

Answer to Question

The Political Developments in Indonesia

(Translated)

Question:

On 20/10/2024, former General Prabowo Subianto (73 years old) was sworn in as the new President of Indonesia before Parliament, after the presidential elections held last February. His victory was announced on 20/3/2024. America did not delay in congratulating him. Its Secretary of State Blinken sent his congratulations, and said ["Washington looks forward to close cooperation with Prabowo" (Al Jazeera, 20/3/2024)]. He also rushed to visit China on 1/4/2024, even before his inauguration! That is, he was an elected president who had not yet assumed his powers at the time. He held a meeting with its President Xi and said that: ["He fully supports the development of closer Indonesia-China relations and wishes to continue President Joko's policy of friendship with China." (Reuters, 1/4/2024)].

The question now is: Do these quick congratulations from America and the hasty visit to China have any significance for Indonesia's relationship with America as well as with China? In other words, will there be a change in Indonesia's policy towards America? How will its policy towards China proceed? And what is its policy towards the Jewish aggression on Gaza?

Answer:

To make the answer clear, we will review the following matters:

First: American policy and Indonesia:

1- America sought at first to replace Dutch colonialism after Indonesia was liberated from it in 1949 by providing aid and loans, but Indonesia refused this, because it realized that it was a means of domination and influence. It did not want to get rid of Dutch colonialism only to enter under American colonialism in another way. So, America exerted pressure on it and stirred up unrest and disturbances for it. Its president, Ahmed Sukarno, submitted and accepted American aid and loans in 1958, and so America began to access the country and search for more agents. It was able to gain new agents in the army, headed by Muhammad Suharto, who carried out a military coup in 1966 against Ahmed Sukarno. America worked to strengthen his influence by helping him eliminate the communists, and then helped him rid East Timor of the Portuguese colonizers in 1975. But when it wanted to separate East Timor from Indonesia, Suharto delayed implementing its demand. So, America created economic problems for him. Its financial tools, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, played an important role in making the situation worse. Then, student protests and riots erupted until Suharto was forced to announce his resignation in 1998. America threw him into a deep valley as it throws any agent who delays in implementing its projects or when his term expires!

2- After Suharto, his deputy Jusuf Habibie took over the presidency of the country for a year and a half between 1998 and 1999. He complied with America's demands to agree to hold a referendum on the right to self-determination for East Timor as a prelude to its secession from the country. He pledged not to demand it, and he established an electoral system under the name of democratic transition. Then, Abdurrahman Wahid took over the rule for about two years between 1999 and 2001. Parliament dismissed him on charges of corruption and was replaced by Megawati Sukarno, daughter of Ahmad Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia. She served as president between 2001 and 2004. During her term, East Timor's separation from Indonesia was declared in 2002, thus she committed treason like those who came before her!

3- Direct presidential elections were held in the country according to the new amendments; the president holds a maximum of two terms if he is re-elected, each lasting 5 years. Yudhoyono was elected from 2004 to 2014. In that year, presidential elections were held in which Joko Widodo won, then he was elected for the second time in 2019, his term ended in October 2024. Widodo was keen to continue the Indonesian regime's subordination to America. During his last visit to America and his meeting with its President Joe Biden on 13/11/2023, agreed with him to strengthen the strategic partnership and enhance the centrality of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, abbreviated as ASEAN, as America is trying to control the decision in this association, which includes many countries, not all of which are under its hegemony. It is working to use Indonesia to achieve this purpose so that it can use it to stand up to China or influence it, in order to prevent it from imposing its control over the South China Sea region. US Secretary of State Blinken, when he sent congratulations on the occasion of Indonesia's independence on 17/8/2024, said, "Marking a historic new phase in our bilateral relations, President Jokowi and President Biden elevated U.S.-Indonesia ties to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership last November." (state.gov; youm7, 17/8/2024).

4- Prabowo Subianto, son-in-law of former President Muhammad Suharto, and his deputy Gibran, son of outgoing President Joko Widodo, were declared the winners of the first round of elections held on 14/2/2024, with 58.58%. Gibran is not eligible to run for vice president because he is 36 years old, as the laws prohibit people from running for senior positions such as the president and vice president under the age of 40. However, the head of the Indonesian judiciary, who is President Widodo's son-in-law, made an amendment before the elections allowing those under 40 to run for such positions. President Widodo himself was thinking about how to extend his term, but was unable to do so, so he made a deal with Prabowo to support him by making his son Gibran vice president.

The state clearly supported Prabowo's election with all its apparatuses, starting with President Widodo, the army, intelligence and police, and America did not object to this, as is its custom in such cases. It is noteworthy that his fellow officers in the army called him "America's boy", and he trained there, at Fort Benning in Georgia, USA, and at Fort Bragg in North Carolina, USA. America did not delay congratulating him on his victory when his victory was officially announced on 20/3/2024. Its Secretary of State Blinken sent his congratulations, and said, "Washington looks forward to close cooperation with Prabowo" (Al-Jazeera, 20/3/2024), which confirms his loyalty to it and the strengthening of this loyalty!

5- Prabowo was officially appointed and sworn in, and then formed a new government on 20/10/2024. During the transitional period from his election victory until his inauguration as president, which is about seven months, he held his previous position as Minister of Defense under his predecessor Widodo. During this period, America conducted massive maneuvers with Indonesia in the Sidoarjo area on Java Island, which is located in the South China Sea, on 26/8/2024, which lasted for two weeks. Japan, Thailand, Britain, Singapore, France, Canada, and New Zealand participated in it. He also made several foreign visits, including to America, where he met with its Secretary of Defense Austin at the Pentagon. The US Ambassador to Indonesia, Kamala Shirin Lakhdhir, said ("Her country's relationship with the new Indonesian president goes back years, even before he assumed his position as Minister of Defense in 2019." (Al Jazeera 20/10/2024)), i.e., while he was an officer in the army, where he was trained in its bases and by its officers, and while he was in command of the army during the era of Suharto. The VOI - Voice of Indonesia website also published on 28/10/2024, i.e., days after Prabowo's inauguration:

"Minister of Defense (Menhan) Lt. Gen. TNI (Ret.) Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin and the United States Ambassador to Indonesia Kamala Shirin Lakhdhir are exploring opportunities for defense cooperation between the two countries, including maritime security. Head of the Public

Relations Bureau (Karo Humas) of the Secretariat General of the Ministry of Defense Brigadier General TNI Edwin Adrian Sumantha explained the US Ambassador to Defense Minister Sjafrie conveying the US desire to increase cooperation in maritime security. During the meeting, the US Ambassador also conveyed his country's desire to continue training with Super Garuda Shield, which currently takes place regularly every year in Indonesia. "(US) also wants to increase cooperation in the field of education and English language training," said Edwin, quoted by ANTARA, Monday, October 28. During the meeting, Defense Minister Sjafrie expressed his gratitude for the visit of Ambassador Kamala and stated Indonesia's commitment to strengthening the partnership that has been established between the two countries."

By contemplating the above-mentioned, it becomes clear that the new Indonesian president, Prabowo, since the announcement of his victory in the elections on 20/3/2024 until his inauguration on 20/10/2024, and also after that... is following in the footsteps of those who preceded him, and has even become more attached to America, and its influence is still the most powerful in Indonesia!!

Second: China's policy with Indonesia:

1- Prabowo visited China on 1/4/2024 as an elected president, although he had not yet assumed his powers at the time. He held a meeting with President Xi and said that: ["He fully supports the development of closer Indonesia-China relations and wishes to continue President Joko's policy of friendship with China", while Xi said: "Beijing views its relations with Indonesia from a strategic and long-term perspective, and is willing to deepen all-round strategic cooperation with Indonesia and build a China-Indonesia community with." (Reuters, 1/4/2024)]. It is worth noting that China has significant economic activity in Indonesia at the level of trade relations and investment, and the two countries are members of the ASEAN organization. This requires dealing with them so that Indonesia does not stand in a position hostile to China while maintaining its dependence on American policy, as we explained above.

2- The Kuwaiti newspaper published on its website on 9/11/2024: (Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto shake hands during the signing ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing in his first foreign stop since taking office three weeks ago, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto met his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping in Beijing, and pledged to maintain close relations with China, Indonesia's number one trading partner and one of its most important foreign investors. "Indonesia views China not only as a superpower, but as a great civilization," Subianto, a 73-year-old former general, said during his meeting with Xi, adding that the two countries have had close relations for centuries."

"So I think it is only natural now in the current geopolitical and geoeconomic situation that Indonesia and China will become very close partners in many many fields." Xi pledged support for Subianto's administration and thanked him for visiting China first, saying he believed that "Indonesia will adhere to an independent development path, continue to make new achievements in the journey of achieving national prosperity and national rejuvenation, and play an important role on the international and regional stage."

China and Indonesia are major economic allies, but the two countries have been embroiled in a verbal spat over sovereignty claims in the South China Sea. Subianto is scheduled to travel to Washington after Yekin at the invitation of US President Joe Biden, as part of an international tour that will also take him to Peru, Brazil and Britain...).

By contemplating this, it becomes clear that the relationship between Indonesia and China does not go beyond commercial aspects that do not affect America's political influence in Indonesia. Thus, the commercial aspects are the basis, so if it moves to the influence, sovereignty and the South China Sea, they will enter into disputes!

Third: Indonesia's policy towards Muslim issues

1- It is known that Indonesia is an ancient Islamic country. Its people began to convert to Islam since the first century AH, so its population is close to 300 million people, the majority of whom are Muslims, reaching 90%. Its area is large, reaching more than 1.9 million kilometer square. It is rich in its resources and raw materials, so it has the potential to become a major country if the Islamic constitution project is implemented in it, and it is ruled by an aware Islamic political leadership.

2- As for the new president's foreign policy towards Muslim issues, it is similar to his predecessor's, adopting the American point of view. On 1/6/2024, Prabowo said in a speech during the Shangri-La Dialogue Summit, the largest security forum in Asia, held in Singapore: ["U.S. President Joe Biden's three-phase proposal for a ceasefire in Gaza was a step in the right direction." "When needed and when requested by the U.N., we are prepared to contribute significant peacekeeping forces to maintain and monitor this prospective ceasefire as well as providing protection and security to all parties and to all sides," Prabowo said. He called for "a just solution to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories." and said: "And that means the rights of not only Israel to exist, but also the rights of the Palestinian people to have their own homeland, their own state, living in peace." (Reuters, 1/6/2024)].

Knowing that his duty is to rise up and support the people of Gaza by sending sufficient forces and weapons to deter the savage enemy with intent on killing them, especially since this enemy is targeting children, women, defenseless men, and civilian targets such as homes, schools, and hospitals. All Indonesia is doing to help the people of Gaza is to build the Indonesian hospital, which was destroyed by the Jewish entity, the enemy of Islam and Muslims, which is supported by America and to which it sends lethal weapons, equipment, and aid from overseas without stopping. Despite all this, the new president, Prabowo, is strengthening his relations with America more, adhering closer to it, and fulfilling its demands because of his old relations with it and its support for him.

Fourth: With these political mentalities that rule Indonesia and are loyal to America, the country is losing the opportunity to become a major state if it were ruled by aware and sincere Islamic political leaders, who implement the Islamic constitution that stems from the belief of the people of the country and their true Islamic Deen, and then work to unify the Islamic countries, especially neighboring countries such as Malaysia, to be a focal point for the state of the Khilafah Rashidah (Rightly-Guided Caliphate) on the methodology of the Prophethood.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ﴾

“O believers! Respond to Allah and His Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life” [Al-Anfal: 24]

9 Jumada Al-Awwal 1446 AH

11/11/2024 CE