



Jokowi's State Address 2019

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Synopsis/Abstract

On Friday 16 August 2019, President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo delivered his annual State Address in front of a joint session of DPR-DPD at the DPR/MPR building in Senayan, Jakarta. As his final State Address of his first term, the speech was a useful opportunity for President Jokowi to highlight his achievements as well as to outline his priorities and agenda for his new term which is set to start in October this year. What then were the key features of Jokowi's State Address? What was mentioned? And what was left out?

‘Indonesia itu bukan hanya Jakarta, bukan hanya Pulau Jawa’

Dressed in the traditional attire of the Suku Sasak from Nusa Tenggara Barat province, President Jokowi continued his theme that the government should abandon its Java-centric mindset. In recent weeks the President has deliberately donned traditional attire to showcase Indonesia's ethnic diversity that go beyond the traditionally dominant Javanese. In his State Address the President went on to declare that infrastructure development programs would continue to be ‘Indonesia-centric’ so that it would benefit all corners of the nation.

However, whilst the current government has heavily pushed for infrastructure development projects outside of Java, the benefits it brings to those communities remain to be seen. It was notable that despite investing heavily on the island of Sumatra – including building the Trans-Sumatra toll road that will stretch 2,000km and connect Aceh with Lampung – Jokowi only won more votes than his rival during the recent Presidential Elections in the provinces of North Sumatra, Kepulauan Riau, Bangka Belitung, and Lampung.¹

The other six provinces went to Prabowo Subianto – in some cases overwhelmingly.² More recently, despite President Jokowi's overtures to Papua and West Papua – including visiting the region more than any other Indonesian presidents before him, in addition to his infrastructure push as well as instituting a One Fuel Price policy – rioting and demonstrations broke out on 19 August and have continued for several days. Interestingly, the Domine Eduard Osok airport in Sorong was a target of the rioting despite having been recently renovated by the government as part of Jokowi's aforementioned infrastructure push.³

In this sense, despite Jokowi statement that, 'Our development [programs] must be sensitive to all risks. Infrastructure must be prepared to support disaster risk mitigations', it would seem more thought and consideration be given to other risks as well.⁴

SDM Unggul, Indonesia Maju

The issue of 'human resources' dominated President Jokowi's State Address in 2019. A content analysis by *Harian Kompas* found that the term 'human resources' was used 14 times – more than any other term.⁵ The second most used term was 'education/science' which was mentioned 11 time. Interestingly, in the previous State Address the year before, 'human resources' and 'education/sciences' only warranted four and six mentions respectively which was instead dominated by 'economy' with 24 mentions.⁶ This may be explained by the fact that 12 months ago it seemed that the economy would become a major campaign issue for the General Elections and was one area where the opposition parties could hurt the government at the polls. Fast forward a year later and having now secured his second term, President Jokowi can turn his attention to other themes.

It may also be explained by the fact that – as noted earlier – the heavy infrastructure development push has not automatically translated into immediate benefits for the communities. Indonesia's GDP growth has slowed with the economy growing at only 5.07% and 5.05% in the first and second quarters of 2019.⁷ In contrast Indonesia's GDP growth in the second quarter of 2018 was 5.27%.⁸ In this sense, there may be a realization on the government's part that hard infrastructure developments – in the form of toll roads, airports, and ports, etc – must also be accompanied by soft infrastructure improvements too.

As noted by the President, 'Global competition which is increasingly tight as well as disruptions in various sectors, requires appropriate human resources quality.'⁹ Jokowi's



State Address thus called for Indonesia's human resources to be more competitive by mastering science and technology as well as be skilled in emerging skills that will be required in emerging jobs and businesses.¹⁰ It was in this sense also that this year's Independence Day celebration focused on the motto of '*SDM Unggul, Indonesia Maju*' (Leading in human resources, Indonesia advances).

Missing Foreign Policy

Whilst President Jokowi is well-known for lacking much foreign policy interest, his State Addresses have usually made some mention of Jakarta's external position. That foreign policy was largely omitted in this year's State Address certainly raised eyebrows. This was especially the case given Indonesia's relative activism in the past 12 months that include successfully pushing the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, launching a new building for the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, concluding the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and taking up its seat as a non-permanent member on the UN Security Council. Instead, references to foreign policy were somewhat vague focusing more on the need to be competitive and the importance of humanitarianism as the spirit of Indonesia's foreign policy.¹¹ Indonesia's external environment was described as one that was unstable and unpredictable, with President Jokowi pointing to geopolitical changes and the flaring up of global economic dynamics.¹² In response to such threats, Jokowi's State Address emphasized that alertness and vigilance was imperative. With the President's well-known lack of foreign policy interest coupled with the inexperienced and unknown entity of his new Vice-President Ma'ruf Amin, it will be interesting to see who will take the lead in ensuring Indonesia is alert and vigilant on the world stage.

A New Capital

Perhaps the most eye-catching part of Jokowi's State Address was when he formally requested that Indonesia's capital be moved. In front of the joint session of the DPD-DPR, President Jokowi stated, "I hereby request your permission to move our national capital to Kalimantan."¹³ Whilst the President's desire to move the capital was not new, this was the first time the idea was put before parliamentarians who must also agree to the move. Ahead of his State Address, there was some speculation that the President would use the opportunity to name the actual location of the new capital. Jokowi himself promised that he would provide more details during his State Address.¹⁴ In reality, he revealed little more





than what was already known, i.e. that the capital would be moved to somewhere on the island of Kalimantan.

Having first mooted the move shortly after the Presidential Elections in April, President Jokowi has been somewhat coy on providing more information. Whilst it is understandable that such a momentous move requires great thought and consideration, it seems questionable to have publicly announced such an idea so early on, without knowing first the location, the budget, the designs, etc. In doing so, many government officials, businesses, diplomats, and the general public have been somewhat left in the dark, thus unnecessarily creating uncertainty for all involved. **[Note:** it has since been announced that the capital will be relocated to the regencies of Penajam Paser Utara and Kutai Kartanegara in East Kalimantan province]

Analysis/The Verdict

Jokowi's State Address has continued many of the themes that the President is known to be keen on. These include infrastructure development and human resources. With the Presidential Elections out of the way, Jokowi can now concentrate on the issues that are important to him. At the same time, the Presidential Elections – as well as the slowing economy – have perhaps also forced a re-tuning of his priorities, showing that hard infrastructure developments will not be enough. It is in this sense that human resources was the central issue in his State Address. Of the eyebrow-raising/eye-catching elements in his State Address, the omission of much foreign policy discussion as well as the formal request to move capitals were certainly among them. Unfortunately, these have left more questions being asked rather than providing much answers.



Endnotes

¹ Detik (Undated). 'Peta Suara Pilpres 2019.' Retrieved from:
https://news.detik.com/x/detail/investigasi/20190521/Kemenangan-Kedua-Jokowi/images/infog_peta-suara-pilpres-2019-detikx-upmeoi.png

² Ibid.

³ Kompas (2019, August 19). 'Demo di Sorong Papua, Massa Rusak Fasilitas Bandara.' Retrieved from:
<https://regional.kompas.com/read/2019/08/19/15481531/demo-di-sorong-papua-massa-rusak-fasilitas-bandara>

⁴ Kompas (2019, August 16). *Pidato Kenegaraan Presiden Jokowi 2019*. Retrieved from:
<https://nasional.kompas.com/jeo/naskah-lengkap-pidato-kenegaraan-2019-presiden-jokowi>

⁵ *Harian Kompas* (2019, August 18) 'Indonesia Siap Mendunia.' Retrieved from:
<https://kompas.id/baca/polhuk/2019/08/18/indonesia-siap-mendunia>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Antara (2019, August 5). 'Indonesia's economic growth pace clocked at 5.05 percent in Q2.' Retrieved from:
<https://en.antaranews.com/news/130452/indonesias-economic-growth-pace-clocked-at-505-percent-in-q2>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Kompas (2019, August 16). *Pidato Kenegaraan. Op.cit.*

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Al Jazeera (2019, August 16). 'Indonesia's Jokowi formally proposes relocating capital to Borneo.' Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/08/indonesia-jokowi-formally-proposes-relocating-capital-borneo-190816042719456.html>

¹⁴ Liputan6 (2019, August 14). 'Jokowi: Ibu Kota Baru Diumumkan saat Pidato Kenegaraan 16 Agustus.' Retrieved from: https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/4037643/jokowi-ibu-kota-baru-diumumkan-saat-pidato-kenegaraan-16-agustus?utm_expid=.9Z4i5ypGQeGiS7w9arwTvQ.0&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F



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