Indonesia’s Foreign Politics 1955-1965: Between Decolonisation and Beacon Politics  
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Abstract  
In Indonesian historiography, the period 1955-1965 was marked by the leadership of Ir. Soekarno facing the “end of parliamentary democracy chaos”. The prevailing spirit of the period was to build a new Indonesia after acknowledgement of its sovereignty, especially to organise Asian-African-Latin Americans nations to balance the Western-Eastern Bloc. A foreign political experiment was designed by Ir. Soekarno and nationalist/Communist groups through their important posts in Indonesia’s Government. It was a main factor in how Indonesia’s foreign politics sought/were able to gain international acknowledgement. The aim of this paper is to explain why Indonesia was chosen as a new power between the Eastern and Western Bloc in 1955-1965. It also examines the internal conditions of Indonesia when holding this line in foreign politics. Finally, the paper assesses what were the risks of these choices.

Keywords: Ir. Soekarno’s Leadership, Indonesian Foreign Policy, Decolonisation, Cold War

Introduction  
In his book titled, A short history of Indonesia: the unlikely nation? Brown (2003) explained that in January 1950, while Indonesia was politically independent, questions posed at the outset of the revolution concerning its aims and its methods remained largely unresolved in the eyes of many Indonesians. For some national leaders, the revolution had meant a change of regime, a change from Dutch rule to Indonesian rule, but little else. These leaders considered that the revolution was over, and the task now facing the government and the state was one of rebuilding Indonesia’s political, economic and social bases.

After Independence Day, August 17th, 1945, Indonesia had not been directly acknowledged by other countries, especially the former colonial Dutch. Moreover, European powers had even formed the Allies/NICA (Netherland Indies Civil Administration) to occupy their former colonies and to regain the Netherland Indies with Dutch Polisionale Actie Campagne (also known as Operation Kraai ["Operation Crow"]) resulting in Indonesia’s focus at that early stage of independence on defensive warfare vis a vis the Dutch/Allies. Thus, during 1945-1949, the Indonesian Government focused on diplomatic strategies for many agreements, such as Linggarjati, Roem-Royen, Renville, until the Round Table Conference/KMB (Konferensi Meja Bundar) that took place in Den Hague on December 27th 1949. As the result, Indonesia gained much international sympathy and de facto acknowledgement from Great Britain, the United States of America, Australia, China, India, Iran, although Syria and Egypt were first to acknowledge Indonesian independence de jure (Snit, 1986, 23-25).
The period of 1949-1955 was a period after the Round Table Conference in which Indonesia’s governance structure was arranged and the geographic spatial structure of the Republic of Indonesia defined. At the same time, between April 18-24th 1955 under the leadership of Ir.Soekarno, Prime Minister, Ali Sastroamidjojo supervised the inaugural Asian-African Conference/Bandung Conference and changed Indonesia’s foreign politics in the direction of developing its status as a new leading power in the anti-colonialism-racialism movement based around newly independent Asian-African nations. It brought Indonesia closer to the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China/PRC obtaining these superpowers’ support to press the United Nations on Indonesia’s West Irian problems and the campaign to reduce the influence in the region of the economic-political power of the Western Bloc.

However, a contradictory situation occurred after the PRC-Soviet Union was involved in conflict, leading to the Sino-Soviet split in 1962-1964. It caused turbulence in Indonesia’s diplomacy and then pressed Ir.Soekarno’s power along with the Indonesian Communist Party/PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia) as his support base. At the same time, opposition groups and the army were backed by the Western Bloc to organize themselves to overthrow Ir.Soekarno’s leadership.

This paper’s aims are to establish the reason for Indonesia’s declaration as a new power between the Eastern and Western Bloc in 1955-1965, what was the internal condition of Indonesia when holding this line in the international political sphere and, what was the risk of these choices? Finally, the paper looks to understand what was the main factor which shaped the direction of Indonesia’s foreign politics at this time?

Dynamic of Indonesia in the period of 1949-1955

1949-1955 was the period that positioned the Indonesian Government in a transitional phase. The international political situation had clearly changed since the Cold War. Indonesia itself stood between those polarities, namely the Western and Eastern Blocs. There were challenges which in the post World War II period had not yet been resolved in the region, such as West Irian. For this reason, Indonesia needed extensive international support in United Nations’ forums to repulse the Dutch. Similar to its action in relation to Egypt and the Suez Crisis in 1956, the Soviet Union through its leader Nikita Kruschev showed its support to Indonesia’s movement to decolonise and in relation to West Irian. This support included promotion of ‘zones of peace’, announced by Khrushchev at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, coupled with his strong endorsement of the Bandung Conference the year before. These displays of solidarity were intended to “steer the emerging anti-Western Afro-Asian political identity along lines favorable to the socialist bloc” (Allison,1988; Crockatt,1995, 172).

From the political perspective and from the perspective of governance, at the beginning of 1955, Indonesia’s cabinet was marked by many changes of leadership. The Prime Minister implemented a large number of policies that ran ineffectively in the handling
of educational issues, public services and economic development, for example. Consequently, processes of national consolidation in the period of post-acknowledgement of sovereignty in 1949-1955 faced many serious challenges in practicing parliamentary democracy largely caused by the great number of political parties. Additionally, Indonesia had been facing several separatist rebellions and the transition of the nation’s format from RIS/Republik Indonesia Serikat to NKRI/Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia.

The representation of the national leadership, the Dwi-Tunggal of Ir-Soekarno-Mohammad Hatta, only stood when forming the Komite National Indonesia Pusat/KNIP until 1956, after Hatta resigned as vice president. However, the governance of the Republic of Indonesia was still under the control of political groups based on religion, as well as nationalist, socialist, Communist, regionalist and military interests. Domestic political affairs, such as the National Election/Pemilu 1955, Presidential Decree 1959, and the overthrow of President Ir. Soekarno, were directed by members of the Indonesian elite whose groups in the Indonesian Government had a role to determine the direction of the policy of the state, domestic or foreign.

The international situation also pressed the position of Indonesia in the constellation of global politics, especially when several Asian-African nations began to struggle for their sovereignty. The USA and the SU started conditioning “new satellites” in the Cold War as they struggled for political, economic, ideological, cultural, knowledge, and technological influence.¹

One issue that emerged from the competing claims to the title of “World War II winner” was the clash of interests in South-East Asia and Indonesia as analysed by Gouda and Thijs Zaalberg (2002) in their book American Visions of the Netherlands East Indies/Indonesia, US Foreign Policy and Indonesian Nationalism, 1920-1949. The book’s argument is that Soviet involvement in Vietnam could be clearly identified and Indonesia provided American officials with a confirmation of their worst fears. On May 22nd 1948, the Soviet Union announced its intention to establish consular relations with the Indonesian Republic, despite the fact that the Netherlands had not yet conceded its independence.

Beacon politics: a world experiment in 1955
1955 was the time when Ali Sastroamidjojo from the Indonesia National Party/PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia) was installed as Prime Minister and introduced state policies that characterised the nationalist group. For instance, the Bandung Conference which was held on the 18-24th April 1955 was part of a diplomatic strategy that expressed Indonesia’s

¹ The Cold War in its Third World manifestation was a proxy conflict between the West and the Soviet Bloc (or between the USA and the USSR) for influence and strategic position in the regions outside Europe and North America. The principal instruments deployed in this struggle were diplomacy, economic assistance, ideology, and, more importantly, arms transfers and various forms of direct and indirect intervention. I argued that German division after World War II, NATO-Warsaw Pact rivalry, partition of Western Europe and Eastern Europe were the roots of Cold War in Europe (Fawcett et.al.,1999,16).
position that the decolonisation processes were not yet finished. After the declaration of Independence on August 17th 1945, the transfer of sovereignty in 1949 left the West Irian problems behind.

Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo in a Policy Statement to the Parliament on 25 August 1953 stated that cooperation between Asia-Africa countries conformed to United Nations’ regulations concerning regional arrangements. Moreover, those countries had the same views with regard to some international relations issues; they had common ground for the establishment of special groups. Hence, Sastroamidjojo urged Indonesia to continue and strengthen cooperation between these countries (1955). So, the Panca Negara Conference took place in Bogor on December 28-29\textsuperscript{th} 1954.

The attendance of 29 countries at the later Bandung Conference, where racialism, colonialism, and self-determination issues were discussed, surely generated much curiosity due to the fact that neither the United States of America nor the Soviet Union were invited. The People’s Republic of China, which at that time was still a close ally of the Soviet Union, was invited and represented by Prime Minister Chou En Lai. The attendance of Chou En Lai was based on the PRC’s foreign policy to discuss the Taiwan problem, citizenship issues of Tionghoa and Indonesia, interest expansion in Africa and the Southeast Asia region, including the PRC’s struggle for membership in the United Nations (Compton, 1992, 327-331). \textsuperscript{2}

Sponsor countries were Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia and participant countries from Asia were Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Japan, Philippines, Lebanon, Thailand, Nepal, the People’s Republic of China, Syria, Turkey, Yemen, Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Laos, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the State of Vietnam and Cambodia. From Africa: Ethiopia, Gold Coast, Liberia, Libya, Egypt and Sudan. After the conference on 24\textsuperscript{th} April 1955, the Final Communique as the consensus of participants was born including the Bandung Ten Principles, the contents of which were as follows (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1955, 161-169). \textsuperscript{3}

1. Respect for fundamental human rights and for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
3. Recognition of the equality of all races and of the equality of all nations large and small.
4. Abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country.
5. Respect for the right of each nation to defend itself singly or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.

\textsuperscript{2} Compton, Boyd.1992.\textit{Kemelut Demokrasi Liberal: Surat-Surat Rahasia Boyd R. Compton}. Jakarta:LP3ES p.327-331

6. a. Abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defence to serve the particular interests of any of the big powers.
b. Abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries.
7. Refraining from acts or threats of aggression or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country.
8. Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means, such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration or judicial settlement as well as other peaceful means of the parties’ own choice, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
9. Promotion of mutual interests and co-operation.
10. Respect for justice and international obligations.

Through the Bandung Conference 1955, the prestige of Indonesia had increased, especially in the sphere of foreign politics. The ability to embrace Asian-African nations was seen as sign of a coming era of liberation by nations that had not yet gained their independence. The idea of the unification of coloured nations challenged the Western press’s opinion of the Bandung conference, which it cast as a Communist or Leftist provocation against the West. According to Richard Wright (1956,14), an Afro-America writer who reported the conference, the call for the meeting had not been named in terms of ideology yet. The participants could not be categorised as proletarians; they comprised princes and paupers, Communists and Christians, Leftists and Rightists, Buddhists and Democrats, in short, just about anybody who lived in Asia and Africa.

The impact of the Bandung Conference, according to Podeh (2004,184), was first discernible in Africa. The Suez Canal Nationalisation in 1956 in Egypt marked the beginning of Nasser’s aggressive campaign against the Baghdad Pact. His participation at the historic meeting at Bandung, the Czech arms deal, the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company, and the end of the Anglo-French-Israeli joint offensive, out of which Nasser emerged as a hero-victor, all signaled defiance of the foreigner whether it be Western Imperialism or not.

On the other hand, Ghana’s independence from British colonialism on July 6th 1957 also related to Ghana/Gold Coast’s participation in the Asian-African Conference on April 18-24th 1955. The representation of Kojo Botsio continued with the Conference of Independent African States in Accra on April 15th 1958 and the All African People Conference on December 8–13rd 1958 attended by Patrice Lumumba (Congo) and Tomb Mboya (Kenya).

Those conditions led African nations to see the Bandung Conference as an opportunity to gain their independence. The joint statement in the Final Communique from the Asian-African Conference on April, 18-24th 1955 also talked about economic, political, and cultural processes between the two continents, emphasising a respect for national-sovereignty, the exchange of specialists to help advance both continents, inter-continental commodities stabilisation, and the development of political systems based on self-determination and human-rights. According to discussions during the Bandung Conference, solidarity, unity, and the common needs of Asian-African nations to make up their position
in the global society were prioritised. Thus, after gaining their independence, many Asian-
African nations needed to recover from colonialism in terms of their cultural, economic, and
political identity.

For Indonesia, the success of Bandung Conference and its impact in the international
world made the Soviet Union and the United States of America pay attention to Indonesian
diplomacy, especially the West Irian problems and Asian-African decolonisation movements.
At the same time, Indonesia’s foreign policies after the Bandung Conference came to be
based on:

1. Cooperation among Asian-African countries to common ground and world-peace
2. Peaceful co-existence among the nations
3. Colonialism
   a. General problems
      • Colonialism in Asian-African states
      • Racialism
   b. Special problems: North Africa, Indonesia, People’s Republic of China, etc
4. Economic cooperation between Asian-African countries
5. Cultural relations between Asian-African countries
6. Nuclear usage with a peaceful aim
7. Consideration around the United Nations (Bandaro, 1958)

During the Bandung Conference, nationalist icons and PNI members, such as Ir.
Soekarno, who delivered the opening speech, Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo (Chairman
of the Conference), Mr. Sunario (Foreign Minister) dominated the whole session of the
conference that focused on the economy, politics, and culture. The meaning of the Bandung
Conference, however, would be distorted politically by “opposition groups” who interpreted
the values of that conference as an effort to improve the image of Ali Sastroamidjojo’s
cabinet and Ir. Soekarno for the Election/Pemilu in 1955 and to conceal the chaotic
economy-political condition in Indonesia at the time.4

Towards guided democracy and global constellation

After the diplomatic achievements of the Bandung Conference, Indonesia conducted its
domestic election/Pemilu in 1955 with 28 parties as contestants. The People’s
Representative Council/DPR (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat)’s election was held on September
29th 1955 and the Constituent Assembly/Konstituante’s election on December 15th 1955.
According to Ricklefs (2001, p.304), the results positioned PNI 22.3 % (57 seats), Masjumi
20.9 % (57 seats), Nadhatul Utama 18.4 % (45 seats), PKI 16.4 % (39 seats), PSII 2.9 % (8
seats), Parkindo 2.6 % (8 seats), Catholic Party 2.0 % (6 seats), PSI 2.0 % (5 seats).

4 Although Ali Sastroamidjojo’s government had foreign policy achievements, domestic conditions had been
focused around inflation, the country’s unbalanced budget, corruption inside government, rebellion in many
A large number of PNI seats in the parliament and the addition of Ali Sastroamidjojo’s achievement at the Bandung Conference had made the PNI dominant and in a position to execute its economic-political policies. Moreover, because of the Bandung Conference, Indonesia’s bargaining position had increased and it could more effectively negotiate the problems in West Irian and press the Dutch. Campaigns by Ir. Soekarno and PNI in relation to national economic policies were aimed at transforming what remained of the economic structures of the Dutch colonial system. Ricklefs (2001) argued that the cabinet also pressed for Indonesianisation of the economy, with encouragement for indigenous businessmen. In practice, however, many new firms were bogus fronts for arrangements between government supporters and the Chinese: the so-called ‘Ali-Baba’ firms, in which an Indonesian (‘Ali’) was a front man for a Chinese (‘Baba’) entrepreneur.  

The resignation of Muhammad Hatta in 1956 and the unfinished constitution’s formulation by the Konstituante, which had lasted from November 10th 1956 until 1958, led to the creation of the Guided Democracy which placed total power in Ir. Soekarno’s hands. In late 1956, President Sukarno became openly critical of the parliamentary system. In February 1957, Sukarno offered an extremely vague alternative with his Konsepsi speech, which proposed a gotong-royong cabinet (gotong royong meaning mutual help) comprised of all the political parties, plus a national council composed of representatives of functional groups (such as workers’ groups, women’s groups) that would advise the cabinet (Feith, 1962; Redfen, 2010, 34).

The break up of Dwi Tunggal and chaos in the parliament was the beginning of the transition to Guided Democracy through the Presidential Decree on July 5th 1959 which contained the dismissal of the Konsituante and the formation of the Advisory Board (Dewan Perwakilan Agung Sementara/DPAS-Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara/MPRS), and a return to the Undang-Undang Dasar-UUD 1945 as Indonesia’s basic constitution. The parliamentary condition that saw a polarisation of Nationalist/Secular groups and Islamic parties was taken advantage of by Communist groups/PKI as the 4th position holder in the DPR. The international situation and the Bandung Conference, in particular the PRC’s/Chou En Lai’s attendance at that event, had increased the prestige of the PKI. In addition, the peaceful-coexistence policy which was being promoted internationally by the CPSU/Communist Party of Soviet Union or Soviet Union, indirectly, offered a form of support to the Afro-Asian movement and encouraged closer ties between a number of emerging states, some newly independent, with the Eastern Bloc.  

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5 See Dick et.al. (2002, 78) *The Emergence of a National Economy. An Economic History of Indonesia, 1800–2000*, Asian Studies Association of Australia in association with Allen & Unwin and University of Hawai‘i Press Honolulu. The program was extended to nationalisation of 70% of the import trade. Nominally, this goal was achieved, but in early 1955 the head of the Central Office of Imports estimated that there were only 50 bona fide importers (Sutter, 1959, 1025–1026).

6 Khrushchev noted the development of a new force for peace in world politics: the neutral and non-aligned movement of newly independent countries which had recently thrown off the shackles of colonialism in Asia and Africa. Nevertheless, PRC viewed de-Stalinisation and rejected Stalin’s foreign policies and his cult of
Meanwhile, on June 29th 1954, relationships between Indonesia and the Dutch became worse after the Dutch officially refused to talk about West Irian problems. This Dutch intransigence led to the boycotting of several Dutch companies, the expulsion of 50,000 Dutch citizens in Indonesia, and the takeover of BPM (Bataafse Petroleum Maatschappij) in 1958 (Snit, 1986, 52-53). Indonesia’s negotiation over the West Irian problems met with deadlock and was an opportunity for Indonesia to arrange the United States of America (John F. Kennedy), on one side, and the Soviet Union, on the other side, to press the Dutch in the United Nations. Indonesia’s supporters included Asian-African countries from the created Non-Alignment Movement, with Yugoslavia as an addition.

Indonesia’s capability in international diplomacy was supported by the Communists and the PKI’s growing influence in domestic affairs after the Election in 1955. Aidit (1959,419) wrote that Indonesia’s people along with PKI, nationalist-revolutionary, President Soekarno Konsepsi, the August Revolution 1945, democracy and Indonesia’s nationalist interest, and the shift to the Left adapted to the international situation which moved to the Left also. Meanwhile, Mâsjumi/PSI were banned after being reputedly involved in the PRRI-Permesta rebellion in 1958; the PNI was disposed to enjoy Ir.Soekarno’s patronage. It can be concluded that in the early stages of the Guided Democracy, PKI’s pattern and Indonesia foreign policies were always related to each other, for example supported to and from the Afro-Asian nations, cooperation with the People’s Republic of China, Cuba, Soviet Union, East Germany and North Korea: all identified as part of the Eastern Bloc.7

The shifting of Indonesia’s foreign politics towards much closer alliances with Communist countries resulted in Indonesia being more extensively counted as a new power, one of the New Emerging Forces (NEFO). Indonesia was invited, alongside Egypt (Gamal Abdul Nasser), Ghana (Kwame Nkrumah), India (Jawaharlal Nehru) and Yugoslavia (Josip Broz Tito) to be part of the Non-Alignment Movement declared in Beograd in September 1961. Basically, that movement was not part of the Eastern Bloc or Western Bloc, but the growth of the Communist Party in Indonesia, as well as Ir.Soekarno’s leadership, had enabled foreign policies that facilitated closer ties with the Eastern Bloc against the United States of America’s nuclear program which involved the Cuban Nuclear Crisis in 1961.

7Dokumen-dokumen Kongres Nasional VI. Partai Komunis Indonesia September,7-14 1959. Djakarta: Jajasan Pembaruan. The Congress also discussed not “choice one Bloc but operated foreign politics which advantages Indonesian peoples”. On page 85, its document quoted Ir.Soekarno’s speech which said that in war and peace problems, in imperialism and independence problems, we were not neutral but explicitly stood for peace and independence. These conditions advantaged the PKI as the main supporter of the whole raft of Ir.Soekarno’s ideas and policies, displaying enormous people power with a membership of more than 1,5 million which included youth, women, workers, peasants, artists and also the parliamentary DPR-GR (Bintang & Merah,1960, 84-94)
Confrontation and peaceful co-existence (1960-1965)

After the Presidential Decree on July 5th 1959, Indonesia’s internal condition commenced to stabilise with the formation of the National Front and the new format of Indonesia’s governance termed the DPR-GR (Gotong Royong) on June 1960 in NASAKOM (Nasionalist, Agama/Religion, Communist) concept, without Masjumi and the PSI party. Ir.Soekarno was more impelled to liberate his ideas about Rediscovery to Our Revolution, National Revolution, Nation-character building, Trisakti, NEFO (New Emerging Forces), and To Build the World Anew, all concepts reflected in Ir.Soekarno’s official speeches and legalised as the orientation of nation-state development or GBHN (Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara) in Tap/MPRS/No1/1960. Thus, in the domain of policy, a regulation in National Planning Department/Depernas, Rancangan Pembangunan Semesta and MANIPOL-USDEK (Politic Manifesto-UUD 45, Indonesian Socialism, Guided Democracy, Guided Economy, Nation Character) became the reference point around which development in domestic affairs and foreign affairs would commence.


These ideas were supported by the Soviet Union and PRC in diplomacy, politics, economics and military matters which helped Indonesia to promote the Bandung Spirit to Asian-African countries in their struggles to break free of colonialism, in states such as the Congo, Algeria and Vietnam. As a result, after the Bandung Conference until 1964, 35 countries in Africa declared their independence, making Indonesia’s efforts more concerted in its conduct of the NEFO’s conception and the Non-Alignment Movement with additional support from Latin American states. Those conceptions not only occurred in the domains of

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8 Roberts (1999, 46) writes that the ‘practical face of Soviet policy in the third world was diplomatic support for the Bandung movement of non-aligned state... economic and military aid to newly independent states (for example, India and Egypt) and political encouragement of the radical tendencies in Third World nationalism; the latter effort being informed by the concept that there could be a rapid transition from national liberation to socialism’. 
diplomacy and politics, but also related to the *blue-print* of economic cooperation, cultural exchange and also in the domain of sports (for example, GANEFO, the Games of New Emerging Forces) in 1963.

However, Indonesia was confronted in 1960 by the Dutch navy’s provocation in the Arafuru Sea and by the Malaysia Federation in May 1961, a situation supported by Britain and the United States of America. This situation brought Indonesia to confront Malaysia after *Dwikora*/Two Commands of People and to defend West Irian through *Trikora*/Three Commands of People as campaigned in 1961. The culmination was the proposal for the Malayan state as a member of the Security Council that led Indonesia to withdraw from the United Nations in 1964.  

**Turbulence, split, and the ending of confrontation**

In this period, the international position suddenly changed when the PRC-India were involved in border conflicts in 1962, following the Sino-Soviet split. The tensions between the Soviet Union and the PRC impacted on Asian-African nations’ foreign politics and within the Non-Alignment Movement as many of these states had formed a dependency on the support offered by the Soviet Union and the PRC. According to *The Atlas on Regional Integration Report* (2006, 2-3), although China and the Soviet Union had cooperated to “lead Africa to revolution”, their goals now diverged. The Soviet Union launched into “peaceful coexistence”, putting peace and disarmament at the top of its strategic foreign affairs agenda. China’s policy was to provide military and financial support to nationalist movements. However, China’s ambitions in Africa were limited by its systematic opposition to the USSR and Western interests (See *Atlas on Regional Integration*, 2006, 2).

Developments in Indonesia received aid in the form of financial capital and infrastructure technology from the Soviet Union and the PRC. For example, Indonesia received military aid in its confrontation with Malaysia and in the struggle to liberate West Irian. Ricklefs (2001,326) noted that in January 1960, Khrushchev had visited Jakarta and extended a US$250 million credit to Indonesia. In January 1961, Nasution went to Moscow and received a Soviet loan of US$450 million for arms. The army now began to grow in size for the first time since the Revolution, reaching about 300,000 men in 1961 and 330,000 by late 1962.

Sukma (1999, 30) noted that from March into early April 1961, Chen Yi visited Indonesia and talked about ‘the perpetual Sino-Indonesian friendship’. He offered to supply

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9 *Conflict and Confrontation in South East Asia, 1961–1965 Britain, the United States and the Creation of Malaysia*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. In late December, the PKI’s Central Committee passed a resolution condemning Malaysia as ‘a form of neo-colonialism’ which would ‘suppress the democratic and patriotic movements of the peoples in [the Borneo territories] which aim at the attainment of national independence and freedom from imperialism’, while with its British bases, Malaysia would be smuggled into SEATO (Jones, 2002, 99).

economic aid for the new Indonesian development plan, and reiterated People Republic of China’s support for Indonesia’s claim over West Irian. In June 1961, Sukarno visited the PRC and was praised by Liu Shaoqi for his role in promoting “the great project of the bridge of friendship between People Republic of China and Indonesia”.

The impact of Indonesia’s cooperation with the Soviet Union and the PRC was to eliminate Western Bloc influence. Such a situation also brought with it risks that became more apparent after the Sino-Soviet split that was triggered by Mongolia-PRC’s conflict in 1964 and the Soviet’s previous support of India in the border conflict with the PRC in 1962. Even more, the Soviet Union’s foreign policies about peaceful coexistence were ideologically cast as Communist deviation/revisionism by the PRC. I have argued that the Sino-Soviet split caused a hesitation to appear in Indonesia’s foreign policies which up until then had been strongly supported by the PKI, but the Sino-Soviet conflict affected the PKI’s internal policies which by that time had become dominant in Indonesia’s Government. In addition, many of Indonesia’s allies in Africa were experiencing turbulence, especially during the period 1961-1965. These countries included Algeria, Mali, Congo, and Ghana. This condition affected Indonesia’s foreign agenda that was based around the Bandung Spirit and Non-Alignment.

The postponing of the 2nd Afro-Asian Conference was a result of the PRC’s refusal to be involved in the conference that took place in Algeria. The clash of interests over the India-Pakistan-Soviet Union conflict also impacted Indonesia’s bargaining position. It was weakened because Indonesia should choose between Peking and Moscow. Weinstein (1965) argued that the most critical point came after the Asian-African Conference 1955, where political and ideological priorities were assumed to be important to the detriment of the economy and education sector. Those events assumed that economy policies inter Asia-Africa needed a supporting system that consists of stability, foreign politics and internal affairs. Nevertheless, the legacy of colonialism and the Cold War climate “turbulence”

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11 The relations between Communist Party Indonesia and Ir.Soekarno’s foreign policy to confront Malaysia through connections among the leaders of Communist parties in South East Asia; in September (1964), the leaders of four Communist parties (Zhou Enlai from China, Ho Chi Minh, Le Duan, and Nguyen Chi Thanh from Vietnam, Kaysone Phomvihane from Laos, and D. N. Aidit from Indonesia) held a meeting in Chonghua, in China’s Guang-dong province. In a keynote speech, Zhou Enlai pointed out that Southeast Asia had been the focus of a confrontation between international revolutionary and reactionary forces (Gadis & Lewis, 2001, 208).

12 “The Leaders of the C.P.S.U Are Betrayers of the Declaration And the Statement. The revisionist line advanced by Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. is the opposite of the revolutionary principles of the Declaration of 1957. The 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. created grave confusion in the international Communist movement; Together with other fraternal Parties, the Communist Party of China conducted a principled struggle against Khrushchov’s revisionist line at the Moscow Meeting” (Peking Review, 1966, 9).

13 “The Second African-Asian Conference Should Be Postponed. If the Soviet Union can participate in the African-Asian Conference, then other countries in Europe, America and Australasia, too, can participate. What kind of an Afro-Asian conference would this be? Since a matter of principle is involved, we will never agree” (Peking Review, 1965, 8-11).
together and caused serial coup d’états amongst 29 countries who attended in Bandung, even war and civil war.

There was a series of coup d’états which positioned Western Bloc allies as leaders on the Africa continent. For example, Patrice Lumumba was assassinated and was replaced by Moise Tshombe in 1961. In Indonesia, the Western Bloc’s influence reinforced opposition and supported anti-Communist groups/anti-Ir.Soekarno forces. The Western Bloc created the Malaya Federation which took over North Kalimantan territories and West Irian problems were postponed until 1969. The Western Bloc also supported military and intelligence operations to overthrow President Ir. Soekarno along with the “catastrophe” of the October 1st 1965 Movement. The chaos masterminded by forces internal and external to Indonesia led to anti-PRC and anti-Communist demonstrations and the genocide of PKI members during 1966. This period would also see the dismantling of nationalist/PNI groups, and finally President Ir. Soekarno resigned and was replaced by General Soeharto after the Nawaksara speech on June 22nd 1966. Those conditions severed Indonesia’s diplomatic connection with the PRC in 1967; relations with the Soviet Union were frozen and Indonesia again joined the United Nations in 1966. General Soeharto began to normalise relations with Malaysia in August 1967. Thus, suddenly, foreign relations between the PRC and the United States of America became closer and were formalized in 1972. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union faced a leadership crisis after Nikita Kruschev died and split with satellite states in Eastern Europe.

Conclusion
It can be concluded that many of Indonesia’s foreign policies in the 1955-1965 period were under the influence of Ir. Soekarno’s leadership, as well as the growth in the influence of the Communists/PKI in Indonesia’s socio-political life. These influences were made possible by the sense of nationalism that imbued Indonesia’s population in that early post-colonial era. These conditions supported the parliament which was dominated by the PKI and which advised on Ir.Soekarno’s foreign policies. The external statement of those policies were supported by the PRC-Soviet Union as the main power of the Eastern bloc, promoting Communism with peaceful coexistence policies to help many Asia-African nations to gain their independence and self determination after independence. However, the rivalry between the PRC and the Soviet Union was the main factor that caused the Eastern Bloc, as well as Asian-African nations allied to one or other Communist superpower, to clash with each other. The 2nd Afro-Asian Conference was postponed due to their rivalry. Indeed, the rivalry between the PRC and the Soviet Union brought advantages to the Western Bloc to spread their influence to Asian-African nations, including, for example, to Indonesia.

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14 The first of these, which goes at least as far back as 1952, was “to prevent the countries of Southeast Asia from passing into the Communist orbit” (Pentagon Papers 1971, 27). Here, in line with the domino theory, the emphasis is regional rather than national as the generalized enemy and, in line with the main thrust of American cold war foreign policy, targets Communism (Crockatt, 1995, 236-237).
The condition of Indonesia was destabilised when the PKI became confused over which axis to support, to choose between Peking-Moscow. Disputes over the leadership at the 2nd Afro-Asian Conference, rifts within the Non-Aligned Movement, and confrontation with Malaysia, all contributed to Indonesia’s instability. These conditions worsened when opposition groups supported by the army took over Ir.Soekarno and PKI’s power. At this time, the Indonesian economic-politic landscape was marked by inflation, unstable monetary conditions, and social chaos. By the end of the 1960s, Indonesia foreign policies totally changed. With the overthrow of Ir.Soekarno, the PKI were banned and diplomacy with the PRC and other of the Communist states, largely broken off. By this time, the power of the New Order led by General Soeharto had been established.

References
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