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After Indonesia's transition to democracy 1999, civilian reformers had to institute civilian control over the military. While international financial support for civil society organizations is an accepted way to promote the deepening and consolidation of democracy in this and other areas, there are few, if any, systematic attempts to evaluate the immediate and tangible contributions civil society organizations have made. This dissertation finds that Indonesian civil society organizations have made significant contributions to the institutionalization of civilian control. However, their success was largely determined by a combination of the institutional interests of civilian decision-makers and the level of veto power and informal counter-pressure the military exerted over decision-makers. Where reform proposals ran counter to civilian institutional interests and met staunch resistance from the armed forces, organizations were only successful if they could rely on assertive tactics like large-scale demonstration and continuous public pressuring campaigns. Over time, reductions in the level of international funding for CSOs and the proliferation of institutional veto actors on the government side have slowed down the reform process.

Principals, Partners and Pawns

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Indonesian Civil Society  
Organizations and Civilian  
Control of the Military

