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INDONESIAN DEFENSE STRATEGY
AN APPRAISAL OF REQUIREMENTS, RESOURCES, CAPABILITIES, AND DIRECTIONS

A Student Essay Submitted For
Military Studies Program
US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks

7 May 1984

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Robert F. Harris, COL, CE
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A 20 page essay which analyzes current threats to Indonesian security and assesses Indonesian capabilities to counter those threats. It investigates Indonesian strategic and military objectives, describes the concept of territorial warfare, lists current force structure and major air and naval combatants, and assesses the adequacy of current military capabilities. It addresses some current military issues which degrade that capability and assesses the Indonesian armed forces overall ability to accomplish their designed role.



THIRD WORLD POWER

Shortly after the end of the Second World War, almost four decades ago, it appeared that the countries of the world would naturally drift into two major groupings; with the democratic, free market nations led by the United States on the one hand, and a communist bloc dominated by the Union of Socialist Soviet Russia on the other. That such an absolute bi-polar world has not been firmly established can be attributed to the resurgence of nationalism, the emergence of more than one hundred new nations, and the unwillingness of some nations to play subordinate roles. While the two super-powers are clearly the major actors in the world political arena, other players have served to keep the balance of power fluid. As they seek their own national objectives, these "Third World" nations have become quite adept at using their strengths/resources (be they economic, military, ideological and/or cultural) as "leverage" in the political process. As a result, the super-powers, as they strive for global advantage, often find themselves courting the "lesser" nations in search of political and/or economic allies. For a variety of reasons, some of these "Third World" nations carry greater weight than others (there is some talk of a "Fourth World" to better identify the truly "insignificant" nations). Of particular concern to the super-powers are the handfull of Third World nations who have the potential for development into regional (if not global) power centers. The Republic of Indonesia is certainly such a potential Third World power.

Indonesia occupies geographic and political positions of particular impact upon both regional and global security and order.

Her population, natural resources and national character virtually dictate a "pro-active" role in world affairs. Since independence was achieved after World War II, Indonesia has experienced extreme political and economic turbulence, but has survived several rather serious challenges to her internal stability. Since 1966, the Indonesian Army has, in effect, "guided" the country away from radical political and economic adventurism, and established the country as a stable/rational member of the community of nations. During this period, however, their efforts have essentially been focussed inward. The current world situation is not likely to permit this in the future. The competition of internal and external security considerations may require significant changes in her national defense strategies. At the same time, the demands for further involvement of "non-military" society in the government and the establishment of a more freely elected "democratic" governing body will likely result in greater competition for the resources needed to support an effective national security strategy. The establishment of Vietnamese hegemony over all IndoChina, and the expansion of Soviet military power into the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean, together with the regional impacts of the Sino-Soviet rift, present serious challenges to the security and stability of the Southeast Asia region and to US strategic interests. As a key member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Indonesia can ill afford to take a passive position. Her willingness to assume an active political (and, if necessary, military) role and her capability to achieve her strategic goals are essential to stability and progress within the region and, ultimately to the viability of US strategy in the region.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Indonesia's national interests are varied and global in nature. Such global interests are primarily political and/or economic, however. They include such concerns as the maintenance of world peace, the prevention of super-power conflicts, access to world markets, technology and financing, etc. The main focus of her strategic goals and objectives, however, is clearly regional (restricted primarily to the area south of China and east of India). Her relationships with the super-powers clearly reflect this regional bias and usually take the form of "quid pro quo" arrangements. Although primarily a Muslim nation and a member of OFEC, she has managed to avoid involvement in the troubles in the Middle East (although she did provide troops to the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces during the 1960s and 70s). Until recently, even her relations with regional neighbors could be characterized as "cool and correct", noncommittal and non-interfering. Only with the withdrawal of US forces from IndoChina, the invasion of Kampuchea by SRV and the outbreak of the China-SRV conflicts did Indonesia trouble to take an active (some would say leadership) political role within the region.

Within the regional perspective, and based upon an analysis of Indonesia's actions and pronouncements during the past several years, her major strategic objectives are derived as follows:

- o Ensure the territorial integrity and national sovereignty over her claimed land and water areas.
- o Achieve international acceptance of the "archipelagic" principle and recognition of her claims to such water areas.

- o Promote regional stability and the territorial and political integrity of all members of ASEAN.
- o Prevent the expansion of USSR/SRV/FRC influence within the region.
- o Retain continued US political/economic/military presence within the region.
- o Preclude super-powers from coming into direct conflict within the region.

These strategic objectives (some of which, at first glance, appear to be mutually exclusive) requires a delicate political "balancing act" on Indonesia's part. She must seek a strengthened position for ASEAN, while maintaining a dialogue with the Soviets, SRV and China. She must retain the confidence and assistance of the US, without seeming to become too close an ally (both in the eyes of her citizens and in the views of her neighbors and fellow Third World nations). She must develop a credible defense establishment, without disturbing the fears of her neighbors and/or potential adversaries. She must accomplish these objectives while continuing to improve her economic position, enhance the quality of life for her citizens, and broadening her internal political base.

MILITARY OBJECTIVES

The Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (ABRI) occupy a unique niche within Indonesian society. Since the early days of their War of Independence, the military have assumed a political role far beyond that of simple national security. In 1957, the Army Chief of Staff, Major General Abdul Haris Nasution, voiced

his concept of the "Middle Way" whereby the army would not seek to take over the government but would continue to be politically active.¹ In 1965, the Army Command and Staff College (SESKOAD) formulated the "dwi fungsi" (dual function) concept which assigns a social-political role to the armed forces (as well as a purely military role).² As a result, particularly since the initiation of President Suharto's New Order, the armed forces have been increasingly involved in all aspects of Indonesian political, governmental, economic, social, cultural and religious life. It is consequently sometimes difficult to separate the purely "military" functions/programs from other aspects of military involvement. In their simplest form, the most critical military objectives may be expressed as follows:

- o Maintain internal security and order.
- o Maintain surveillance over and control of Indonesian air and water space.
- o Engage and defeat any hostile force which violates the territorial integrity of Indonesia's land, water and air space.
- o Establish and maintain suitably trained and equipped forces adequate to deter aggression by hostile powers against Indonesia and/or its immediate neighbors (Singapore & Malaysia).
- o Develop a domestic industrial base to support national security requirements.
- o Maintain continuous, close relationships with the Indonesian peoples as a whole; in order to promote national "resilience" and ensure their support in times of crisis.
- o Develop military leaders at all levels that are technically competent, ideologically pure and culturally sensitive.

THE THREAT

Throughout its short history, Indonesia has been troubled by local armed insurgent groups. Despite the armed forces' successes in these engagements, there currently remain five active or semi-active insurgent movements which (more or less) trouble the authorities. These include:

- o The Independence Movement of the South Java Republic (RMS): This group, mostly Moluccans and Amboinese, opposed incorporation into the Republic of Indonesia. Defeated early in the 1950s, most fled to the Netherlands. At present there are less than 40,000 living in Holland, with about half still claiming Indonesian citizenship. While they periodically receive "press" notice, they have no power base in Indonesia and present more of a problem to the Dutch than to the Republic of Indonesia.

- o The Papuan Independence Organization (OPN): When West Irian came under Indonesian control in 1969, a small group of native New Guineans fled across into Papua. Numbering less than one thousand persons and operating in an area of very sparse population, they are more of an embarrassment than a threat to the Republic of Indonesia.

- o The Timor Independence Revolutionary Front (FRETILIN): This group, organized originally as a political party in East Timor while the Portuguese were still in control, attempted to seize power when the Portuguese left in 1975. Indonesia supported opposing political factions and invaded East Timor on 7 December 1975. The FRETILIN was surprisingly well armed and organized. It was not until the end of 1976 that Indonesia could claim complete

control of the island. Most of the survivors fled overseas where they represent a vocal group opposed to Indonesian sovereignty over Timor. Several hundred armed rebels fled into the wooded mountains, from which they have occasionally emerged to harass government forces. They do have some international following, and remain a political liability to Indonesia (especially with regard to Australia and a few Western Europe nations).

o The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI): At one time, the PKI was the largest communist party outside the Soviet Union, enjoyed considerable support from Sukarno, and threatened to become the dominant power in Indonesia. The coup attempt of 30 September 1965, however, drew them into direct armed conflict with the Indonesian Army and resulted in their virtual annihilation. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, a small group continued to operate in the area of the West Kalimantan/Sarawak border, but joint Indonesian-Malaysian counter-insurgency operations eliminated that threat. Some party cadre escaped to the PRC who until recently gave vocal support to their cause. Lately, the PRC appears to have tired of their presence and has even threatened to "send them home".³ There remains the possibility that some form of "underground" infrastructure remains, but the probability that they could pose any serious threat without extensive outside support appears remote. Indonesia's "fears" about the PKI is more a reflection of her concern about the political loyalty of her large ethnic Chinese minority than any "fear" of the PKI itself.

o The Radical Islamic Organization (Kommando Jihad): This group is the successor to the "Darul Islam" movement which has caused problems for the central government since its establishment

in 1949. Its aim is to replace the existing secular Indonesian government and form an Islamic state. It is a terrorist group which has been active in Sumatra and West Java since 1977. Its most notable attacks were against a police station in Bandung in 1981, and the hi-jacking of a Garuda (Indonesian National Airline) aircraft to Bangkok that same year (Indonesian special police rescued all passengers and killed the hi-jackers). Indonesia has given priority to its suppression (201 suspected members have been arrested in the last five years).⁴ This group's size and the extent of its popular support is not known. The established Muslim clergy has voiced their opposition, to the extent of "debating" selected arrested suspects on public television.

The external threat poses far greater risks, but is similarly difficult to precisely define. Within the region, only two states currently have the military capability to threaten Indonesia. These are the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of China. While both have extremely large standing armies, neither has a particularly effective air force or a "blue-water" navy capable of supporting a major attack on Indonesia. Both are, however, past masters of "revolutionary" warfare, and have been active in "exporting" people's revolutions in the past. The SRV has a dispute with Indonesia over ownership of the Natuna Islands and surrounding waters. Indonesia occupies the larger islands and has entered into oil exploration agreements with western oil companies. There have been unconfirmed reports of SRV patrol boats cruising in the area, with Indonesia periodically putting on a "show of force" with her navy flotilla. In a "one-on-one" conflict with the SRV over the Natunas, Indonesia would enjoy a relative



R. Harris

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eneral Benny Murdani, to Hanoi.⁶
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MILITA

Since independence, the
distinctive military strategy
primarily by General Nasution
during World War II and the I
introduced by Nasution in his
became the topic of a series
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In March 1962, SESKOAD publish
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a rationale for the military's
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Territorial Warfare recog
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armed forces intend to oppose
restore the nation to its peop
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What is equally remarkable is that the document was made available to western military specialists. Since it was published prior to the abortive coup attempt of 1965, it is equally obvious that the PKI neglected to study it. Had they done so, they might well have avoided their almost total annihilation.

Territorial warfare strategy provides for fighting a defensive war in three phases:

- o Phase I - Frontal Phase. The hostile forces are detected and engaged using air and sea forces as soon as they enter Indonesian territorial waters or airspace. Ground forces resist enemy attempts to gain a lodgement ashore.

- o Phase II - Containment, Challenge, and Consolidation Phase. Enemy formations ashore are engaged with all available local forces (air and ground) using conventional formations and tactics. Air and sea forces interdict follow-on and support formations. Trade space for time. Avoid decisive combat. Minimize losses of personnel and equipment.

- o Phase III - Counteroffensive Phase. Strategic reserves are moved into critical areas. Total mobilization of the armed forces has been achieved. The Indonesian people are resisting the hostile forces to the maximum extent. Local superiority is achieved. Indonesian Armed Forces counterattack to destroy the enemy and/or eject him from Indonesian territory.

There is a fourth (un-named) phase. There will be no surrender. In the event the counteroffensive phase fails to dislodge the enemy, the Indonesian armed forces will continue to fight using all means available. The people will continue massive/total resistance. The enemy will be afforded no respite. The war will go on forever.

The Doctrine of Territorial Warfare goes on to discuss the implications of communications, administration, training and logistics. The difficulty of controlling and supporting combat operations in a nation consisting of over thirteen thousand islands is recognized. Emphasis is placed upon dispersion of forces and war reserve stocks, gaining civilian support, and the use of captured enemy supplies and equipment. It is anticipated that the chain-of-command, while fractured, will remain effective. The initiative of local commanders is encouraged and expected.

This volume continues with an explanation of the concept of Territorial Management. This is the system by which the armed forces (especially the army) interacts with the civilian community and governmental agencies in peacetime, so as to be prepared to direct the total efforts of the people during war. Army units are located throughout the Indonesian islands. Soldiers are recruited, trained and serve in units in their home areas. The unit commander is responsible not only to his chain-of-command, but also to his men and to the community in which they (and he) lives. His influence, authorities and responsibilities cross functional lines, and involve him in all aspects of Indonesian life.

Since the introduction of the Concept of Territorial Warfare, quantitative and qualitative improvements have been made in the capabilities of the ABRI. Its basic doctrine remains unchanged, however. An entire generation of officers and men have been trained under this system. This continuity has paid handsome dividends in understanding and effectiveness. Its major failing is its lack of provision for force-projection out of country.

MILITARY CAPABILITIES

The President of the Republic of Indonesia is constitutionally the Supreme Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. At the cabinet level, he is assisted by the Department of Defense and Security (HANKAM). While he may be either a civilian or a military man, the Defense Minister has been a serving member of the Army since the beginning of the Republic. Directly below HANKAM is the Headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (ABRI) whose commander (General Benny Murdani) is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. In the past, the positions of Defense Minister and Commander of ABRI have often been held by one man. Only during this past year have they gone to different persons. At the present time, General Murdani is concurrently the commander of the Command for the Restoration of Order and Security (KOPKAMTIB) which is a subordinate organization which combines functions similar to those of the FBI, CIA and DIA in the US. Directly subordinate to ABRI are the four military services (Army, Navy, Air Force, and National Police) and eight unified/specified commands (4 KOWILHAN, KOSTRANAS, KOSTRAD, KOPASSANDA, and an Air Defense Command). The total strength of ABRI is estimated at about 440,000 persons. The actual strength of the Indonesian military is open to speculation, since such data is classified and not readily available to outsiders. Estimated strengths do not include any reserve components, militia or para-military agencies. From 1966 until 1975, Indonesia was in the process of reducing the size of their armed forces. With the withdrawal of the US from Vietnam and the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, a reassessment was made. Its size has since increased.

o Army (TNI-AD). The Army is comprised of approximately 210,000 men and women. Directly subordinate to the Chief of Staff are 16 major territorial commands (KODAMs) commanded primarily by major generals and brigadier generals. The KODAMs, in turn, have various number of subordinate commands (KODIMs - commanded by colonels and KOREMs and KORAMILs). The KODAMs generally conform to the political boundaries of civilian provinces. In practice, the KODAM commander, the Province Chief, and the local Police Chief work together to effectively govern a given area. It is through the KODAM that the Army exercises its Territorial Management responsibilities. The KODAM commander also normally commands the army units located in his area. Total Army forces include the following:

- 13 Infantry Brigades (3 bn each)
- 37 Separate Infantry Battalions
- 2 Airborne Infantry Brigades (3 bns each)
- 1 Armored Cavalry Brigade (4 bns)
- 6 Separate Armored Cavalry Battalions
- 1 Field Artillery Brigade (3 bns)
- 14 Separate Field Artillery Battalions
- 1 Anti-aircraft Artillery Brigade (3 bns)
- 10 Separate Anti-aircraft Artillery Battalions
- 2 Engineer Construction Regiments (2 bns each)
- 8 Combat Engineer Battalions
- 4 Special Warfare Groups (KOPPASANDA)
- Army Aviation Command
- Marine Transport Command
- Supply, Maintenance and Communications Elements

o Air Force (TNI-AU). The Air Force is comprised of about 30,000 men and women. Its major bases are located (primarily on Java) at Jakarta, Bandung, Malang and Semarang. Its force structure/major combatants include:

- 2 Interceptor Squadrons (with 15 F-5 aircraft)
- 2 Fighter Ground Attack Squadrons (with 31 A-4 aircraft)
- 1 Counter-insurgency Squadron (with 15 OV-10F aircraft)
- 1 Reconnaissance Squadron (with C-130, 737, HU-16 aircraft)
- 3 Transport Squadrons (with 31 C-130, G-47, CASA 212, etc.)

o Navy (TNI-AL). The Navy is comprised of about 42,000 men and women. This includes two Marine (KKO) Regiments of 3 battalions each. It has major bases on Java at Jakarta and Surabaya. Its major combatants include:

- 3 Submarines (1 Soviet, 2 West German (new))
- 9 Frigates (3 with Exocet surface-to-surface missiles)
- 14 Large Patrol Craft
- 4 Dagger Fast Attack Craft (with Exocet SSM)

Plus LST (13), LCU (3), LCM (38), minesweepers (3) & others

o National Police. The National Police is comprised of about 120,000 men and women. This includes a para-military Mobile Brigade of 12,000 men.

o KOWILHANS. The four (4) KOWILHANS are the major unified territorial commands. Commanded by Lieutenant Generals (Army, Navy or Air Force), they are assigned geographic responsibilities and command (at least nominally) all forces of all services located in their areas of responsibility.

o KOSTRANAS. This unified command would command and control all strategic reserve forces in time of war. In peacetime, it is a

cadre organization and occupies itself with the planning and conduct of joint training exercises.

o KOSTRAD. This is the Army Strategic Reserve Command and is directly under the ABRI Commander in peacetime. It normally commands the two airborne infantry brigades, the armored cavalry brigade, three infantry brigades and the field artillery brigade. It can be augmented by other units as required. It is located on Java (headquartered in Jakarta). Its airborne units are located near major airbases (the 17th in Bandung and the 18th in Malang) and can be airlifted to virtually any place in the islands in a relatively short time. Its forces appear to be better manned, equipped and trained than other army units. Its officers are particularly bright, competent and aggressive; and usually move on to positions of greater responsibility (President Suharto was the KOSTRAD Commander in 1965).

o KCPASSANDA. This is the Special Forces Command (Red Berets) and is comprised of four special warfare groups of a total of about 4,000 men. These forces are specially trained in counter-insurgency operations, and would be the units first committed in any operation in West Irian and/or Timor, if required.

o The Air Defense Command is primarily an Air Force operation and is charged with both an air superiority mission and an area and point defense mission. It does command some army anti-aircraft artillery units during wartime.

o There is a joint service military academy with all cadets having a common first year and then three years of service specific training and education. Each service has its own training command and its own logistics and service support commands & depots.

MILITARY ISSUES

o Size. With a total population of between 150 and 160 million persons, Indonesia is the fifth largest nation in the world (after the PRC, India, USSR and the US). Yet its armed forces total only about 440,000 men and women (320,000 if you discount the police). By way of comparison, the military forces of the PRC exceed 4.1 million, India - 1.1 million, the USSR - 5.0 million, and the US - 2.1 million. Even the SRV (its closest potential threat) with a total population of only 57 million maintains armed forces that exceed 1.2 million persons. While its current force structure has clearly proven its adequacy from an internal security perspective, it is just as clearly inadequate when the external threat is analyzed. Its small size is the very factor which will make armed conflict most probable. It just is not a credible deterrent to its potential adversaries (nor a source of comfort to its ASEAN partners).

o Reserves. The small size of Indonesia's active duty military would not be so distressing if there were adequate trained reserves available for rapid mobilization. Such is not the case. It has been estimated that her reserves total less than 70,000 persons.⁹ These are primarily village militia, with little or no formal military training. There is an urgent requirement that Indonesia develop and implement a comprehensive program for recruiting, training and equipping a reserve component for mobilization in times of national emergency. It would not be imprudent to suggest that this ready reserve should at least equal the active component in authorized strength.

o Equipment. At the end of the internal conflict following the PKI coup attempt, ABRI found itself with a massive "armada" of rapidly ageing Soviet equipment, with no reliable source of repair parts and spares. This equipment (purchased for more than \$ 2 billion from the Soviets) included PT-76 tanks, MI-4 helicopters, MIG-17 fighters, IL-28 bombers, battle cruisers, and submarines. Ten years later, it was all virtually inoperable. During this period, President Suharto kept the Armed Forces on a strict diet, giving priority to economic development. Little assistance in the form of security assistance aid was forthcoming from the western democracies. In 1975, with the change in circumstances in Indo-China, a modest modernization program was initiated. Most of these funds have gone to purchase aircraft and surface combatants for the Air Force and Navy. Indonesian military leaders have frequently voiced their justifiable pride in having the best "shotgun" army in the world. Unfortunately, a "shotgun" army will be hopelessly "out-gunned" in any direct conflict with her potential enemies. Of pressing need are requirements for an all-weather, night-fighting interceptor aircraft; an air-defense system adequate to defend against high-performance aircraft; and state-of-the-art surface-to-surface missiles for her naval craft.

o Standardization. ABRI is plagued with an equipment pool of excessive variety and manufacture. For example, with a total of ten armored cavalry battalions, TNI-AD has PT-76 tanks, AMX-13 tanks, V-150 armored cars, Saladin armored cars, Ferret scout cars, AMX-VCI personnel carriers, Saracen personnel carriers, and BTR-40 personnel carriers. Eight different models (from USSR, US, French and British sources) make training difficult and maintenance hard.

- o Stationing. More than half the total forces of ABRI are currently located on the island of Java. During the period when internal security had priority, this made good sense (as more than half Indonesia's total population is located on Java). With the change in threat, this stationing is no longer prudent. Forces should be located for rapid employment against expected threats.
- o Transportation. A factor which aggravates the stationing imbalance is the relatively poor transportation network available within Indonesia. Only on Java are the road and rail networks adequate to support rapid troop movement and logistical support. Railways on Sumatra are restricted to the northern one-third and the southern one-third (with a complete void in the middle). There are no railroads on the other islands. The road networks are poor to non-existent on the other islands. Most inter-island traffic must be by air or sealfit. Improved military transport is essential. This is particularly critical if Indonesia intends to plan on projecting her military power outside her territorial limits in support of regional (ASEAN) defense arrangements.
- o Funding. With a GNP (1982) of \$ 93.3 billion, Indonesia was expected to spend approximately \$ 2.93 billion on defence (3%).¹⁰ This was a significant increase over previous years, but falls far short of meeting her force modernization requirements. In recent years, security assistance aid to Indonesia has been modestly increased by the US, with Australia, West Germany, and the Netherlands providing lesser amounts. Recognizing that the nations security depended on economic development, the ABRI has accepted their relative low funding priority since 1966. It is essential that funding for force modernization be increased soon.

STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

- o Indonesia occupies a particularly strategic geographic location from both a regional and a global perspective.
- o The threat to Indonesian security has both an internal and an external component, with potential conflict with the SRV over control of the Natunas being the most probable in the short term (next ten years) and expansionist pressure from the PRC being the most critical long term threat. Internal security risks are low and should present no major problems unless outside support to insurgents is introduced or domestic economic/political failures should occur and lead to general popular unrest.
- o The basic Indonesian defense strategy, that of Territorial Warfare, is viable, supportable within existing resource constraints, and appears adequate to meet existing and anticipated threats at least during the next ten years.
- o The Indonesian Armed Forces have developed and are maintaining a small, but effective, defense establishment. It incorporates a relatively modernized air force and navy. Those services appear adequate for the near term defense of Indonesian territory, and are capable of operating effectively in joint exercises with regional (ASEAN) partners.
- o The Indonesian army is trained, equipped and deployed to meet any internal security threat. It requires considerable capital investment in force modernization, logistic/transport infrastructure, and force levels if it is to deter potential aggressors or, failing deterrence, effectively engage hostile external powers. At the present time, it has little force-projection capabilities outside Indonesian territory.

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