

**FLINDERS UNIVERSITY**  
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Submission 14  
TT 6 December 2006

Mr James Rees  
Committee Secretary  
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties  
PO BOX 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Rees

**Agreement Between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia on the  
Framework for Security Cooperation**

As requested by Dr Andrew Southcott, Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, we would like to provide comments on the Agreement Between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia on the Framework for Security Cooperation (Mataram, Lombok, 13 November 2006).

Flinders has a long and history of links with Indonesia, with teaching programs in Indonesian language and cultural, social and economic issues. About 180 Indonesian students undertook courses on the campus in 2006.

The Flinders International Asia Pacific: International Security, Transnational Risk Assessment and Development Solutions (FIAP) group currently focuses on four areas of research: Fragile States, State-building and Human Security; Regions and Regionalism in the Asia Pacific; East Asia's New Political Economy; and Security and Risk Assessment

With the assistance of Dr Andrew O'Neil we would like to pass on some comments on the framework.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

The Treaty is driven largely by the Indonesian government's attempt to elicit a formal non-intervention in internal affairs commitment from the Australian government. This is the core principle underlying relations between ASEAN states; from Jakarta's perspective, it makes strategic sense bringing its southern neighbour into the regional tent.

The Treaty is more of a confidence building measure between Jakarta and Canberra than a security agreement in a formal sense. Indeed, the only formal commitments spelt out in the Treaty are contained in Article 2. And, aside from a fairly generic non-aggression commitment in 2.5, Article 2 is almost exclusively concerned with enshrining non-interference as the dominant consideration in security relations between the two countries.

The Treaty further formalises cooperation across a range of issue-areas already in place (e.g. counter-terrorism, law enforcement, military exchanges, and immigration).

Given the recent potential for tensions over Australia's domestic nuclear ambitions, Article 17 promoting greater bilateral nuclear cooperation between Canberra and Jakarta should be singled out as an especially positive development.

As far as it is possible to tell, there are no implications for tertiary education – although one could make the argument that the confidence-building role of the Treaty will have positive effects in other areas of Australian-Indonesian relations.

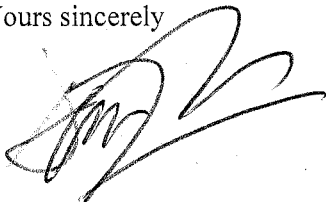
#### NET ASSESSMENT

The Lombok Treaty will probably serve to bolster the bilateral relationship in the short term by promoting some increased bilateral confidence in the security area and by reassuring Indonesian elites that the Australian government will not support, and will possibly discourage, any local support for West Papuan independence claims. But the Treaty contains medium and longer term risks for the relationship by providing false reassurance to Indonesian elites that any Australian government will necessarily be in a position politically to discourage local support/agitation for West Papuan (and possibly other) independence pressures here in Australia. As Hugh White has argued, the 1999 East Timor crisis showed that Australian governments find it very difficult to resist strong domestic pressure in favour of supporting national self-determination movements in our region - especially when the country denying such movements legitimacy is regarded (however unfairly) by the majority of Australians at best with suspicion, and at worst with distrust.

Should you wish to follow up any of the comments please contact me directly at 8201 5729 or email: [dean.forbes@flinders.edu.au](mailto:dean.forbes@flinders.edu.au).

Indonesian issues are of interest to Flinders University, from a research and teaching perspective, and we hope these links will be sustained into the future.

Yours sincerely



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