

EDITORIAL

Breaking the taboo

Religious institutions, including the Catholic Church, are not immune from sexual abuse cases involving leaders or those at the top of the hierarchy. When these happen, a settlement is difficult to reach as it may undermine not only their personal credibility but also that of the institution.

Even if there is a will to solve a case, there is rarely a way, or at least it is a long and winding road to find a fair and just solution. In most cases, victims choose to remain silent as they are too afraid to speak about the unthinkable. In a religious society like Indonesia, clerics, clergymen and other faith leaders gain respect and protection from their congregations as a result of their roles as moral guides who lead their people to God.

Last week *The Jakarta Post* published a series of articles addressing the issue of sexual abuse within the Catholic Church, which many may perceive as a “taboo” as it could undermine the Church’s authority. It was the second time that the *Post* collaborated with *Tirto.id* after our joint investigative report on sexual abuse on campuses last year. Our recent tandem effort followed a report published by a West Jakarta parish magazine last December about 56 cases of alleged sexual abuse within the Church community.

Nothing is new about sexual abuse cases involving clergymen. The Vatican under Pope Francis, for example, has repeatedly asserted zero tolerance of the crime and ordered in May 2019 all church officials to establish protocols to protect minors and vulnerable adults. Most recently the Vatican released a manual for bishops and other senior officials to tackle clerical child sex abuse claims, including a form they should fill out detailing the alleged crimes.

As our reports show, however, the hope of justice being delivered to victims of sexual abuse and harassment cases involving clergymen looks remote. One and perhaps the biggest barrier is the apparent denial of the cases, which will only generate suspicion about cover-up attempts by the Church.

Actually, there is no doubt about the Church’s commitment to transparency as evident when Indonesian Bishops Conference (KWI) seminary commission secretary Father Joseph Kristanto spoke in a public forum about 56 alleged sexual abuse cases within the Indonesian Catholic Church. But the fact that he was found guilty of a “code of ethics violation” and has apologized for the disclosure, as stated by KWI chairman Ignatius Cardinal Suharyo, reveals that the Church is not ready yet to break the long-held taboo.

The KWI has in fact taken measures to protect minors and vulnerable people, work that priests like Father Kristanto are involved in, and this must continue. The Church now has to find a mechanism for victims to report without any fear.

On top of that, action against sex crime perpetrators is needed as a deterrent. The ongoing police investigation into sexual abuse cases in the Church in Depok, West Java, although not involving a clergyman, should set the precedent for a fair and just settlement of a decades-old scandal that continues to plague the Church.

Arguing for difference on indifferent council

By Fitriani and Maria M. Widhia Putri

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This is Indonesia’s second year sitting as an elected member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), raising the question as to whether Indonesia has made a difference on the council. If Indonesia has yet to make its mark, perhaps this August, during its UNSC presidency, the country can leave a lasting legacy.

It is a difficult period for members of the UNSC, as rivalries between great powers straddle its ability to issue substantial resolutions that can bring about global peace and order. We witness violence committed by armed groups, pandemic, territorial disputes intensification, as well as regional and domestic political posturing that the council chooses to sit on the fence and watch.

Of course, it would be a tremendous burden, if not entirely unfair, to expect Indonesia to save the world alone while the great powers choose to stall or fight among themselves.

Nevertheless, except for COVID-19, Indonesia has been aware of the arduous task of working toward global peace when it campaigned to win the UNSC seat in 2018. Then the United States began to threaten China with increased tariffs and Russian diplomats were expelled from several European countries after a spy poisoning case.

When Indonesia began its membership, the UNSC was experiencing a decline in the number of resolutions issued. In 2016, it issued 77 resolutions, including those substantive issues on fighting violent extremism in Syria. But in 2019, there were only 51 resolutions, 37 of which were extensions of previous mandates. As of last month, the council has issued 32 resolutions with more than half being extensions.

For the optimist among us, they may argue that there is persistence on the UNSC, but for some others yearning for a breakthrough, they may see the council as hedging sustainable peace by not taking drastic measures.

In the preparatory period, Indonesia, with other elected members, sent a letter to highlight “the need for fair burden-sharing and

equal distribution of work among all members of the security council”. The letter urges UNSC reform from the dominance of the P5 (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) toward more meaningful participation from elected members by accepting them as “penholder” in drafting the council’s resolutions.

Together with Germany, Indonesia is co-penholder for the situation on Afghanistan and has successfully negotiated for two mandate extensions of UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in March and September 2019. This is a particularly challenging diplomatic case as mandate extensions usually last

one year, not six months. Still, the negotiations were highly politicized by great powers rivalries, especially with the Western group’s concern about China’s Belt and Road Initiative complicating the discussion as Afghanistan’s national election was due to take place. In the deadlock, Indonesia took the role of bridge-builder, pushing for a peaceful resolution by supporting resolutions that reflected the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process.

Indonesia also displayed its commitment to Afghan’s peace process by being a member of the International Contact Group (ICG) on Afghanistan and having Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi as one of the honorary members of the Group of Friends of Women of Afghanistan.

Indonesia endeavored to provide empowerment for Afghan women by holding dialogue on the role of women in building and sustaining peace last No-

vember. Furthermore, as 2020 marks the two decades implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, earlier this year Indonesia also conducted online training for women diplomats, negotiators and mediators from Afghanistan and beyond, reaching those of ASEAN member states, Timor Leste and Papua New Guinea.

The free-and-active foreign policy principle provides Indonesia with a constructive foundation for its adept participation on the council. Such a principle has enabled the country to navigate and mediate the differing positions of the council’s members through partnership and regionalism.

Admittedly, not all issues yield progress. One rocky topic for Indonesian diplomacy is Palestine. Indonesia has been consistent in supporting a two-state solution that would bring about an independent and sovereign Palestinian state alongside Israel. The challenge is not all the council’s members agree with the idea, including Indonesia co-penholders on the issue of Palestine— the US and Kuwait.

Nevertheless, Indonesia unwaveringly promotes Palestine’s peace process, including by drafting UNSC press statements on the demolition of residential buildings in the Sur Bahir/Wadi al-Hummus, East Jerusalem; the closing of Temporary International Presence in Hebron by Israel, and organizing an informal discussion on illegal settlements at the time of Indonesia’s presidency at the council in May 2019.

Presidency at the council was significant because Indonesia demonstrated its ability to lead

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Defending Indonesia: A forward strategy

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Last January, the Defense Ministry issued a state defense policy that is still anchored in the 2009-2024 defense strategy and posture development, released in 2008. However, such a policy will be meaningless if the ministry fails to reexamine and remedy a set of established assumptions inherent in this policy.

As strategy is about getting to the next stage rather than some ultimate destination, immediate remedies are to be made within the timeframe of 2020-2024 if Indonesia is going to reap the expected strategic objectives from 2024 onward.

Correspondingly, with the timeframe of no less than four years and not more than 25 years (2020-2045), the defense strategy in 2020 shall be reviewed from five strategic dimensions: the root of Indonesia’s national security interests; the international system; global trends; how, when and where to develop, deploy and employ the Indonesian armed forces; and how to strategically synchronize nonmilitary dimensions of war (political, economic, psychological, technological and cybernetic) into overall national defense capability especially in the peaceful, interwar period.

Of these five strategic dimensions, the 2020 defense strategy shall futuristically and methodologically reexamine assumptions about five policy options: control option; foreign policy option; force development option; resource al-

location option and force employment option.

The first assumption pertains to how the civil-military relationship is being shaped and how it corresponds to future states. Since the 1998 tension has brewed between the Indonesian Military (TNI) headquarters and the Ministry of Defense and tended to impede a wide spectrum of issues, from political control on one end to defense procurement on the other.

This situation has not improved, even though, for the last six years, the defense minister post has been occupied by two retired Army generals. In other words, the effectual implementation of defense strategy for the next 25 years will be largely determined by how this civil-military relationship is settled from 2020 to 2024.

The second assumption is how well the national defense strategy predicts possible global and domestic political scenarios, followed by a corresponding combination of military and non-military instruments of power. Unexpected scenarios to be considered are the possible clash of great powers in the region, less ASEAN support and a less favorable environments for Indonesian defense interests, a failure to defend national ideology, intensifying unconventional warfare including but not limited to insurgency, terrorism and biological warfare, and incoherent in-



JP/Narabeto Korohama

Practice makes perfect: Air Force elite forces (Paskhas) personnel practice close-range ground combat at the compound of Wing 1 Paskhas headquarters in Jakarta on Sept. 7, 2019. The Indonesian Military continues to improve the skills of its personnel as part of the national defense strategy.

teragency working relationships within the government that exacerbate a number of other unexpected security scenarios.

The third assumption is about force development, where the combination of superior strategy and quality manpower will be followed by quantity and force multipliers. There are at least four aspects to be considered to challenge our assumptions in this matter: the future proportions of strength between the Army, Navy and Air Force; the quality of minds of TNI personnel; the combination and strategic necessity of defense reserve

components and the quality of technology being used.

Of particular importance underlying this third assumption is how well the Defense Ministry revamps the TNI education system from the tactical all the way up to the strategic level with a more professional world-class education system by incorporating future operational engagements within interagency, inter-governmental and multinational environments in times of peace, crisis and war.

As the defense minister, since his appointment in October 2019, has been so concerned with the

strategic necessity of improving the welfare and quality of human military assets, the starting point to address his concern is by rethinking the value of human assets within the TNI establishment.

The main starting point to modernize and contextualize Indonesia’s people-based total defense system shall be by seriously treating people as the main asset (J-1) as opposed to intelligence (J-2) and operations (J-3). Any creative ways to leverage the quality of Indonesian people (military and civilian) for national defense interests and for improving the unity between Indonesian Military, its civilian counterparts and citizens must be done at any costs.

The future is the era of brain war, where the thinking and innovative nation will gain global competitive advantages and significantly increase its chances to win a war.

The fourth assumption pertains to resource allocation, which particularly depends on three inter-related factors: efficiency in terms of saving national resources from unnecessary human, operational, and procurement-related spending; the suppression of corruption in the defense and military bureaucracy to the lowest level possible; and the investment and accelerated building of a visionary defense industry to become a global trendsetter in selective global niche markets.

Based on this assumption, Indonesia’s plan to procure Russian Su-35s and US Bell Boeing MV-22B Block C Ospreys must be based on the very tough policy justification based on the four underlying sub-assumptions: the defense strategic objectives; the kind of wars we anticipate and the TNI roles; its expected mili-

tary operations; and its appropriated capability to conduct such futuristic operations. Capability itself is not only about the weapon system but is also about building, maintenance, costs and the proper synchronization of such a system with human factors and related weapon systems.

The fifth assumption is about the way the national defense strategy picks employment options, whether it leans toward more offensive, defensive or merely deterrent approaches throughout the warfare domains available. So far, since 2008, the Indonesian defense posture is developed based on military operations for war and military operations for other than war, with specific priorities given to global peacekeeping forces and conventional and nonconventional engagement in the domains of land, sea and air.

Subsequently, the Defense Ministry for the next four years shall seriously lay a strong foundation for the military employment in the area of cyberspace, which is currently treated by superpowers and regional powers as a warfare domain.

Last but not the latest, strategy is like a story that consists of adjustable plots along the way. The main characters, defense policymakers and all citizens, shall be looking forward positively to the future to achieve the result of comedy with satisfactory resolution as opposed to the tragedy.

Although the risk of ending up with tragedy is still inherent in any strategy, the odds of its occurrence are lowered if we dare to continuously review our established, inherent assumptions and turn such institutional biases into excellent foresight to shape and generate the future we envision.