governance'. Internationally this trend began with the elite-led transitions from authoritarian rule in southern Europe in the 1970s, with Spain as the paradigmatic example. It then travelled to Latin America, it effected the transformation of South Africa and it was exported to the rest of Africa south of the Sahara in addition to Eastern Europe. (E.g. O'Donnell and

Schmitter 1986, Lintz and Stepan 1996, Grugel 2002). Finally it was taken aboard in parts of Asia too; and with the end game in Jakarta it was introduced to Indonesia by scholars such as William Liddle (2001).

At present, many of these ideas are applied in international agencies for democracy building like the National Democratic Institute and International Institude for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). In this view and by international standards among new but often poorly advancing democracies, Indonesia is doing fine, especially given the traumatic history of the elimination of the popular movements in 1965-66, and the more than thirty years of militarised capitalism that followed. Hence, the achievements may testify to what is possible even under harsh conditions.

It is true that the designers acknowledge that the system poorly represents the real needs of ordinary people, but they believe that this problem too can be improved through better institutional design. The measures they propose include more direct elections of government executives, and 'simplification' of the political party system. The latter step would result in a few major parties that, although top-driven, would at least be able to develop policies, 'pick up' demands from society, recruit people for government jobs and supervise the executive. The designers think that popular representation from below is unrealistic and that top-down democracy dominated by powerful elites will have to do. In this view, 'deepening democracy' is instead limited to direct participation by 'responsible citizens' in civil society, usually, in fact, excluding 'the masses'. (E.g. Catón 2007)

The second answer comes from 'structuralists' on both the left and the right of the political spectrum. The 'structuralists' use a similarly narrow definition of democracy but are much more pessimistic. They say that the structural conditions do not permit decent democracy. As a result, the oligarchs have retained their power and ordinary people their poverty.

From a radical political economy position, this is most forcefully argued by Vedi Hadiz and Richard Robison (2004) and recently by Max Lane (2008), advocating the need to return to extra parliamentary actions. According to other structuralists, freedoms and elections have even generated worse identity politics, conflicts and corruption, and less economic growth (e.g. Mansfield and Snyder 2005).

Thus, there is a new emerging international thesis: that enlightened groups should 'sequence democracy'. While major parts of the left focus on fighting global neo-liberalism, saying it blocks real democracy, the right wants to build solid institutions, 'good governance',

growth alliances and organisations of 'responsible' citizens, *before* entrusting the masses with even the limited freedom of electing top-down parties dominated by powerful elites. This position is gaining ground in, for instance, many ministries for foreign affairs, conservative think- tanks and development bodies such as the World Bank. (C.f. the review by Carothers 2007a,b)

Alternative Focus on Universal Factors in Contextual Processes

Both these arguments are theoretically and politically dubious. The first assumes that once the elites have agreed to the establishment of a few democratic institutions, democracy has been achieved. This is, of course, as naive as stating that basic capitalist or socialist institutions always generate prosperity. Yet, most designers, whom as already mentioned were introduced to Indonesia by scholars such as Liddle, have at least held on to their belief in democracy.

That is not always the case with the structuralists. They insist that rather narrowly defined democracy is meaningful only if certain prerequisites have already been met. For the conventional left, this usually means greater social and economic equality, workers or the poor having strong bargaining power, and the like. For the right, it means strong institutions, good governance, associations of 'responsible' citizens and economic growth.

As a result, the structuralists by definition exclude the possibility of creating such conditions through improved democracy. Instead, they become pessimistic about the promise of democracy, or argue or indicate − including reportedly Vice President Jusuf Kalla (e.g. Suwarni 2007, Simamora 2008) − that it should be limited or even postponed.

In between the two extremes (both applying a narrow definition of democracy but one engineering elite institutions, the other waiting for massive social change) democracy can be understood instead as a *contextual process* where universal dimensions and intrinsic democratic institutions can only be analysed in view of contending actors' democratic will and their political capacity to use and promote the institutions over time.

A framework for such an analysis was developed and applied in our two national surveys of Indonesia's democracy. At each point in time Demos asked some 900 experienced campaigners-cum-experts on democratisation in all provinces about the extent to which the existing institutions really supported the universally accepted aims and means of democracy.

The theoretical framework and method are presented and discussed in detail in Chapter 2, but the first focus was on the performance, spread and substance of the 32 intrinsic instruments for promoting and applying democracy that we had identified in accordance with mainstream theories. These instruments included the major dimensions of equal citizenship, international law and human rights conventions, rule of law and justice, civil and political rights, economic and social rights, free and fair elections, good political representation, democratic and accountable government, freedom of media, press and academic freedoms, additional civic participation, direct participation.

Second, questions were asked about the extent to which the most important actors that the informants had identified had actually promoted, avoided, used or abused the intrinsic instruments of democracy. Third, attention was directed at the capacity of these actors to promote and use the instruments. The major dimension in this respect was the extent to which the actors (a) were included or excluded in politics at large; (b) had relevant sources of power and ability to transform them into authority and legitimacy; (c) were able to put their main issues and interests on the agenda (i.e. politicise them), (d) could organise and mobilise collective action in democratic ways, and (e) had the capacity to approach decision making and executive institutions of governance, directly and or by means of representation.

The combined results from both surveys make it clear that the extreme institutionalist and structuralist arguments are not just theoretically but also empirically mistaken. Let us turn to a general outline of the findings.

Eight Major Conclusions

(1) Deteriorating Freedom

A first conclusion from these surveys is that while many civil and political rights are being upheld – which is in contrast to most other new democracies – the advances have somewhat deteriorated since 2003/04. By then the general standard of freedoms were outstanding as compared to the other institutional dimensions of democracy. Informants reported that in addition to major problems of the 'freedom to form parties on the national or local level (or teams of independent candidates) that can recruit members, and participate in elections' – to which we shall return - the 'freedoms of religion, belief, language and culture', 'freedom of speech, assembly and organisation', 'freedom of the press, art and academic world', 'citizens' participation in extensive independent civil

associations' and 'public access to and the reflection of different views within media, art and the academic world' have regressed. (For an overview of the details, see the index in Chapter 3.)

(2) Improved Governance

The second conclusion is that there has been a general improvement since 2003-2004 in top-down efforts by government institutions to improve the miserable performance of the rule of law, particularly the control of corruption. These improvements are particularly noticeable with regard to the 'subordination of the government and public officials to the rule of law', 'the equality before the law', 'the transparency and accountability of elected government and the executive', 'government's independence from strong interest groups and capacity to eliminate corruption and abuse of power', and 'the capacity of the government to combat paramilitary groups, hoodlums and organised crime'. It is true that these improvements are starting from very low levels and that most of these crucial problems remain, but the advances remain commendable.

(3) Country-Wide Political Community

Third, the disintegration of the centralistic New Order has not led to the balkanisation, characterised by separatism and ethnic and religious cleansing, that many observers and politicians had predicted. What has emerged instead is a unitary *political* (rather than ethno-nationalist) community with extensive space for local politics. It is true that this space implies huge inequalities among the provinces and regions, and that it has often been occupied by powerful groups. The attempts to develop democratic politics on the basis of real issues and interests on the ground are under the threat by elitist and localised identity politics and economic globalisation. But in Aceh, where foreign donors have so far contained the military and big business and where separatists have been able to substitute political participation for armed struggle, decentralisation has paved the way for peace and potentially fruitful democracy.

(4) The Relative Stability of Democracy Rests With Elitist Inclusion of People

At the same time, politics *in general* continues to be dominated by the powerful elite. Yet, the dominant elite groups are more broadly-based, more localised and less militarised than under Soeharto. Hence the surveys and associated research qualifies the general thesis that the

powerful elite from the New Order has simply captured democracy (C.f. Hadiz and Robison 2002). Remarkably, it is rather an extended elite that have taken advantage of the new institutions that are supposed to promote democracy.

This is not to say that there are no abuses, but decentralisation and elections have enabled more diverse sections of Indonesia's elite to mobilise popular support. Of course, elites often mobilise such support by making use of their clientelistic networks, their privileged control of public resources and their alliances with business and communal leaders. Yet, the interest of such elite groups in elections is *both* a crucial basis of the actually existing democracy *and* its major drawback. Without this elite support, Indonesian democracy would not survive; with the powerful elite support, it becomes the domain of 'rotten politicians' who prosper and entrench themselves through corruption (the research programs 'Renegotiating Boundaries' and 'In Search of Middle Indonesia' at the KITLV institute in the Netherlands (www.kitlv.nl) and Center for Local Politics and Regional Autonomy Studies at Gadjah Mada University are providing comprehensive case studies in this area.).

In short, democratic institutions and people's capacities remain weak. Yet, much of the required infrastructure is now in place, and in spite of their weaknesses and biases, Indonesia's institutions are solid enough to accommodate powerful actors and, at least partially, alternative actors as well. Theoretically, this is the bottom line. It is the reason why Indonesia may be called an emerging democracy.

In this respect, Indonesia may thus begin to resemble India, the most stable democracy in the global South which is dominated primarily by politically oriented powerful elites that incorporate vulnerable people into politics, win elections and of course benefit in various ways from the powers thus gained – and therefore also sustaining certain procedural fundamentals of democracy – while the more 'modern' and cosmopolitan affluent middle classes increasingly often opt for private solutions to their problems (e.g. CSDS 2007, Chatterjee 2004, Corbridge and Harriss 2000, Harriss-White 2003).

(5) Monopolisation of Representation

So what would it take to make the most of this democratic potential? The major problem when compared to India is that Indonesia's system of representation and elections is not open enough to the possible inclusion of the aspirations of the majority at large and also erects high barriers to participation by independent players. Indonesia's democracy

is thus held back even in a very basic and procedural sense. Civic and popular organisations are prevented from getting into organised politics. Moreover, and to a large extent due to decades of repression and the continuous monopolisation of representation but also because their own mistakes, these groups remain hampered by their own fragmentation and weak mass organisations.

Moreover, supplementary research indicates clearly that these weaknesses in turn are related to problems of representation, even in basic terms of being responsive to the prime daily problems and aspirations of people on the ground in developing policies and strategies. In this respect Indonesia still seriously lags behind. This underdevelopment of democracy is with regard to both the people and the issues and interests that are excluded.

The survey reveals firstly that the powerful actors, those with capacity to affect the course of the dynamics of democracy, in society dominate politics and the political economy. Political institutions (including the executive) and 'good contacts', either economically or politically defined, are their primary sources of power; 'pure' economic bases are less crucial. Alliances are mainly within these powerful sections of the elite in a broad sense of the word (thus also implying of course that there are also other elites, alternative-political, cultural intellectual elites with less access to power). Legitimacy of the powerful elite is mainly sustained through their ability to connect with people and gain authoritative positions.

The major issues on the agenda include hard issues of governance and economic development. Ordinary people are brought into politics primarily through clientelism and populism; and in this context the control and use of the mass media is becoming increasingly important. Comprehensive organization, however, remains insignificant; attempts to build from below are the weakest of all.
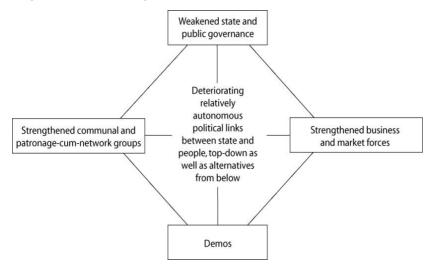
Secondly, the ever-resourceful elites prevent ordinary people and *their* small parties (but not the petty parties of the resourceful) from entering politics. Independent local parties are only allowed and functional in Aceh. Participation in elections in other parts of the country (even of local parliaments) calls for 'national presence' requiring branch offices all over the country. Hence, it is almost impossible to build more representative parties from below without having access to huge funds. For those with such funds, however, it is rather easy to set up an eligible party and get represented, thus causing problems of inefficient governance by squabbling elite politicians with special vested interests.

Furthermore, only big parties or extensive coalitions may nominate candidates for elections of governors, mayors and district heads. Aside from the elections of individual representatives from the provinces to an insignificant national assembly (DPD), independent candidates have been prohibited -- and the newly announced 'openings' call again for huge financial resources on the part of the candidates. In addition, candidates for various positions must have comparatively advanced formal schooling, thus excluding leaders from the labouring classes. Those running in village elections usually even have to share the substantial administrative costs of the election. In addition, there are no efficient measures to counter vested interests and private political financing or to promote internal party democracy, and the guidelines to foster equal gender representation have generated little result.

Thirdly, there are no substantive efforts to foster direct democratic representation in public governance through local representatives and popular organisations based on interest and special knowledge such as trade unions and environmental movements – only privileged contacts and top-down selection of figures and groups. Hardly anywhere in Indonesia can we see substantive representation of crucial interests and ideas of the liberal middle classes, workers, farmers, the urban poor, women, or human rights and environmental activists.

In short so far, Demos' surveys and supplementary research reveal that the fundamental problem of Indonesian democracy is weak popular representation. Many freedoms are at hand, and the rule of law and public governance are at least improving. But democratic political relations between the state and the people remain poor. Typically it is difficult for actors and ideas that reflect fundamental social and economic cleavages to engage in public affairs. In the absence of effective popular control over public affairs, economic and political power rests instead with actors related to the state and private businesses. The leverage of these dominant actors has increased with whittling away of public resources that were vested within the state.

In this context, the post centralist and authoritarian relations between the state and the people (the 'demos') are instead increasingly mediated on the one hand by market institutions and on the other by communal, patronage and network based groups, including 'alternative patronage' via civil associations. Neither of these mediators is subject to democratic control, (Figure 1). Moreover, in spite of the rhetoric of competition, the reduction of the public space in favour of religious and ethnic communities is not incompatible with neo-liberal perspectives. Rather the communal perspectives are in line with the whittling away of

public resources. The reduction of public social security and education, for instance, generates both profitable private hospitals and schools for the rich on the one hand and more communitarian charity and schools for the poor, on the other; ironically at times fostering extreme identity politics.

Figure 1.1. The challenges of democratic popular control of public affairs

(6) The Risk: Return to 'politics of order'

The defunct representation is not only bad for democracy as such. It also undermines ordinary people's chances to use it to foster their views and interests – and the possibilities to alter the unequal division of power that prevents socially and environmentally responsible development. In addition, the monopolisation of representation nourishes a general lack of trust in democracy. Most worrying, upper and middle class groups who rarely manage to win elections may well use this discontent with powerful-elite democracy to gain wide support for alternatives to democracy and to promote 'better preconditions' through 'politics of order'. Supporters of 'middle class coups' typically say that they aim to prevent disruptive populist rule and to build stronger preconditions for democracy. Their views find an echo in some of the previously mentioned international support for proper 'sequencing' of democracy.

Indonesia has been down this path once before, in the 1960s, and it gave rise to Soeharto's New Order regime; and similar dynamics have more recently been at work in the Thai metropolitan middle class who have failed to win broad popular support but rather take to the streets, calling for the rule of the educated citizens and linking up with the King and the army against what are no doubt corrupt and devious politicians but who hold wide electoral support.

In contemporary Indonesia, Vice President Jusuf Kalla's statements on Poso and similar areas of conflict are also cases in point. The message was that democratic elections held too early were behind the conflicts and that profitable business-driven development would be the best way to handle them. Other illustrations include the quest for presidentialism and stronger executives, the 'streamlining' of the party system towards a majoritarian two-party system, and general admiration for Singapore and China's attempts to introduce and promote stability and economic growth ahead of 'excessive' democracy. Meanwhile religious activists argue for the need to reduce the public sphere, but this time in favour of religious values, communities and leaders.

The empirical evidence from Demos' survey and supplementary research speaks quite clearly against the thesis that the roots of Indonesia's current conflicts and problems of corruption as well as economic development are the new civil and political freedoms. On the contrary the results show that it is the defunct instruments of democracy – and especially the poor popular capacities to foster them – that have made it difficult to use the freedoms to alter the relations of power, prevent the abuse of them and thus improve law, policies and governance. There is a shortage of institutionalised channels for interest and issue group participation, beyond clientelism and 'good contacts'. Even popular representation in formal government is held back by elitist control of party and electoral systems. The party and election systems sustain elitism on behalf of the powerful. The separate issue- and interest group representation is weak and undemocratic; and so is direct popular participation.

(7) The Challenge: Overcoming the constraints of popular representation

It is imperative, therefore, that civic and popular organisations be able to scale up their ideas and alliances. By connecting communities and workplaces, at local and central levels, it is possible to challenge elite control over politics. Demos' survey and case studies suggest, however, that scaling up into organised politics is not only hampered by elite monopolisation of politics but also by civic groups and political activists themselves.

The survey and supplementary studies reveal that even if many alternative actors now try to enter into politics, to not just be confined to civil society activities, many challenges still remain ahead. There are few decisive improvements in popular representation when compared to the first survey.

One problem is the poor presence of popular organisations within state, politics and business as well as in related workplaces. Another is that the sources of access to power and the ways of gaining authority and legitimacy remain focused on knowledge and public discourse at the expense of organisation, attempts to gain public mandates and win elections. Moreover, the issues that are put on the agenda typically focus on specific rights and complaints, neglecting broader perspectives of how to promote better governance, development and public welfare. Finally and in spite of advances, civil groups remain poorly connected to social movements and popular organisations (and vice versa); collective action is mainly based on individual networking, popular leaders or alternative patronage as against broad and representative organisations; and attempts to approach elections, parliaments and the executive remain primarily by way of media, NGOs and pressure and lobby groups.

Comparative case studies also show that the problems in these respects are typically addressed instead by either bringing together people on the grass-roots level or by top-down organising or by attempts to facilitate issue-specific direct connections between people and the executive or leading politicians. In many instances, these efforts are quite impressive and stimulating. To mention but one, the local farmers' organisations in Batang in Central Java, have rallied behind broad agendas and won a number of village elections. They now wish to scale up to the regional level, but one problem is sufficiently democratic selection of candidates and of course the lack of funds.

So far, the only *major* opening has been in Aceh, thanks to the unique possibility of building parties from below and of launching independent candidates after the peace treaty. Yet, these parties are short of well organised constituents beyond old activist groups, activist networks and influential leaders.

Moreover, these results also point to a number of problems. Unity from below has proven difficult because of the myriad of specific issues, approaches and contending projects and leaders. Political action aiming at majorities behind common platforms calls for ways of combining different specialisations and interests, such as between farmers and plantation labourers. There must be converged agendas for necessary alliances and equal-citizen-based governance. Loose networking and

polycentric action – the methods favoured by most Indonesia's NGOs and pro-democracy activists – are not enough.

However, attempts to compensate for this by way of socialist or other ideologies, centrally co-ordinated new or established organisations (some with charismatic figures at the helm), or simply the creation of a joint political vehicle or individual candidates offering support in return for popular votes, tend to preserve top-down structures and generate divisions among social movements and popular civil organisations.

The alternative attempts to by-pass 'dirty politics' by facilitating direct linkages between 'people' and the executives (inspired by, for instance, participatory budgeting) are no doubt important supplements but have little to say on how to co-ordinate different sections of 'the people', or how to scale up the operation beyond the local and facilitate fair representation. Elsewhere, in fact, the latter has called for top-down measures through, for instance, the office of a governor or mayor.

(8) The Recommendation: Democratic political blocs

Hence, there are two major lessons: First, basic popular and civic groups must co-ordinate instead on an intermediate political level, between the specific grass-roots issues and the top-level perspectives. This is in order to define joint platforms, gain wide support through alliances, and to control genuine politicians – rather than being the victim of fragmentation and dominated by various parties or political actors. Second, this may also be the level on which it is possible to combine parliamentary and extra parliamentary activities, as well as representative and direct participation.

It is not new that both old and new democracy driven organisations suffer from insufficient links between civic and more popular oriented groups on the one hand and problems of relating to organised politics on the other. This was made quite clear already before 1998 (c.f. Törnquist 2002). It was expanded on in the analysis of the post-Soeharto movement (Prasetyo et.al. 2003), where the blame could no longer be put on excessive authoritarianism. It was confirmed on a general level in the first all-Indonesia survey (Priyono et.al. 2007). However, the more recent results for the second survey and especially supplementary research (c.f. Priyono et.al 2009, Törnquist et.al 2009) have identified quite clearly that the crucial problem of fostering such linkages relates to democratic representation (Figure 2).
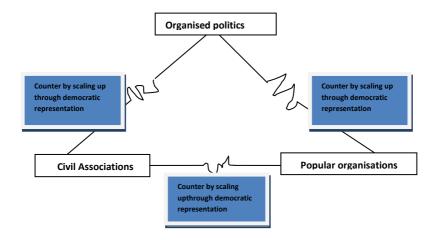
Figure 1.2. The challenges of politicising the democracy movement

In other words, the major challenge along each of the axes is to develop improved democratic representation. This is to enable the scaling up of issues, groups, communities and workplaces. Since structural conditions cannot be altered immediately, people need to get together and act collectively. If this is to be attempted democratically, it calls for trustworthy representation in terms of solid chains of popular sovereignty. This includes authorisation, mandates, responsiveness, transparency and accountability. In addition, this requires clear definitions of what demos are supposed to control parts of public affairs – to avoid polycentric confusion between factions of the demos.

To facilitate scaling up through democratic representation, Demos' recommendation is that democratic social movements, popular and civic associations wishing to engage in politics should build co-ordinated Democratic Political Blocs at local and central levels.

Such political blocs call for leadership and commitment to the building of democracy through popular mandates and accountability, both within and between organisations and in relation to elections. Unfortunately, many democracy activists are unlikely to become involved in democratic representation and electoral politics so long as it remains easier for them to lobby and network.

Similarly there is the recent argument that one should recall the tradition of the many scattered militant groups during the anti-colonial liberation struggle and prioritise extra-parliamentary action in the streets. (Cf. Lane 2008) Organising constituencies and winning

majorities in elections implies hard work. Further, party-political activists need to realise that there will never be one party only among pro-democratic elements. Hence, they need to avoid dominating and dividing basic social movements and popular organisations. Politicians and political parties may well participate in building Political Blocs, but preferably as members of the movements and associations, and definitely not in dominant positions. The negative international experiences of the unfortunate party-politicisation of civic and social movements cannot be overstated.

While the task of building Democratic Political Blocs is thus next to impossible there are options. Historically, of course, this was the way Scandinavian popular and civic organisations built broad political movements, parties and rights based economic development. At present, the Labour Party with civic and popular organisations in Brazil has tried similar roadmaps, including by facilitating participatory budgeting.

The Acehnese even proved that some advances are feasible in spite of very poor conditions. The alternative framework for change was that the party system was de-monopolised to allow for local parties and independent candidates, and that the civic and political organisations were willing and sufficiently well-organised to win votes and thus take advantage of the democratic openings. Neither of these factors are present elsewhere in the country.

It is true that Aceh at present suffers from a lack of firmly and democratically organised interest and issue-based movements that can put vital issues on the agenda and keep parties and leaders accountable. There is a risk, therefore, that client-based and populist means of political inclusion (and associated favouritism and corruption) will dominate while referring to special needs during a quite unspecified period of transition, which may rather take Aceh right down the same drain of primitive accumulation of capital (by way of coercive means) as has occurred in many other provinces. This must be countered by creating broad demands from below for political facilitation by the newly elected leaders (and supportive donors) of participatory democratic institutions.

Furthermore, it needs to be stressed that the situation beyond Aceh is less favourable. The possibilities of building political representation from below have been blocked. According to the most recent legislation, participation in elections in other parts of the country (even of local parliaments) requires 'national presence' with branch offices in 60% of the provinces, 50% of the districts and municipalities, and 25% of the sub-districts. Even the heroic attempt by social and political activists in PPR (*Partai Perserikatan Rakyat*) to measure up to the demands has failed. Unfortunately some of the PPR's leaders now think that there

is no other way to enter into politics than to subordinate themselves to bosses and retired generals in new parties with huge resources and in temporary need of activists. Similarly, the demands for the collection of signatures of independent candidates in direct elections are so high that one needs to be a local equivalent of Italy's Berlusconi to stand a chance. In addition, women, still tend to be marginalised and no ordinary workers, farmers or fisher- folks can run even in village elections because of lack of supposedly 'sufficient' formal education and the demands to pay for the basic administrative costs of taking part in the process.

Conclusion

There is a common expression among builders of democracy in Indonesia that the infrastructure is at hand and that most actors have adjusted to the rules of the game but that what remains is to build a democratic culture and foster social and economic gains which may satisfy ordinary people. This is misleading and partly wrong! It is true that most actors – even the powerful – adjust to the actually existing rules and regulations. But giving priority to the outcome and general habits (culture) is to neglect that the democratic infrastructure is far from sufficient and that to some extent it is not even existent. A large portion of the contextual rules and regulations do not really support the 32 universal means towards democracy. The alternative actors in particular are short of sufficient capacity to use and promote the means of democracy. Organised democracy and especially the system of representation is monopolised by the powerful elite.

In short, democracy is held back. It is true that all people are allowed to vote, but women (who are not well connected) and poor and subordinated people, especially migrant labourers, are *de-facto* prevented from standing as candidates and sometimes even from voting, thus from trying to develop popular representation. Basic issues of equal civic rights and political equality thus present a similar challenge but also an opportunity as did the movements for the right to vote in the old democracies.

Hence the immediate need to develop well organised and non-party-dominated Political Blocs – to foster independent popular influence within organised politics in spite of elitist monopolisation; to enable, moreover, ordinary people to use *and* promote democracy; to alter, thus, the current relations of power through more popular representation and participation; to improve, also, the efficiency of democratic governance; and to increase, finally, bargaining power to foster compromises that move towards rights-based sustainable development.