Abstrak

There are reasons for thinking that this is at last Indonesia's moment on the world stage. Having successfully negotiated its difficult transition to democracy after 1998, Indonesia has held three popular elections with a low level of violence by the standards of southern Asia. Recently its economic growth rate has been high (above 6 per cent a year) and rising, where China's has been dropping and the developed world has been in crisis. Indonesia's admission in 2009 to the G20 club of the world's most influential states seemed to confirm a status implied by its size, as the world's fourth-largest country by population, and the largest with a Muslim majority. Some international pundits have been declaring that Indonesia is the new star to watch, and that its long-awaited moment in the sun may at last have arrived.

Those who know Indonesia well, like the experts writing in this book, are less easy to convince. In this volume they weigh the economic evidence (Ross Garnaut and M. Chatib Basri); the political equation between democracy and the massive obstacles to progress in corruption, inefficiency and legal inadequacies (Rizal Sukma and Donald K. Emmerson); and Indonesia's unrealized potential as a leader in matters environmental (Frank Jotzo) and Islamic (Martin van Bruinessen). The volume is rounded out by Scott Guggenheim's analysis of the potential for better performance in education, and by the longer-term considerations of Anthony Reid and R.E. Elson. Overall, the conclusion is one of cautious optimism, well aware of past disappointments.

1. Indonesia's New Prominence in the World
2. Indonesia in the New World Balance
3. Indonesia's Role in the World Economy: Sitting on the Fence
4. Is Indonesia Rising? It Depends
5. Domestic Politics and International Posture: Constraints and Possibilities
6. Can Indonesia Lead on Climate Change?
7. Indonesian Muslims and Their Place in the Larger World of Islam
8. Indonesia's Quiet Springtime: Knowledge, Policy and Reform
9. Problems of Identity and Legitimacy for Indonesia's Place in the World