



Australian Government  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



Australian Institute of  
International Affairs

# ISLAMIC POLITICS AND INDONESIAN DEMOCRACY

**Professor Vedi Hadiz**

**Australian Research Council Future Fellow**

**Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University**

Analysts take sharply opposed positions about the compatibility of Islamic politics and democratic electoral systems: some analysts suggest that there is an inherent contradiction between the two, due to specific traits identified in Muslims or in the Islamic religion itself. Others take the opposite view and suggest that there are tolerant and pluralist traditions within Islam that allow secular democratic systems to easily accommodate Islamic-based political parties and organisations; moreover, that engagement in democratic politics has a 'moderating' effect on them. Both views are premised on understanding Islamic politics either as flowing from religious doctrine or from a (usually ill-defined) Islamic political culture. In this presentation, Professor Hadiz will explain how, in the case of Indonesia, more prosaic factors related to Indonesian political and social transformation since the Cold War can give a more accurate and less alarmist understanding of Islamic politics. This understanding suggests that mainstream Islamism in Indonesia will continue to play by democratic rules and terrorist activities are likely to remain marginal.

**When: Tuesday 10 August**

**Time: 12.30 to 2.00 pm**

**Venue: 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, Exchange Plaza, Perth**

**FREE ENTRY, ALL WELCOME**

Vedi Hadiz is Professor of Asian Societies and Politics in the Asia Research Centre at Murdoch University. He received his PhD at Murdoch University in 1996 and worked in the Centre as a Research Fellow until he was appointed to the faculty of the National University of Singapore in 2000. At NUS, he was Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology, establishing a world-class reputation as one of the pre-eminent scholars of Indonesia, during its decade of transformation and turmoil following the fall of the Suharto regime. Professor Hadiz returned to Murdoch in 2010, to take up one of the Australian Research Council's highly prestigious Future Fellowship awards. He is currently conducting research on State, Class and Islamic Populism. His most recent book is *Localising Power in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia: A Southeast Asia Perspective* (Stanford University Press 2010). He is also the author of *Workers and the State in New Order Indonesia* (Routledge 1997) and (with Richard Robison) *Reorganising Power in Indonesia: The Politics of Oligarchy in an Age of Markets* (RoutledgeCurzon 2004,) as well as editor or co-editor of several books, including *Empire and Neoliberalism in Asia* (Routledge 2006). His articles have appeared in journals such as *Development and Change*, *Journal of Development Studies*, *Pacific Review*, *Pacific Affairs*, *Third World Quarterly*, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, *Democratization*, *Critical Asian Studies*, *Indonesia*, and *Historical Materialism*.

**Part of the "New Modes of Governance in Indonesia: Issues for Australia" Seminar Series**

**RSVP: T.Dent@murdoch.edu.au or 9360 2263 by Thursday 5th August**