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These alliances mean that Sutiyoso is widely seen as a representative of the old guard. If elected president, he is not expected to back efforts to clean up graft or reduce the power of the military. Nor would there be much progress on human rights cases.

However, there are also good reasons why Sutiyoso's candidacy may not last the distance. His announcement has set the cat among the pigeons and other potential candidates are now jostling for position ahead of the 2009 polls.

While these include spent forces like former president Abdurrahman Wahid, Sutiyoso's action is also likely to alert more powerful actors, like Golkar leader Jusuf Kalla, who may use the time leading up to 2009 to neutralize Sutiyoso's bid.

If Wiranto decides to run again, his relationship with Sutiyoso is likely to be short-lived and there is certainly no room for him at the PDI-P, unless Sutiyoso settles for the number-two spot.

His best hope for 2009 may be to ally with the smaller parties and bank on attracting the protest vote. With the current crop of tired faces heading into 2009, he might just have a chance.

Love thy neighbour

Implementing the extradition and defence treaties between Singapore and Indonesia was never going to be an easy task. But few were prepared for the acrimony that has since developed between the two countries over the issue.

Signed by Singapore and Indonesia's defence ministers on April 27, the treaties were considered to be something of a diplomatic triumph at the time. Bundling them into one package was supposed to ensure the two agreements would be passed. The extradition treaty was widely perceived to be in Indonesia's interests, while the defence cooperation treaty was thought to benefit Singapore.

However, in recent weeks the process of ratifying the treaties in the Indonesian legislature has stalled, with all of the major political parties refusing to pass it in its current form. Such difficulties were anticipated when the agreements were first signed, but more damaging are the public accusations and counter accusations traded between government ministers of the two countries.

Ostensibly, the negotiations have stuck on a single point—the frequency with which Singaporean armed forces can train in one particular area of Indonesia, known as Bravo Zone. Each country is claiming that this issue was already specified in the agreements that both had signed and that the other is now demanding new changes. The *Report* has obtained copies of these agreements and curiously the exact number of days was never detailed in any of them. So what is the disagreement really about?

According to Indonesian Defence Minister Juwono Sudarsono, the Singaporeans are trying to undermine negotiations on defence cooperation

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in order to avoid signing the extradition treaty. Juwono testified before the House of Representatives (DPR) Commission I on defence that Singapore's former prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew had privately admitted he was worried about the effect the extradition treaty would have on Singapore's corruption-free image.

"If the extradition treaty is retroactive, Lee is worried that it will tarnish Singapore's image as a clean country," Juwono told the local press. "This will affect their economy, which is based on the service industry," he said.

As Singapore's Mentor Minister, Lee Kuan Yew is still considered influential in Singaporean politics. Having led the country for more than 30 years from 1959-1990, he now serves under the premiership of his son, Lee Hsien Loong.

Singapore's politicians have remained tight-lipped about the issue in public, other than to express their "puzzlement" over Juwono's statements. However, one source told the *Report* that diplomats believed the House's opposition to the treaties was influenced by the domestic political climate.

"Initially the government tried to defend the agreements, but then they were criticised by the DPR and the tone of the ministers became much more defensive," the source said. "At the moment it seems that whatever the [Indonesian] government proposes is blocked by the DPR."

But according to a highly placed military source here, the reluctance of the parliament to ratify the treaties is also a reflection of intense lobbying from disaffected members of the Indonesian military.

"We are concerned about Indonesian sovereignty," the source told the *Report*, referring to the possibility of a third party joining Singapore in its military practices on Indonesian soil. The source remained unmoved when the *Report* pointed out that, according to the treaty, third parties would only be allowed to participate in training exercises upon *prior agreement* by the Indonesian authorities.

In a long explanation of why Indonesia should reject the treaties, the military source also cited the 1963 period of Konfrontasi between Malaysia and Indonesia when "Singapore sided with Malaysia" and pressure from the United States on President Yudhoyono to endorse the treaty, giving the US a military foothold in Indonesia through the "back door."

The source also claimed that the cost to Indonesia of the defence cooperation agreement was not outweighed by the benefit of the extradition treaty. Just signing an extradition treaty would not guarantee Indonesian fugitives would be sent home, he said.

Whether it be because of old-school military paranoia, self-interested attempts by legislators to undermine President Yudhoyono, back-peddling by Singapore to protect its reputation or a mixture of all of the above, it is looking increasingly unlikely that the treaties will stand in their current form.

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With each country currently scrambling to lay blame for the impasse on the others' shoulders, Harry Prihatono, the executive director of Indonesian think-tank Propatria believes the focus on the detail of the agreement is a red herring. Harry, who has produced analyses of the agreements for Commission I, says that it is difficult to unravel what's going on because "both sides are being less than truthful in public."

"It will be a real shame if the treaties just dissolve [into nothing]," Harry told the *Report*. The agreement process was like organising a wedding, where neither the bride nor groom was really committed, he said.

"The man and the woman both decide to get married, everything is set up, but then small details and misperceptions get in the way and the whole thing is called off ... What we need now is a renewed commitment to engage and a more inclusive consultation process in place of this megaphone diplomacy." □