

**ACEH: WHY MILITARY FORCE
WON'T BRING LASTING PEACE**

12 June 2001

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ACEH: WHY MILITARY FORCE WON'T BRING LASTING PEACE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For much of the last 50 years Aceh has been in rebellion against the failure of successive Indonesian governments to recognise the political and economic aspirations of the Acehnese people. The distinct historical origins and social cleavages of the Acehnese were never reflected in the political structures of the region, and economic equity was distorted by Jakarta's centralised control of development and resource exploitation. The undisciplined military response to rebellion, especially from the late 1970s onwards, also embittered many Acehnese and deepened their sense of grievance against the central government. When President Soeharto's New Order collapsed, these frustrations were expressed in demands for accountability for past crimes, in demands for greater autonomy, and in a burgeoning demand for independence. These were accompanied by an upsurge in armed resistance when Jakarta failed to grasp fleeting opportunities to seek an end to conflict.

The six-point plan announced by the Wahid government on 11 April 2001 was clothed in the language of a comprehensive solution involving political, economic and social measures but it can have little effect while 80 per cent of the province is not under effective government control. Regaining control requires either successful security operations or a peace agreement with the Aceh Liberation Movement (GAM).¹ Intensified security operations could restore government control over large areas and deal a sharp blow to the armed wing of the Aceh Liberation Movement (AGAM)² but a hardened rump would remain, and the people of Aceh would have been further alienated in the process.

The military solution is certain to fail as long as the security forces are incapable of exercising the degree of control and discipline over their troops necessary to prevent behaviour that alienates ordinary Acehnese. Many of the practices of the authoritarian past are still in use. The intelligence system seems at times to be subject to hidden agendas set by both internal and external influences. Brutality and reprisals against unarmed civilians and their property also go largely unpunished. With two ambiguous exceptions, there is no indication that those responsible for abuses of human rights have been, or will be, brought to justice.

The failure to impose discipline and control stems in part from the fact that only 25 per cent of the security budget is provided by the state. This means that military and police forces in the field, in Aceh as elsewhere, are compelled to engage in a great variety of legal and illegal activities to provide the remaining funds to support operations and meet personal needs. These depredations on the economy are underpinned by the use or threat of force.

¹ GAM – Gerakan Aceh Merdeka

² AGAM – Angkatan Gerakan Aceh Merdeka

There are also reasons to believe that the military [TNI – Indonesian National Military], particularly the army, benefits from continued conflict in Aceh even if it is not the result of explicit policy. Continued engagement in Aceh allows the TNI to portray itself as the only force capable of preventing the disintegration of Indonesia and thereby helps it to preserve its political influence. It also supports the army's push to regain responsibility for internal security from the police that in turn justifies the army's retention of the territorial system that is the fountain of non-government funding. Political influence assists the TNI to preserve its institutional independence and foil efforts to bring senior officers to justice for past human rights offences.

President Wahid has resisted pressure to declare a state of emergency but he has authorised the establishment of an operational command under police leadership and the dispatch of army reinforcements. In present circumstances more troops and the expansion of operations under the guise of restoring law and order will inevitably lead to more depredation and frustrate the objective of winning the hearts and minds of the people, let alone address the underlying political problem.

A more appropriate strategy would be to maintain the status quo while talks are pursued to overcome the substantive obstacles to peace. A central issue in these talks would need to be the extent to which Jakarta was prepared to grant wide autonomy to Aceh. Meanwhile, to help ensure that efforts are not undermined by inappropriate actions on the ground in Aceh, effective control measures are required from both the government and the security forces.

If the Indonesian government is prepared to make reasonable concessions on regional autonomy, the international community could play a useful role in informing the GAM leadership overseas and in Aceh of the advantages and disadvantages of various options, in assisting negotiations and in monitoring a settlement. Peace keeping forces are unlikely to be acceptable to Indonesia, and the best guarantee that a settlement will endure is a successful democratic transition in the country.

This report is primarily concerned with why military operations to support the imposition of a solution are unlikely to bring lasting peace. A following ICG report will examine the proposals for autonomy and their prospects for acceptance as an alternative to independence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Government of Indonesia

1. In order to facilitate negotiations and because efforts to regain territory by force are counter-productive to the peace process, military operations should be limited to what is necessary to maintain the status quo while searching for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.
2. Consideration should be given to the designation of a lead minister or the appointment of a special minister to focus and invigorate the search for a settlement of the conflict.
3. Consideration should be given to the appointment of a political authority in Aceh – most likely the governor -- to control and coordinate all government agencies and the security forces in accordance with national policy.

4. It is essential to provide clear and unequivocal regulations covering the call out of TNI and its powers of search, arrest, and interrogation, rules of engagement, command and control arrangements, and accountability.
5. The review and restructuring of national intelligence agencies and accountability mechanisms should be expedited.
6. Discipline and order should be imposed on the police paramilitary force (Brimob), particularly relating to the wearing of uniforms, rules of engagement and accountability for abuses of power.
7. In order to restore the confidence of the people of Aceh, it is necessary to bring to justice security forces personnel, including senior officers, responsible for human rights abuses, particularly clear cut cases like the RATA killings of December 2000.

To the Indonesian National Military (TNI)

8. Necessary intelligence collection and analysis should be separated from the authorisation of intelligence operations.
9. Civic action programs should be suspended until a political settlement is reached.

To the International Community

10. The international community should support the search for a political solution to the conflict and provide any assistance required to facilitate negotiations and monitor a settlement.

Jakarta/Brussels, 12 June 2001



ACEH: WHY MILITARY FORCE WON'T BRING LASTING PEACE

I. INTRODUCTION

On 10 March 2001 the Indonesian government and representatives of GAM³ agreed to replace the Humanitarian Pause that had been in effect since 2 June 2000 with a, "Peace through Dialogue" approach including a ceasefire and consultations to end the armed conflict in Aceh.⁴ Trials of ceasefire arrangements were introduced in Pidie and North Aceh between 22 March and 3 April. These arrangements were to be extended to other districts if the trials proved successful but they did not.

Despite this setback, President Wahid has resisted mounting pressure from elements of the armed forces and other cabinet members to declare a state of emergency and launch military operations.⁵ Instead, on 11 April 2001, the government released Presidential Instruction 4/2001, a "comprehensive" package of political, social and economic measures under which the police retain responsibility for security and public order assisted by the military.⁶ Nevertheless, in a portent of the trouble to come, a 1000-man TNI force specially trained in intelligence operations and anti-guerrilla warfare was sent to Aceh in late April, an operational command was established, and operations were intensified from 2 May 2001.

Aceh comprises only 2 per cent of Indonesia's population, less than 2.5 per cent of its GDP (or 1.5 per cent if oil and gas are deducted), and less than 3 per cent of Indonesia's land area. Its loss would not necessarily be fatal to Indonesia.

Moreover, the costs of keeping Aceh are considerable. There is the continuing stream of casualties; the financial burden of maintaining troops in the province; the increased costs of industrial production in the province; the opportunity cost of lost production through economic dislocation; the costs of caring for refugees; and insofar as unrest in Aceh contributes to the impression that Indonesia is insecure, the loss of foreign and domestic investment. Indirect costs include the diminution of respect for the central government in the region and globally as a result of its inability or unwillingness to make the necessary concessions to bring peace or to enforce respect for human rights.

³ GAM – Gerakan Aceh Merdeka

⁴ "Jeda Kemanusiaan Dinyatakan Berakhir", *Serambi*, 11 March 2001.

⁵ "Aceh: Taktik Operasi Hati-hati", *Gatra*, 31 March 2001, p.72.

⁶ The comprehensive package includes political, economic, social, legal, security and public order, and information and communications measures and programs. *Instruksi Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 4 Tahun 2001 Tentang Langkah-Langkah Komprehensif dalam Rangka Penyelesaian Masalah Aceh*, Jakarta, 11 April 2001.

National pride, political and economic interests, and a concern that independence for Aceh might trigger national disintegration all bolster the determination of the political elite and the security forces to bear these costs. The main question is will the government and the military attempt to impose a solution by force or are they prepared to make the concessions that might achieve a peaceful outcome to the conflict?

The police and the TNI are using force now and seem intent on escalating the scale of military operations. This report will focus on the question whether such force is capable of bringing a lasting peace: it will examine what force might be applied by Jakarta, what the consequences might be, and what measures might be implemented to limit the negative impact of the security forces' presence in Aceh.

The Indonesian parliament (DPR) is debating a special regional autonomy bill for Aceh. Consideration of this and other autonomy proposals, and the question of whether they can produce a peaceful settlement, will be left to a subsequent ICG paper. This report is restricted to the impact of intensified security operations.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The origins of the conflict can be traced back to the birth of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945 when insufficient attention was accorded Aceh's unique historical identity, its role in the struggle for independence against the Dutch and social cleavages within Acehnese society.⁷ The main cleavages were between the Ulama (religious scholars) and the Ulebalang (aristocrats or self-governing rulers). Later due respect was not paid between traditional and reformist Ulama and their Zuama partners (Muslim scholars working in secular jobs, particularly government officials).⁸

Consequently, a revolt ensued from 1953 to 1962 in which the Acehnese rebels sought provincial status, recognition of their contribution to the War of Independence, a degree of regional autonomy – especially over education, religion and customary law – and the proclamation of Indonesia as an Islamic state. At this stage, the goal was not to achieve independence. Concessions were made at various times by the central government but they were either not implemented or were eroded by creeping centralisation and authoritarian rule in Jakarta.⁹

⁷ GAM takes a much longer historical perspective on the origins of Aceh's independence and denies that the Acehnese ever surrendered their sovereignty to either the Dutch colonial administration or its Indonesian successor.

⁸ There are also ethnic differences, mainly between the Acehnese who live in the lowlands and the Gayo and Alas peoples in the highlands, but these are of minor importance. In later years the arrival of increasing numbers of Javanese created tensions that have recently resulted in the internal displacement of most of them.

⁹ See for example, Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *The Republican Revolt: A Study of Acehnese Rebellion*, ISEAS, Singapore, 1985.

After a period of relative tranquillity the armed struggle erupted again with the declaration of independence for Aceh on 4 December 1976 by Hasan Tiro, the founder of GAM, a descendant of pre-colonial sultans and enigmatic envoy of the previous revolt, who has remained the head of the movement. In response to a request from the provincial governor, army special forces established a presence in the province at this time to reinforce territorial units and began employing tactics that eventually undermined respect for the army generally. Hasan Tiro's movement was quite small and centred on his home district of Pidie. It was heavily penetrated by military intelligence and quickly overwhelmed, forcing him to seek refuge in Sweden where he has lived since 1979.

The grievances that prompted the revolt were never addressed, and were magnified by economic development, beginning in the early 1970s, that marginalised much of Acehnese society. It is estimated that less than 5 per cent of the benefits flowing to Jakarta from Aceh's natural resources actually came back to the province.¹⁰ Armed insurgency flared again in 1989 following the return of several hundred Acehnese who had received military training in Libya.¹¹ The initial military response sought to draw the community into resolving the problem but these efforts failed to produce quick results, and in mid-1990 President Suharto, at the behest of the provincial governor, ordered the armed forces commander, General Try Sutrisno, to crush the insurgents as quickly as possible.

This was achieved within a few years by the application of overwhelming military force and brutality that created a rising tide of hatred and suspicion of the Indonesian government and its agents and burst out as open condemnation after the fall of Suharto. President Habibie admitted the mistakes of the past and promised to redress them. The number of casualties up to 1998 is contested but seems to range between 1,000-3,000 killed, 900-1,400 missing (presumed dead), 500 maimed, and 700 dwellings torched.¹² Even General Wiranto, then minister for defence and security and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, was forced to acknowledge these excesses on 7 August 1998 by apologising and withdrawing the Area of Military Operations (DOM) status that had applied in Aceh since 1990. He also ordered the withdrawal of all troops from outside Aceh by the end of the month.¹³

¹⁰ Syarifudin Tippe (the military commander (colonel) in Banda Aceh until March 2001), *Aceh di Persimpangan Jalan*, Pustaka Cidesindo, Jakarta, November 2000, p.48.

¹¹ About 800 Acehnese are believed to have been trained in Libya, mainly in the mid to late 1980s, and a further 115 have reportedly been trained in the Philippines, presumably in more recent times, by Muslim guerrillas in Mindanao. "Percayakah Rakyat Aceh Kepada Inpres No 4 Tahun 2001?" *Kompas*, 15 April 2001. Some have also reportedly been trained in Afghanistan. An unknown number of police and military personnel or former members have joined the armed wing of the Aceh Liberation Movement (AGAM) over the years.

¹² *Laporan Akhir Komisi Independen Pengusutan Tindak Kekerasan di Aceh*, Jakarta, July 2000, pp. 7-11. These figures do not include cases of rape and torture or reflect the trauma and fear of the population. A further 1340 Acehnese and security force personnel are reported to have been killed in the 15 months to April 2001. "Mencari Aman di Luar Aceh", *Tempo*, 28 May 2001, p.83.

¹³ DOM had no legal status. It is a military term to define the boundaries within which military operations are undertaken but it also seems to have become an informal authority to take whatever measures are necessary to maintain security in the province.

Habibie appointed an independent commission to investigate the violence in Aceh in August 1998¹⁴ but the government failed to take the other immediate steps necessary to circumvent the resurgence of the armed struggle that had been made more likely by the forced repatriation of 545 illegal Acehnese migrants, including some GAM sympathisers, from a detention camp in Malaysia in June 1998.

Moreover, the unreconstructed TNI and police inflamed the situation by the indiscriminate application of force to disperse protesters and take revenge for attacks on themselves as they sought to annihilate a resurgent AGAM.¹⁵ In the absence of coherent government policy and leadership, the TNI and police were left to put together military strategies unanchored to any declared policy except a determination to prevent independence. Moreover, without effective political leadership, a declared state of emergency, or a functioning justice sector, the TNI and police were acting, with rare exceptions, in a virtual legal vacuum.¹⁶

The arrival of the Wahid presidency in October 1999 brought little relief even though the president declared that he would personally deal with the conflict in Aceh. Although his own attitude was ambivalent, only a month before his election Wahid had attended a ceremony in Aceh to launch the campaign for a referendum to give Aceh the option of independence or autonomy. Once in office, however, he was prevailed upon to close that option, thus adding to what the Acehnese see as a litany of broken promises by politicians in Jakarta. Instead, after a period of mounting violence, the Humanitarian Pause was negotiated in Switzerland between the Indonesian government and GAM, facilitated by the Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, an NGO with a mission to promote peace through dialogue. The Pause came into effect on 2 June 2000 and was extended several times, in various forms, pending negotiation of a more lasting solution.¹⁷

The violence continued with both sides blaming either the other or shadowy third parties who were accused of independent violent activities. Though the Pause at least delayed a full scale military onslaught, it seemed that neither side had complete control of its fighters on the ground, and a trial ceasefire failed to meet expectations. The Pause was replaced by the Peace through Dialogue agreement on 10 March 2001 but no fundamental advances have been made in the search for a settlement. Despite the agreements, the security forces continue to classify AGAM members as criminals and treat them in ways that inevitably provoke violent responses.¹⁸

¹⁴ The commission produced a final report in July 2000. Its most valuable contribution was to record and analyse the litany of abuses of power by the army. However, only two of eleven recommended cases were brought to trial.

¹⁵ AGAM – Angkatan Gerakan Aceh Merdeka

¹⁶ See, *Indonesia: Impunity Versus Accountability for Gross Human Rights Violations*, ICG Report No. 12, Jakarta/Brussels, 2 February 2001.

¹⁷ Rizal Sukma gives a summary of the conflict in "The Aceh Rebellion", in Andrew Tan and Kenneth Boutin, *Non-traditional Security Issues in SEA*, Select Books, Singapore, 2001. The article was initially written in conjunction with the IDSS-Ford Foundation Project on Non-Traditional Security in Southeast Asia.

¹⁸ Since the release of Presidential Instruction 4/2001 GAM has been classified as an armed separatist movement (Gerakan Separatis Bersenjata), with the intention of justifying the use of military force to counter it.

Elements of the military are dissatisfied that Presidential Instruction 4/2001 did not include the declaration of a state of emergency. Nevertheless, the package opens the way to an escalation of military operations, and despite broad consultation with national and provincial administrations, it does not of itself provide a workable basis for compromise.¹⁹

The six-point plan calls for political, economic, social, legal, public order and security, and information and communications measures to regain political control of the province, reactivate the functions of government, and reinvigorate economic development. It is in fact a checklist of the responsibilities of various government departments and agencies with instructions for them to prepare their own detailed plans under the general control and coordination of the vice president and the two coordinating ministers.²⁰

The centrepiece of any peaceful resolution of the conflict in Aceh would likely be a legislated regional autonomy offer that proves acceptable to the majority of Acehnese as an alternative to independence. Such legislated regional autonomy, if taken as concrete evidence of the Government of Indonesia's good faith, could become the starting point for negotiations to resolve the divisive substantive issues. The bill on regional autonomy for Aceh is still with the DPR, however, and is unlikely to pass in a form acceptable to the majority of Acehnese. If so, the six-point plan is likely to degenerate into a disguise for military operations and an attempt to impose a solution by force.

III. THE CONTESTANTS

A. GAM

GAM is the political movement leading Aceh's struggle for independence. Still headed by Hasan Tiro from his base in Sweden, it appears to have won widespread support, or at least sympathy, in the province. It is widely believed that GAM would be able to mobilise overwhelming support for independence if a referendum were held. Currently it is often estimated that about 80 per cent of Aceh's villages are under GAM control or influence. Although espousing the ethos of one of Indonesia's most Islamic regions and supported by many religious leaders, GAM is not an Islamic fundamentalist movement and is driven more by Acehnese nationalism than religious fervour.

Other organisations share GAM's resentment against rule from Jakarta. HUDA (Himpunan Ulama Dayah Aceh) is an organisation of Muslim religious leaders while SIRA (Information Centre for Aceh Referendum) was formed by young intellectuals and activists in February 1999 - one week after President Habibie announced the referendum that delivered East Timor's independence - to seek popular support for a referendum in Aceh. The government, however, has come to regard both HUDA and SIRA as virtually synonymous with GAM, especially after SIRA organised several mass rallies in support of a referendum and conducted an

¹⁹ "Sebuah Inpres Yang Ragu-Ragu", *Tempo*, 22 April 2001.

²⁰ *Instruksi Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 4 Tahun 2001 Tentang Langkah-Langkah Komprehensif Dalam Rangka Penyelesaian Masalah Aceh*, Jakarta, 11 April 2001.

informal universal ballot in early November 2000 which reportedly showed that 92 per cent of Acehnese supported independence.²¹

Not all Acehnese, of course, support or sympathise with GAM. A relatively small group feels a strong sense of identity with the Indonesian nation, including those who are the beneficiaries of the current arrangements, such as government officials and some business interests. The voice of this group is muted by fear of violence but is prominently represented behind the scenes, especially in Jakarta.

Hasan Tiro is now in his late 70s and reportedly in poor health so that day to day leadership is in the hands of several "ministers" of a self-styled government in exile, also mainly resident in Sweden. A split in the leadership appeared in the mid-1990s when Hasan Tiro suffered a bout of illness and a succession struggle emerged. This was also reflected among GAM supporters resident in Malaysia and Singapore but faded with the expulsion of Swedish based rivals from the movement and the later murder of their Malaysian based colleague, Don Zulfahri, by an unknown gunman in Kuala Lumpur on 1 June 2000 one day before the Humanitarian Pause came into effect. The split was about power and means rather than ends, and some have suggested that Indonesian intelligence may have played a role in it.²²

GAM supporters in Malaysia and Singapore remain in constant contact with their countrymen in Aceh but no longer appear to challenge Hasan Tiro's leadership. The government, represented by Indonesia's then ambassador in Geneva, Hassan Wirajuda, acknowledged Hasan Tiro's pre-eminent position in late 1999 when it agreed to begin negotiations with his ministers, led by Zaini Abdullah. However, if Hasan Tiro were to die or be incapacitated, the political leadership might well be contested and could shift location and policy orientation.

Teungku Adbullah Syafi'ie, the leader of GAM's military wing, AGAM, publicly acknowledges the political leadership of Hasan Tiro.²³ At the celebrations of GAM's foundation in December 2000, Syafi'ie read out a message from Hasan Tiro to his assembled troops at one of AGAM's camps. On another occasion when the provincial police chief tried to meet him, the AGAM commander did not respond because he did not have the approval of his superior in Sweden.²⁴

²¹ "Dirjen Politik Deplu Dr N Hassan Wirayuda: GAM Ingkari Kesepakatan Bersama", *Kompas*, 17 November 2000, and "Indonesia told to free Aceh activist", *The Jakarta Post*, 23 November 2000. Given the conditions under which the ballot was conducted, its results are of dubious validity.

²² Gerry van Klinken, "What is the Free Aceh Movement", *Inside Indonesia*, Digest 89, 25 November 1999 provides a summary of these machinations. Don Zukfahri had condemned the Humanitarian Pause before his assassination.

²³ "Jangan Bosan Berdialog!", *Kompas*, 15 April 2000. Abdullah Syafi'ie's name appears in various spellings in the Roman alphabet. This spelling will be used for consistency.

²⁴ "Impian Kapolda", *Kontras*, No.129, 21-27 March 2001.

Estimates of the strength of AGAM vary from about 15,000 to 27,000. The AGAM commander of North Aceh, the second most populous of Aceh's 11 districts, claimed to have a force of 8,000.²⁵ On the other hand, the minister of defence claimed in April 2001 that AGAM has only 4,869 members.²⁶ Fighting capacity is a lot smaller than the larger numbers suggest. Most observers estimate that AGAM has only between 1000 and 1500 modern firearms and a few grenade launchers, even fewer rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and perhaps one or two 60mm mortars.²⁷ The minister of defence, however, has recently claimed that AGAM acquired 2,619 weapons from the TNI and police.²⁸ Most fighters have only homemade firearms, explosive devices or sharp/blunt instruments. AGAM also has the assistance of unarmed supporters who total at least two or three times the number of armed members. These supporters provide recruits, information, early warning, shelter, and sustenance.

AGAM is organised on a regional basis. Below Teungku Abdullah Syafi'ie there are district commanders (*Panglima Kabupaten*), who are supported by local commanders (*Panglima Sagoe*) covering a number of sub-districts (*Kecamatan*). They in turn supervise small unit commands.²⁹ The lower down the chain of command, the less structured AGAM becomes. TNI describes AGAM as being organised in cells and having many factions.³⁰

AGAM has units throughout most of the province but is most active in Pidie, Bireuen and North and East Aceh. However, its support in West Aceh, Aceh Besar, South Aceh, Banda Aceh, and Aceh Tengah has grown considerably in the last few years. North Aceh/Bireuen is reportedly the most active area because of its relatively large population (about one million or one quarter of Aceh's population) and the presence of the Lhokseumawe industrial complex. East Aceh, especially the Peureula area, is the next most conflict prone. The offshore islands, much of Southeast Aceh and the eastern reaches of the province have seen little or no activity.

Experienced observers assess that AGAM members generally display little military prowess or discipline, and most would be easy prey to a military strike. Nevertheless, AGAM has an extensive network of informers and lookouts with good communications able to provide intelligence and early warning of TNI and police movements. It has conducted regular ambushes of convoys and raids on military offices and complexes and has murdered individual police and soldiers. Although official casualty figures are not available, overall security force casualties are relatively small with about eight killed per month and probably at least twice as many wounded. AGAM regularly employs squad and platoon sized groups (10-

²⁵ "Aceh: Gertakan Status GAM", *Gatra*, 17 March 2001, p.40. Aceh has a population of about four million.

²⁶ "Percayakah Rakyat Aceh Kepada Inpres No 4 Tahun 2001", *Kompas*, 15 April 2001. The precision of this number suggests that it may be from a hit list produced by TNI intelligence, rather than an estimate of the overall membership of AGAM.

²⁷ Based on various ICG interviews.

²⁸ "Percayakah Rakyat Aceh Kepada Inpres No 4 Tahun 2001", *Kompas*, 15 April 2001. Not all of these stolen or otherwise acquired weapons, however, necessarily fell into the hands AGAM or remained with it or are still serviceable.

²⁹ *Laporan Akhir Komisi Independen Pengusutan Tindak Kekerasan di Aceh*, 31 July 2000, p.15.

³⁰ Syarifudin Tippe, *Aceh di Persimpangan Jalan*, Pustaka Cidesindo, Jakarta, November 2000, p.88.

30 people) in these operations. Larger numbers have occasionally been used but they normally disperse quickly after an action to avoid prolonged combat.

Treatment of corpses and captured police and TNI personnel has often been brutal and in violation of the rules governing combatants in civil conflicts.³¹ The AGAM commander admitted in August 2000 that they had not always acted in their own best interests when he appealed to his people not to smear GAM's image by committing actions such as extortion, abduction or killings.³² However, to put GAM's crimes into perspective, the independent commission on violence in Aceh assessed that over 90 per cent of abuses were committed by TNI and the police during the period 1989-98. That figure would have declined with the expansion of AGAM activity in the last few years but it is indicative of the continuing balance of coercive power.³³

No foreign government recognises GAM, and there is no prospect of that changing. Consequently, AGAM does not have the benefit of a foreign sanctuary or support from a friendly government. Although Acehnese expatriate supporters in Malaysia and Singapore are able to smuggle small quantities of arms and other assistance to the province, mostly through southern Thailand, AGAM is essentially dependent on the Acehnese community and the capture, theft or purchase of TNI and police weapons and materiel for sustenance and support.³⁴ Funding comes from local taxes on individuals and business, contributions from Acehnese expatriates, crime, and the profits of marijuana cultivation and trade.

A major concern of the Indonesian government is AGAM's strength in the area surrounding the Lhokseumawe industrial complex, which hosts the Arun natural gas fields worked by Pertamina and ExxonMobil and feeder industries based on paper, fertiliser and aromatics production. The complex, including factories and pipelines, is spread over about 80 kilometres. It is vulnerable to sabotage but GAM allowed it to operate in the past. However, in March 2001 ExxonMobil closed production and evacuated workers after a general deterioration in the security situation, especially in the latter half of February. Although the government has blamed the closure on GAM threats, some Acehnese suspect that it may have been the work of military intelligence aiming to discredit GAM.³⁵

³¹ *A Reign of terror: Human Rights Violations in Aceh 1998-2000*, Tapol, Surrey, March 2000, p.14.

³² "GAM commander emerges from hiding, calls for end to unrest", *The Jakarta Post*, 8 August 2000.

³³ *Laporan Akhir Komisi Independen Pengusutan Tindak Kekerasan di Aceh*, Jakarta, July 2000, p.25.

³⁴ For example, GAM claims to have captured seventeen M-16 rifles, 4000 rounds of ammunition, and other equipment when it attacked a military post recently. "AGAM Ngaku Rampas Reo, OCM Membantah", *Serambi*, 11 March 2001. TNI also captured a factory for homemade firearms and weapons in North Aceh. "Aceh violence reaches new peak", *Indonesian Observer*, 24 January 2000.

³⁵ In early March, an extortion demand was presented to ExxonMobil for the payment of U.S.\$500,000 per month for security. A local AGAM commander and a senior GAM official denied that GAM was involved although it had previously warned ExxonMobil to evacuate staff if the government declared a state of emergency and launched military operations. "Exxon Mobil Hentikan Produksi", *Serambi*, 10 March 2001, and "Polisi Siap Amankan ExxonMobil", *Serambi*, 11 March 2001. Whoever made the demand, it came at a convenient time, as pressure was mounting in Jakarta for "limited" military operations and on the same day the defence minister announced that the government was to make a decision on the future status of Aceh on 12 March. For this reason there has been some doubt about the true source of the original threat.

Whatever the case, it seems that GAM will continue to apply pressure by denying the government the revenue that flows from the gas contract and the associated industries. On 6 May 2001 AGAM cut a small pipeline, and on 20 May it cut the major gas supply pipeline, thus rendering production impossible until AGAM is totally neutralised in that region or a peaceful settlement is reached.

With limited and ambiguous exceptions, AGAM has so far confined its operations to the province of Aceh. It has not taken violence to the capital, Jakarta, or elsewhere probably because it assesses that such actions would not win domestic or international sympathy and would add to pressure for a military offensive in Aceh.³⁶ Nevertheless, AGAM probably has the capacity to undertake limited attacks with support from sympathetic Acehnese living outside the province, and there have been threats to take such action if TNI does launch an offensive.³⁷

In summary, although the overseas political leadership of GAM is brittle and dependent on an ageing leader, the Acehnese struggle is deeply rooted in a profound distrust of the central government, a strong bond of Acehnese identity, and hatred of the TNI and police for the death, torture and destruction suffered since the early 1950s, but particularly since 1990. AGAM is not particularly well prepared, trained or disciplined, but a hard core could sustain a lengthy guerrilla campaign.

B. Indonesian Security Forces

Following its separation from the TNI in 1999, the police were made responsible for internal security while the TNI retained responsibility for external defence. However, it was recognised that the police would not be able to cope with all internal security challenges, especially counter insurgency operations. Thus, the police were given the authority to call on the TNI for assistance when necessary but military involvement remained under overall police command. Only after the declaration of a military emergency could command be transferred to the TNI. It was clear that the police would need the support of the army and other units of the TNI in Aceh, but the president has resisted military demands for the introduction of a military emergency.

Following the issue of Presidential Instruction 4/2001 on 11 April 2001, an operational command (Komando Tugas Pengamanan Aceh – Aceh Security Command) was established to coordinate the actions of the police and the military in the province. A police major general heads the command while his deputy is an army brigadier general.³⁸ Two subordinate field commands have also been established, one for the police and another for TNI, thus bringing all TNI forces in Aceh under a single command for the first time since 1984.³⁹

³⁶ The Jakarta Stock Exchange bombing of September 2000 has been attributed to GAM but the masterminds behind the operation have not been uncovered. More recently, police have attempted to establish a link between GAM and a bomb explosion, which killed two and injured others on 9 May 2001 in a house in Jakarta occupied by Acehnese. There have also been reports of GAM, or people purporting to be GAM, engaging in criminal activity to raise funds in places like Medan and Riau.

³⁷ "Aceh rebel chief threatens to create "Chaos" throughout Indonesia", *AFP*, 16 February 2001.

³⁸ The first TNI operational commander is a Kopassus officer, Brigadier General Zamroni.

³⁹ "Danrem 012/TU Kolonel Inf Endang Suwarya TNI Harus Hindari Pelanggaran HAM", *Serambi*, 21 April 2001.

1. Police

The provincial chief of police has his headquarters in Banda Aceh. Subordinate headquarters are located at district (*Kabupaten*) and sub-district (*Kecamatan*) levels. Police officers are also placed in villages. The police perform standard police functions but are not trained or equipped to carry out “military” operations against AGAM. Among other duties, they are expected to keep watch over GAM activities in their areas but in reality standard functions are not always performed effectively because many of the lower level posts cannot be protected from AGAM and are not manned.

Police “military” operations are carried out by units of the police paramilitary force, the Mobile Brigade (Brimob), which are rotated through Aceh. However, the Brimob is not yet sufficiently organised, equipped or trained to counter a large, dispersed, and politically motivated force like AGAM. Discipline and oversight of Brimob operations are sorely lacking. Its rules of engagement are arbitrary, there is little accountability for infringements of the law, and its members frequently wear civilian clothing. The failure to wear uniforms at all times has led to accidental clashes with TNI but often enables Brimob to deny responsibility for crimes such as the murder and wounding of unarmed civilians, destruction of property and thefts.

2. Army Territorial Structure and Forces

The province of Aceh is part of the territory covered by the “Bukit Barisan” North Sumatra Regional Military Command (Kodam – Komando Daerah Militer), which comprises the four westernmost provinces of Sumatra. It is headed by a major general whose headquarters are in Medan. Aceh is divided into two Sub-Regional Military Commands (Korem – Komando Resor Militer) led by colonels who report to the Kodam commander. Korem 011, located in Lhokseumawe, covers the eastern districts of Jeumpa (commonly referred to as Bireuen) and North, East, Central and Southeast Aceh. Korem 012, located in Banda Aceh, includes the western districts of Greater Aceh, Pidie, West and South Aceh, Singkil and Simeuleu. Each of these Korem has district and sub-district commands sometimes reaching down to village level.

The army's territorial structure has the formal function of “managing” the local population. Each Korem has staffs for intelligence, operations, personnel and logistics as well as agencies such as intelligence detachments that provide command and control facilities to the commanders.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ On the territorial structure, see ICG report on military. *Indonesia: Keeping the Military Under Control*, ICG Asia Report No.9, Jakarta/Brussels, 5 September 2000, pp. 12-15.

In addition to the personnel assigned to territorial duties, the Korem also maintain what are called "organic" infantry battalions permanently attached to the command but available to be sent to other regions if necessary. Korem 011 has two such battalions and supporting troops while Korem 012 has only one plus supporting troops.

Since the 1990s the territorial units have also recruited both Acehnese and non-Acehnese agents, including petty criminals, to support intelligence gathering and "intelligence operations" aimed at intimidating dissidents. In the early 1990s militia were also raised in some areas, and there are fears that this might be done again.

3. Military Reinforcements on Rotation

To reinforce the territorial forces and the police, other units (often referred to as non-organic troops) are rotated through the province for particular operations. They come from other army territorial commands, the two national army commands, Kostrad (Army Strategic Reserve Command) and Kopassus (Special Forces Command), and the navy's marine corps. They perform intelligence, combat, police support, and civic action missions. Anticipating a request from the police, the Kostrad commander recently said that he was ready to send troops to Aceh to conduct "limited" operations against AGAM as earlier foreshadowed by the government.⁴¹

4. Naval and Air Bases

The navy has a small base and airfield at Sabang, off the western tip of Aceh, small posts at Lhokseumawe and Meulaboh, and a small maritime patrol task group. Several larger vessels are also deployed by the Western Fleet to reinforce patrols designed to intercept unauthorised movement across the straits of Malacca although most smuggling comes not through Aceh but rather the port of Belawan, servicing Medan, and Bengkalis. A marine corps battalion is also deployed in the province.⁴²

The air force has a base unit in Banda Aceh and two radar units but no aircraft are stationed permanently in the province. However, both the army and the air force deploy helicopters to the province for operations.

Naval gunfire, air strikes and artillery have not normally been used in Aceh.

5. Strength

TNI and police numbers in Aceh are not officially disclosed so have to be estimated. The regular police reportedly total about 7000 and the army's organic troops about 6000. The numbers of Brimob and rotated TNI troops vary according to need. In May 2001 it was reported that 7000 Brimob

⁴¹ "HUT Ke-40 Kostrad: Kedaulatan Wilayah Kesatuan RI adalah Harga Mati", *Kompas*, 8 March 2001.

⁴² "Operasi Militer Terbatas di Aceh: TNI AL Akan Lakukan penyekatan Lewat Laut", *Kompas*, 22 March 2001.

troops were stationed in the province⁴³ while around 10,000 non-organic military forces in about fifteen battalions are currently believed to be in Aceh. These numbers add up to about 30,000 personnel in about eighteen TNI battalion sized units in addition to Brimob units.⁴⁴ However, other troops can be sent in at short notice for particular operations. In short, the central government has sufficient forces at its disposal to ensure that AGAM cannot evict it from the province.

Traditional military theory calls for a very high ratio of troops to guerrillas to ensure victory. Figures ranging from 12:1 to 20:1 or even higher have been quoted.⁴⁵ Although the ratio of TNI/Police to AGAM is far lower, AGAM's limited weaponry and training, its exposure to TNI intelligence, and TNI familiarity with Acehnese society and the terrain make most of the insurgents vulnerable to a swift blow even if it would be difficult to eliminate them altogether.

IV. DOES THE TNI WANT A SOLUTION?

With the country now seen by many as being on the verge of disintegration, the TNI's fierce belief in national unity is shared by many civilians, who look to the military to hold the nation together. The military is driven by what it sees as its own sacred mission and also by the hopes that others have in its capacity to achieve that mission. Military officers are very wary of any solution to the Aceh conflict short of the complete defeat of AGAM and the submission of GAM. Many believe that any concessions to the rebels, including substantial autonomy, could be the first steps toward independence. They therefore prefer to continue the current warfare rather than agree to concessions that might eventually result in what they would see as defeat.

Moreover, the campaign in Aceh is viewed as serving the interests of individual military and police officers as well as broader institutional interests. It is not uncommon for Acehnese and even some military personnel to refer cynically to Aceh as a "project", like East Timor and Irian Jaya, through which money is made, reputations are built and promotions gained.

A. Economic Interests

Continuing conflict in Aceh is seen to benefit TNI by justifying retention of the territorial structure that allows the army to tap into the economy nationally. For example, timber companies see advantage in employing former military officers to supervise their legal and illegal activities, and military backed businesses gain leverage in obtaining contracts because of the army presence and its ability to protect these business activities from other predatory forces. Disbanding the territorial system would lead to large reductions in the size of the army thus reducing its political importance and its dominance within the armed forces.

⁴³ "Militer Tak Mau Kalah (Lagi)", *Koran Tempo*, 9 May 2001.

⁴⁴ Compiled from newspaper and magazine reports.

⁴⁵ The ratio in the Malayan emergency started out at 5:1, reached 12:1 at the peak of the campaign and increased further as the communists were defeated. Robert Thompson, *Defeating Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1966, p.48.

Consequently, some level of conflict somewhere in the archipelago justifies the territorial organisation that underpins the army's access to the economy for institutional and individual gain and preserves broad institutional objectives.

Throughout Indonesia, TNI personnel are poorly paid and TNI commanders lack the funds and resources needed to conduct the operations they are required to undertake.⁴⁶ Units are often left to make their own arrangements for quarters, rations, transport and other operating costs. Moreover, individuals often seek private gain to supplement meagre salaries. Formal government policies are often ignored by the bureaucracy, military and police, which all collude in corruption because of low salaries, insufficient budget allocations to maintain regional administration, and the absence of the rule of law.⁴⁷

In Aceh, as in the other provinces of Indonesia, the military as an institution as well as individual soldiers actively seek funds from local sources. However, their capacity to extract funds is enhanced in conditions where violence is commonplace.

The military as an institution generally obtains contributions from enterprises that its soldiers protect. Under its Production Sharing Contracts, ExxonMobil in Lhokseumawe, for example, pays the Indonesian state oil company, Pertamina, for limited logistical support to the approximately 1000 security forces assigned to protect the Arun gas fields. This support includes some vehicles, accommodation, food, water, fuel and a small stipend for individual soldiers. Beyond this ExxonMobil has no legal obligation, and it claims not to finance military or police operations.⁴⁸ However, ExxonMobil's contribution is only part of a much larger contribution Pertamina is obliged to make for the protection of its assets in Lhokseumawe and elsewhere in Aceh.

Continuing hostilities create an atmosphere of uncertainty and insecurity. The vulnerability of the Lhokseumawe industrial complex and other industrial and commercial centres to attack by GAM makes their managers feel the need to seek additional security by paying local commanders to deploy soldiers to protect their enterprises. It can, therefore, be in the interests of the military if AGAM activity – within limits – continues in these areas. It is not impossible, as suggested in the earlier discussion of the closure of ExxonMobil's plant in Lhokseumawe, that the actual threats delivered to a company originate not from AGAM but from elements within the military aiming to raise the level of "protection money".

The military also uses its influence to gain access to business opportunities for both individual officers and military business networks. Although public data is naturally not available, it would be most surprising if there were no military involvement in the many subcontracts let by companies clustered in the industrial complex at Lhokseumawe. Again, in a lawless atmosphere, it is easier for military

⁴⁶ About 75 per cent of the TNI budget is said to come from extra-budgetary sources. See also ICG report on military *Indonesia: Keeping the Military Under Control*, ICG Asia Report No.9, Jakarta/Brussels, 5 September 2000, p. 16.

⁴⁷ For examples in the field of logging, see John F. McCarthy, *"Wild Logging": The Rise and Fall of Logging Networks and Biodiversity Conservation Projects on Sumatra's Rainforest Frontier*, Centre for International Forestry Research, Bogor, October 2000.

⁴⁸ ICG interview and written response from ExxonMobil spokesperson.

backed businesses to obtain opportunities that would not be normally available. The perceived capacity of military personnel to take retaliatory action in the event of rejection can often be decisive in such deals.

It is also claimed that TNI and police personnel derive considerable income from the marijuana trade and the legal and illegal exploitation of timber.⁴⁹ With the large number of troops deployed in the province, it is impossible for civil authorities to prevent this activity – when, of course, they themselves are not involved. At a lower level, the establishment of numerous roadblocks on major highways, ostensibly to prevent the movements of rebels, enables troops and police to extort passing traffic on a systematic basis.

B. Political Interests

Continuing hostilities might also serve the TNI's political interests. Since 1998 the military has been on the political defensive. Serving military officers can no longer be appointed to bureaucratic posts. Military representation is due to end in the legislatures in 2004 and in the People's Consultative Assembly before 2009. The military's role in internal security has been curtailed and much of its authority transferred to the police. As a result the military's capacity to raise its own funds has been reduced while military officers fear that they are losing their previous immunity to charges of corruption and human rights violations.

Some observers have, therefore, suggested that the TNI has an interest in sustaining the insurgency in Aceh as a way of underlining its continuing importance in national life. Aware that a settlement in Aceh or even a reduction in hostilities could further reduce their political importance and therefore their political influence, many officers seem reluctant to adopt approaches in Aceh other than the military one. Army officers are unhappy with the formal transfer of responsibility for internal security to the police and have used the Aceh case to argue that internal security operations should be returned to the TNI. If the military leadership, or segments of it, actually has a political agenda to at least preserve its political influence or even restore some of its lost political power, sustaining a low level insurgency in Aceh could help that endeavour.

The outbreak of unrest in Aceh after the fall of Suharto was attributable, at least in part, to the determination of the military to remain engaged in the province. It stretches credulity to believe that provocative incidents that preceded or followed efforts by both Presidents Habibie and Wahid to contain the violence and seek a solution to Aceh's problems were coincidental.⁵⁰ Rather, it seems that some officers were deliberately attempting to sabotage policies announced in Jakarta. Some of these incidents might, however, also have been related to institutional competition between the police and the TNI.

⁴⁹ Even President Wahid seems to hold this view, "Menolak Diplomasi Senjata", *Peristewa*, 25 May 2000.

⁵⁰ For example, in the week before planned discussions between Wahid and Abdullah Syafi'ie, TNI and police attacked several AGAM bases trying to find and capture him, "President set to hold dialog with Aceh leaders on Tuesday", *The Jakarta Post*, 22 January 2000. After an "informal" visit to Syafi'ie by Bondan Gunawan on behalf of the President on 16 March 2000, TNI launched a major sweep through the village where the meeting occurred. "Bagaimana Di Aceh Pasca Pertemuan Bondan dan Panglima GAM Abdullah Syafi'ie?", *Radio Netherlands*, 20 March 2000.

The negative approach of the TNI to peace negotiations was apparent again in its reaction to the Humanitarian Pause commenced in June 2000. The Humanitarian Pause has supposedly given TNI intelligence a clear picture of “the intellectual figures” behind GAM and the domestic and international NGOs that support SIRA. According to Colonel Syarifudin Tippe, the commander of Korem 012 in Banda Aceh until March 2001, however, it has also given the outside world the impression that Indonesia is prepared to compromise. TNI assesses that the Pause has advantaged AGAM by allowing it to raise funds and strengthen its forces, especially in North and West Aceh and Pidie.⁵¹

Ultimately, military officers continue to believe that the only way to defeat the Acehese insurgency is to crush it by military means. Whether or not military and police personnel are deliberately prolonging the conflict, it seems clear that few officers have a driving interest in resolving it through negotiations.

V. OBSTACLES TO A MILITARY SOLUTION

A. Operational Capacity

The TNI had become impatient with the situation that applied in Aceh until April 2001. According to Colonel Tippe, GAM controlled 80 per cent of the province.⁵² Moreover, casualties were considered too high, giving rise to growing pressure to escalate military operations.⁵³ Closure of the Arun natural gas field from the second week of March 2001 due to deteriorating security also stimulated lobbying for immediate action. Finally, the president was persuaded to issue Presidential Instruction 4/2001 containing the government's comprehensive security package.

Despite calls for a crushing blow against AGAM, the former coordinating minister for political, social and security affairs, General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, spoke of launching “limited” military operations while taking care to avoid civilian casualties.⁵⁴ Although such operations would not eliminate AGAM, they could be expected to reduce its control of the province, lower TNI and police casualties over the longer term and, hopefully from Jakarta's point of view, legitimate continued military presence.

The TNI/police pattern of operations Bambang Yudhoyono referred to has been laid out in Colonel Tippe's book.⁵⁵ It provides an analysis of the events that have brought Aceh to its current state of conflict. As could be expected from an army officer, Tippe rejects the call for a referendum on the grounds that it would cause

⁵¹ Syarifudin Tippe, *Aceh di Persimpangan Jalan*, Pustaka Cidesindo, Jakarta, November 2000, pp.87, 89.

⁵² This figure is open to arguments about what constitutes control, while inflating the extent of GAM control is a means of convincing Jakarta to impose emergency rules.

⁵³ TNI and police do not release detailed figures on casualties but the human rights group Forum Peduli Hak Asasi Manusia reports 262 soldiers and police, 1,540 civilians, and 95 AGAM killed during the period August 1998 until April 2001. Many more would have been wounded or injured. “Lain di Aceh, Lain di Jakarta”, Kompas, 15 April 2001.

⁵⁴ “Aceh: Taktik Operasi Hati-hati”, *Gatra*, 31 March 2001, p.72. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was dismissed from his cabinet post on 1 June 2001 for political reasons unrelated to this paper.

⁵⁵ Syarifudin Tippe, *Aceh di Persimpangan Jalan*, Pustaka Cidesindo, Jakarta, November 2000.

the break up of Indonesia and generate horizontal conflict – similar to that in East Timor in 1999 – due to the changed socio-cultural formation brought about by GAM terror and intimidation and the “games” of domestic and international NGOs.⁵⁶ Consequently, he recommends a classic anti-guerrilla strategy of winning the hearts and minds while conducting intelligence operations and “selective” military operations to weaken and eventually destroy AGAM.

The actual military plan of operations for Aceh is not publicly available but the pattern of TNI preparations and operations closely follows the proposals outlined by Tippe. He envisaged that the army would be responsible for “finding, smashing, and capturing” selected AGAM bases and gaining active public support for operations.⁵⁷ These combat operations would be preceded by intelligence operations designed to:

- Dismantle AGAM links to domestic and international NGOs.
- Dismantle and cut logistic support and funding networks.
- Uncover local and Jakarta based politicians who support GAM objectives.
- Circumvent AGAM efforts to provoke terror and intimidation by TNI/police.
- Determine AGAM numbers, organisation and locations.
- Form peoples’ resistance forces.
- Create tensions between the hardcore of GAM and their less zealous followers and GAM imitators.

Intelligence operations would provide the information on which to mount selective, limited military operations to wipe out and capture AGAM leaders and bases. Tippe envisaged that these operations would be mounted by “professional” troops imbued with democratic values and respect for human rights. Giving credence to Tippe’s book, army chief, General Endriartono Sutarto, announced that 1000 troops had been under training for this purpose since the beginning of 2001.⁵⁸ They began moving to Aceh on 22 April 2001, and operations commenced on 2 May.

The TNI’s authoritarian past has bred a penchant for intelligence operations that tend to have a life of their own beyond the control and, on many occasions, contrary to the interests of the TNI. The intelligence operation outlined below, involving the murder of activists from a non-governmental organisation (RATA), clearly shows the seamlessness of the TNI threat analysis.⁵⁹ The automatic assumption is that anyone or any organisation that supports independence for Aceh is an enemy whether they are pursuing their objective through peaceful means or not.

This is largely a continuation of the New Order attitudes that were prevalent during the Suharto regime and were a feature of the East Timor struggle. Intelligence operations can include covert missions to paralyse government and industry in order to vilify GAM and justify military operations. For example, the

⁵⁶ Syarifudin Tippe, *Aceh di Persimpangan Jalan*, Pustaka Cidesindo, Jakarta, November 2000, p.81.

⁵⁷ Tippe’s approach is reflected in the TNI commander’s statement that TNI reinforcements were being sent to Aceh to destroy [*menghancurkan*] GAM separatists. “TNI Mulai Beroperasi di Aceh”, *Koran Tempo*, 21 April 2001.

⁵⁸ “KSAD: Operasi Militer Guna Hancurkan Kekuatan Bersenjata GAM”, *Kompas*, 15 March 2001.

⁵⁹ See p.23 below.

work of local government in Banda Aceh has reportedly been severely curtailed by anonymous telephone threats warning public employees that their security might be jeopardised if they attend their offices.⁶⁰ GAM is undoubtedly responsible for many of these actions but paralysing government would also strengthen the case of those pressing for tougher action against AGAM.

Colonel Tippe's proposal that TNI intelligence should uncover Acehnese and Jakarta based politicians suspected of having connections with GAM could present specially sensitive problems.⁶¹ In practice it could mean that targets both in Aceh and elsewhere would be subjected to intelligence tricks, such as blackmail, bribery, and threats against family or welfare.

At the same time, Tippe suggested that civic action programs, known as Bhakti TNI, be mounted to pacify areas influenced by, or previously under, GAM control with the aim of winning support for Aceh remaining within Indonesia. Such programs would include refurbishing educational and religious schools and mosques, communal ablutions (toilets, bathing and clothes washing facilities) and common use areas and "empowering" farmers (especially in cattle raising and productivity techniques), providing medical services, and channelling humanitarian relief.

Given the TNI's poor record, it is fair to question whether it is capable of selective/limited operations that only target armed opponents. TNI fervently denies that it ever had a policy of violence toward its fellow citizens or that it has any institutional responsibility for the actions of errant individuals (*oknum*) who were sometimes caught red-handed in gross violation of national law and human rights. It must be asked, however, how the discrepancy arises between the "enlightened" explanations given by senior commanders and their spokespersons and the brutality that people experience in their everyday lives in Aceh.

Civic action programs also have a poor track record of achieving their desired outcomes because of corruption, bad planning and coordination, and breaches of discipline by troops. A public works official in Aceh, for example, has complained that the Rp.10 billion (U.S.\$1 million) allocated to TNI for civic action programs to alleviate the impact of widespread flooding in November 2000 has not been used for the intended purpose.⁶² A well publicised handover of Bhakti TNI projects was held in April 2001 to counter these claims but the general point is unchallenged. The result is that the military effort in general in Aceh is further discredited. More generally civic action is often seen as little more than a cover for future military operations.

B. Financial Imperatives

The first explanation stems from the fundamental fact that the government budget does not cover basic operating costs, including salaries, let alone a reasonable level of capital investment. Consequently, the military, like many other government agencies, has to seek up to 75 per cent of its own funding. Although the military and police have access to other sources of government funding (such

⁶⁰ "Kantor di Aceh Besar Lumpuh", *Jawa Pos*, 6 March 2001.

⁶¹ Syarifudin Tippe, *Aceh Di Persimpangan Jalan*, Pustaka Cidesindo, November 2000, p.96.

⁶² "Maunya Penyaluran Dana Itu Gaya "Aceh"", *Kompas*, 6 March 2001.

as contributions from local governments and government departments for services rendered) and operate their own businesses in a broad range of fields, additional funds are accumulated through the use or threat of coercion or the threat of refusing, withdrawing or delaying some essential facility.

By its nature the extent and form of such predatory behaviour is not measurable. It is also difficult to hold individuals accountable for particular incidents because the nature of the activity demands that any action taken against them does not undermine the system. Periodically, however, individuals do exceed the undefined bounds of what is acceptable or they are caught red handed and sacrificed in order to sustain the system.

The following example illustrates how financial need unavoidably leads to alienating behaviour. The patterns of behaviour revealed in this small, almost insignificant, case are repeated in a vast array of fields ranging from petty extortion to threats against major industries.

In early 2001, 700 truck drivers in Aceh went on strike, causing food shortages throughout the province and power blackouts in the provincial capital, Banda Aceh. According to reports, it is common practice for troops and police at the 42 checkpoints between the North Sumatra border and Banda Aceh to stop passing vehicles on the pretext of searching for weapons. During searches they regularly steal possessions and money from passengers and demand "pocket money" from drivers. The beatings and demands reached the limits of the drivers' tolerance at the beginning of February 2001.⁶³

As a result the local police chief ordered that action be taken against offenders while the army commander appealed to the community not to let the misdeeds of a few individuals (oknum) negate the good work of the soldiers. Revealing the systemic nature of the problem, however, the police chief said that troops and police were given extra pocket money for serving in Aceh but it was insufficient, and even the small allowance budgeted was often reduced by unexplained "deductions".⁶⁴ Nevertheless, he invited the drivers to report "mischievous" subordinates. The response of one truck driver was to say that even to look at the name tags of soldiers or police invited a beating let alone what might happen if they were reported.⁶⁵

These types of incident show:

- the economic benefits that can flow from the authority to conduct military operations;
- the necessarily arbitrary and situational nature of what constitutes "excesses";

⁶³ There is some suggestion that the drivers would not have gone on strike without military/police concurrence and that the strike was orchestrated to show the Acehnese the deprivation that could result from AGAM actions or cutting themselves off from the rest of Indonesia. Whatever the case, the point made here remains valid. Moreover, another road transport strike occurred in April/May 2001 for the same reasons quoted in the text.

⁶⁴ The allowance is supposedly Rp11,000 (US\$1.00) per day for the police, "Maunya Penyaluran Dana Itu Gaya 'Aceh'", *Kompas*, 6 March 2001.

⁶⁵ "Aceh: Buah Tangan Pungli", *Gatra*, 17 February 2001.

- coercion or threat as an essential ingredient of the system - otherwise why would the passengers surrender their possessions and money and the truck drivers tolerate "the bite of the mosquito"?
- the absence of the rule of law; and
- the systemic consequences of not properly funding the institutions of state.

No matter what the police chief or military commander might say, they are part of the system and have no power to change its fundamental nature although they do have some power to regulate excesses to ensure its survival until reform makes it redundant. Meanwhile, the logic of the system will continue to reward brutality by soldiers and police against their fellow citizens.

C. Ideological and Institutional Imperatives

Another explanation relates to the ideological framework in which the military conducts its operations. The TNI has a threat paradigm that holds the borders of the state to be sacrosanct. They are conceived as virtually God given and immutable, not the product of historical chance and community agreement or acquiescence at some arbitrary point in time.

Anything that threatens or is believed to threaten the borders, from within or without, is conceived as a threat to the state that the TNI is sworn to defend. Broader concepts of security encompassing security of the individual, the community, the state, and the region do not yet have any real resonance within much of the TNI. Moreover, globalisation is seen as magnifying the opportunities for domestic and international actors to collude in the destruction of the borders rather than as an opportunity to harness the productive power of the people and increase the prosperity of the individual, the community and the state.

These attitudes are reflected in the constant use of the family as the frame of reference for the relationship between the state and the people. As a military member of parliament described it, the problem in Aceh can be likened to a family where the father is responsible for the behaviour of his children.⁶⁶ If they are mischievous he should counsel them and try and guide them in the right direction but if they persist he is obliged to give them a thrashing to teach them the error of their ways.

This mindset results in the Acehnese, or any other recalcitrant group, not being viewed as fellow citizens with an equal vote and equal rights to express their views about how they should be governed. It does not usually occur to the holders of these views that, when translated to the field, a thrashing becomes the murder of civilians, rape, the destruction of homes and livelihood and the enduring hatred of the state for inflicting such suffering.⁶⁷ If it does occur to them, then that is seen as the price to be paid for threatening the borders of the state that the TNI is sworn to defend.

⁶⁶ Anonymous ICG interview.

⁶⁷ The catalogue of crimes committed by the security forces in Aceh, including murder, torture, rape, maiming, arson, theft and extortion, has been recorded by an independent commission established by the government and numerous other publications and press articles. The independent commission's report is entitled *Laporan Akhir Komisi Independen Pengusutan Tindak Kekerasan di Aceh*, Jakarta, 31 July 2000.

At the operational level, these attitudes are apparent in the recent testimony of an Acehnese aid worker who escaped death at the hands of TNI intelligence in December 2000. According to *Tempo* magazine, the witness and three colleagues were employed by RATA, an NGO funded by the Danish government to provide counselling and rehabilitation services to victims of torture and abuse in Aceh. Their vehicle was intercepted on the road by three vehicles containing Army intelligence personnel and Acehnese accomplices. They and another victim randomly picked up along the way were brutalised and had their possessions confiscated, including ATM cards and PIN codes. Four were executed. One managed to escape and was courageous enough to come forward and give evidence.

During interrogation, intelligence operatives accused the group of giving information to the Humanitarian Pause monitoring team about breaches of the ceasefire by TNI and police. They asserted that anyone who works for an NGO is GAM and accused the members of the group of stirring up the people against the security forces. They were also accused of treating Acehnese victims but not TNI or police victims. An extraordinary, but historically common, feature of the incident was that TNI members filmed their own brutality with a large shoulder mounted video camera.⁶⁸

Another example is the virtually routine practice of both TNI and Brimob troops who respond to attacks on themselves by burning houses and other facilities in villages that are suspected of harbouring the perpetrators of the attacks. In their search for their attackers, troops regularly seize any villagers in the vicinity, who are then beaten and tortured in order to extract information about AGAM activities and activists. It is claimed that rapes have also taken place during such raids. In one case helicopters were used to drop petrol bombs on a warehouse used to dry fish and store nets after a clash with AGAM in the Lhokseumawe area in early 2001.⁶⁹ This was not part of a military operation but "punishment" for suspected support of AGAM.

These incidents demonstrate the polarisation of the conflict: you are either with or against the TNI. Any type of "punishment" of those identified as opposed to the TNI and its sacred mission is justified. There is no sense that civil society has any place in the conflict.

In the absence of the rule of law it is a very short step from this sort of ideological view to the brutality and murder of the RATA incident described above. Had there been no witness, the killings would have been attributed to AGAM or some mysterious third force, commonly blamed for other incidents, such as the murders of Acehnese national parliamentarian, Nashiruddin Daud, in North Sumatra in January 2000, Safwan Idris, rector of the Islamic university in Banda Aceh in September 2000, the U.S. based Jafar Siddiq Hamzah, Chairman of the International Forum for Aceh, in Medan in November 2000, and Teungku Al-Kamal, member of the Aceh peace monitoring team, his lawyer and driver, in March 2001.

⁶⁸ The chief of military intelligence (a major) in Lhokseumawe and several other officers have been identified as suspects in the case. "Peristiwa", *Tempo*, 11 March 2001, p.36.

⁶⁹ Dan Murphy, "Ruinous Force in Aceh", *The International Herald Tribune*, 9 February 2001.

AGAM might be responsible for some of these killings but security forces are responsible for others. It is quite possible that this sort of action is not condoned by senior TNI and police leaders in Jakarta – in fact the perpetrators of the RATA murders are under investigation. But there is no doubt that it is a systemic problem and that the institution does nothing to stem it unless forced to take action to contain the damage in the interests of preserving the system.

This inevitably involves preserving the myth that the problems are isolated and perpetrated by errant individuals. Consequently, senior officers are never brought to account, and lower level officers take responsibility through a combination of fear, excessive commitment to esprit de corps, and rewards to ensure that system linkages are broken.⁷⁰ One example is the trial of the special forces major who took responsibility for the kidnapping of several political activists and the probable murder of several more in 1997-1998 claiming he was acting on his own initiative in the interests of the state. In occasional isolated cases where the system is threatened, crucial witnesses have reportedly been killed or vanished. An example is Lieutenant Colonel Sudjono, the alleged field supervisor in the massacre of 56 Blang Meurandeh villagers in Aceh in July 1999, who conveniently disappeared before he could be put on trial. Sudjono was head of the intelligence unit responsible for the RATA incident described above.

Where individuals are sacrificed to sustain the system, their sentences are usually very light, many do not actually serve their sentences, and there is an understanding that their personal and family welfare will be provided for.

Consequently, the ideological and institutional outlooks of the military have to be changed before it is capable of translating the subtleties of the application of force to a field environment in an emerging democracy. There are some early signs of change. For example, the army chief, General Endriartono Sutarto, acknowledged the challenge when he said that the special training giving to troops to be sent Aceh would help ensure that they did not infringe human rights, take revenge on innocent civilians or burn their houses.⁷¹ This involves a massive change of culture, which the chief of territorial staff, Lieutenant General Agus Wijoyo, has admitted will take time.⁷² Part of changing culture involves the enactment of legislation regulating the conduct of military operations at home and the establishment of the rule of law to bring offenders at all levels to account for misconduct.

⁷⁰ *Indonesia: Impunity Versus Accountability for Gross Human Rights Violations*, ICG Report No. 12, Jakarta/Brussels, 2 February 2001.

⁷¹ "KSAD: Operasi Militer Guna Hancurkan Kekuatan Bersenjata GAM", *Kompas*, 15 March 2001.

⁷² "TNI Is Seriously Carrying Out the Reform Process." *Van Zorge Report on Indonesia*, 4-6 March 2001, p.38.

VI. A MORE POSITIVE ROLE FOR THE MILITARY

Although Tippe openly admitted that the TNI's image was so bad it could not lead the push for reconciliation, he argued that it must nevertheless be included.⁷³ The TNI could do a lot to improve its image nationwide by honestly reviewing its role in Aceh over the years; curtailing self-defeating practices, especially by intelligence units; reducing troop levels to the minimum required to maintain the status quo while negotiations proceed; and being prepared to make reasonable concessions needed to achieve a peaceful outcome. The New Order concept of compromise - in which the weaker party accepted the few crumbs the government or TNI was prepared to give - is no longer a workable formula.

A. Strategy

The six-point plan announced 11 April 2001 makes no concession to the possibility of independence and implies that negotiations with GAM overseas and in Aceh are unlikely to succeed. Although future negotiations have not been ruled out, the government's primary objective in Aceh seems to be to "uphold the sovereignty of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia by restoring security and public order".⁷⁴

The government has emphasised that military operations are only one part of the six-point plan. Military operations, according to several ministers, are only a last resort and will be limited to action against the armed members of AGAM. However, with as much as 80 per cent of the province beyond its control, other elements of the package cannot be implemented unless the government restores its authority in "lost" territory.

This would require military operations much more successful than envisaged in this report. Designing a theoretical strategy to achieve the government's objective is relatively simple but devising one that will work in the absence of the rule of law and that can be implemented by an unreformed military with TNI's structural problems is next to impossible.

If the government is seeking a peaceful solution, the key to the six-point plan is the bill on regional autonomy for Aceh that the minister for home affairs is responsible for shepherding through the DPR. But so far there is no sign that either the parliament or the government is prepared to make concessions adequate to win over sufficient advocates of independence.⁷⁵ If the bill does pass in workable form, the other elements of the six-point plan would be more appropriately developed as part of a negotiating strategy. In this case the appropriate military strategy would be to concentrate on assisting the police to maintain security and law and order in areas already controlled. Meanwhile, the TNI should not oppose moves by the government to open negotiations with GAM and other groups in Aceh. Ceasefire or cooperative security arrangements might

⁷³ Syarifudin Tippe, *Aceh Di Persimpangan Jalan*, Pustaka Cidesindo, November 2000p.83.

⁷⁴ Instruksi Presiden "Republik Indonesia Nomor 4 Tahun 2001 Tentang Langkah-Langkah Komprehensif Dalam Rangka Penyelesaian Masalah Aceh, Jakarta, 11 April 2001, Mengimbang: g.

⁷⁵ Draft bill about Special Autonomy For the Province of Aceh in the form of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam. A separate ICG paper will be issued on the autonomy proposals for Aceh.

be pursued as interim measures to reduce conflict but they should not be a precondition to substantive talks.

B. Command and Control

Whichever strategy the government takes in Aceh, it needs to review command and control arrangements and define responsibilities between the agencies involved. Although Presidential Instruction 4/2001 allocates responsibilities, no government minister seems to have authority for vigorously seeking an end to the conflict. The coordinating minister for politics, social affairs and security has overall responsibilities for coordination but he has little time to devote to specific matters. Either a lead minister or a new special minister should be appointed to take direct responsibility for resolving the conflict.

The government is also contemplating establishing a taskforce to oversee implementation of its six-point "comprehensive" strategy for resolving the conflict that would include coordination of the military effort. While a taskforce might circumvent political problems, the danger is that it will impose another layer of bureaucracy on an already labyrinthine system. The same outcome could be achieved by making sure the lead or special minister mentioned above had appropriate ministerial representatives on his staff.

Such actions will have little effect if a workable national level policy has not been formulated and agreed, at least in outline, between the executive and legislature. Some coordination has occurred through the DPR committees but close liaison and lobbying will be needed to ensure parliamentary support for the concessions that will have to be made in the course of any serious effort to find a solution to the conflict.

At province level there is a need to appoint a civilian authority with powers to coordinate the actions of all provincial and central government agencies in Aceh, including the security forces. The local leadership councils (Muspida) left over from the New Order do provide a venue for periodic coordination of policy but in areas of conflict there is a need for close and constant control and monitoring of all agencies involved in the government's response. During the New Order period the powers vested in the military commander could be used for this purpose but they no longer apply.⁷⁶

One possibility would be to introduce a civil emergency which gives the governor extensive formal powers not only over civil administration but also over the security forces. Alternatively, special legislation could be introduced to answer questions like who has the authority to call out the army, what purposes it can be used for, whether it has powers of arrest, under what conditions it can conduct interrogations or use lethal force, who has authority to direct the army's operational employment, and how its actions will be coordinated with local government, other government agencies, and the community. The 1959 emergency legislation lacks clarity on these issues, particularly those related to control of military forces and limits of powers, so some form of emergency

⁷⁶ Powers originating from the Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order (Kopkamtib) or its successor the Coordinating Agency for the Maintenance of National Stability (Bakorstanas).

powers legislation or regulation is needed to define responsibilities and the restrictions that can legally be imposed on the population. Whichever course is adopted the governor's powers should include the right to demand the immediate withdrawal or isolation of individuals and units of the security forces suspected of undermining the government's strategy.

There might be some hesitation in giving such powers to a governor whose legitimacy is questionable because he was elected by a legislature that was itself chosen by only about 40 per cent of the eligible voters.⁷⁷ Either the risk must be taken or some other means of exercising effective control over the government's strategy in Aceh will have to be adopted – for example, despatch of a senior central government liaison officer to work with the governor.

As already noted, responsibility for the restoration of security and public order under Presidential Instruction 4/2001 remains with the police assisted by the TNI. Cooperation between police and military is currently undermined by institutional competition. The police are trying to reestablish their independence and authority after their recent release from being the junior service of the armed forces. Consequently, the police have been reluctant to call for military assistance when warranted, and the TNI has been reluctant to provide assistance at times, claiming that it lacks legal authority. The new command arrangements mentioned above might mitigate the problem but long term solutions require legislation and fundamental reform of military and police doctrine.

C. Immediate Measures

Whichever strategy the government takes, actions that might show the good faith of the security forces and demonstrate to the Acehnese people that the central government is serious in seeking a genuine end to the conflict could include:

- suspension of selective/limited operations for a period long enough to reach a political solution, while accepting that holding operations will be necessary to maintain the status quo during negotiations;
- cancellation of all coercive intelligence operations;
- imposition of discipline and order on Brimob – for example, rules of engagement, wearing of uniforms, accurate reporting of incidents, and accountability for abuses of power;
- disarming of civilian agents of the military and arranging for their reintegration into Acehnese society or their relocation;
- forbidding the formation of militia;
- reducing military and police units to the absolute minimum necessary to maintain the status quo until a political agreement is reached;
- reducing activities that offend the people of Aceh, such as sweeping operations and excesses at roadblocks;
- honouring ceasefire agreements in letter and spirit;
- inviting civil society groups to monitor the treatment of prisoners and to witness interrogation of prisoners where lawyers are not present;
- cancellation of civic action programs with the exception of specialist services like medical and dental or engineering services;

⁷⁷ Many voters boycotted the general election in 1999 or were too intimidated to participate.

- if TNI wants to continue to be associated with general civic action programs, provision to NGOs or communities of the resources (including military specialists) to conduct such programs on behalf of TNI;
- phasing out of military and police business activities based on non-competitive advantages; and
- legal action against military and police personnel suspected of human rights violations.

VII. THE ROLE OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

The pros and cons of foreign assistance to military forces and police constitute a complex and controversial issue that will not be covered in this paper. Donor and supplier countries need to assess whether provisioning TNI is in Indonesia's broader interests until such time as some sort of credible government is in place and resolution of the Aceh problem is in prospect. Foreign governments, however, should definitely help facilitate resolution of the Aceh problem. That might mean facilitation of negotiations, which could include providing TNI and GAM with accurate information and analysis about the options open to them. Confidential mediation, such as that provided by the Henry Dunant Centre, might be useful in providing such services without becoming captive to the political interaction among and between the parties to the conflict.

Assistance in the military field can also be offered that is dependent on a successful completion of negotiations. For example, aid could be given towards the education and training of AGAM members inducted into the national security forces as part of an agreement, and assistance could be provided to facilitate the reduction of central government security forces in the province. The latter might be in the form of help with upgrading naval and air bases in Aceh and providing barracks, housing and training facilities for the small residual army garrison.

Foreign assistance might also be useful in monitoring and auditing agreements reached between the parties though the deployment of peace keeping forces or mechanisms to coerce compliance with any agreement are not likely to be acceptable to the Indonesian government. Transparency and democratic transition in Indonesia are Aceh's best hope that compliance with agreed concessions are actually implemented and sustained.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The Acehese struggle for justice has deep political and social roots. The cleavages within Acehese society are overlaid with a strong sense of grievance about the treatment received from the central government since the earliest days of independence. The military response to the armed uprising in the late 1970s and particularly in the 1990s only served to spread and intensify this sense of injustice.

Fleeting opportunities to seek peace during the Habibie interlude and after the election of the Wahid government were lost by circumstance and the malice of at least some elements of the security forces. Efforts at "humanitarian negotiation" have at best delayed a military offensive. As long as there is no physical separation between AGAM and the security forces and as long as AGAM is classified and treated as a criminal or separatist organisation, ceasefires and humanitarian pauses will have little effect.

The impression is sometimes created that TNI and police are stretched to the breaking point. For example, at one time in 2000, there were reportedly 21 battalions in Maluku as well as deployments in Irian, on the West Timor border, Aceh, and in support of the police in Jakarta. Nevertheless, it would be wrong for the Acehese to draw hope from this that their continued armed insurgency will add to the cumulative forces that will split Indonesia asunder. The TNI does not lack troops. If it did, it would have made more compromises.

If Indonesia does disintegrate, it will not be from having too few soldiers or police but from an inability or unwillingness to meet the aspirations of a large and diverse population spread over a vast area and a failure to adjust economic policies to the realities of a rapidly globalising world.⁷⁸ In other words the Indonesian elite might commit national suicide but AGAM would not be able to claim credit for that.

Although AGAM cannot win independence for Aceh, it could sustain a lengthy guerrilla campaign and conduct terrorist activities elsewhere in Indonesia on a sporadic basis. Consequently, even with well trained, organised, and disciplined troops, a military solution is unlikely to succeed unless the underlying problems are addressed. The Jakarta government has not been able to generate either the policy or the resources to institute the reforms needed to create this level of capability in the security forces.

Few TNI officers understand that meaningful concessions will have to be made if a political solution is to be found in Aceh. Despite some rational analysis, the degree of self delusion about their relationship with the people of Aceh is of New Order proportions. Consequently, they view AGAM as a diseased branch that needs lopping off rather than a condition afflicting the whole tree.

⁷⁸ The challenges facing Indonesia are encapsulated in Thomas L. Friedman, *Understanding Globalization: The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Anchor Book, New York, April 2000.

Even if the aim of dispatching more troops to Aceh and intensifying operations is only to force GAM to the negotiating table, it is unlikely to be productive. History shows that embedded coercion will increase in proportion to the number of troops sent to Aceh and negate the declared objective of winning the hearts and minds of the people. This objective might also be undermined by a determination, at least by elements of the military, to sustain the conflict to preserve political and economic interests. The government's failure to prosecute those responsible for past crimes in Aceh, let alone more recent offences, contradicts any claims that the security forces have learnt the lessons of the past.⁷⁹

Reform of the intelligence apparatus both to build the necessary capability within the police force and to control excesses in the security forces generally is an essential first step toward bringing the security forces under control. Intelligence collection and analysis should be separated from the authorisation of operations. Oversight mechanisms to stop the excesses of TNI intelligence and curtail the intrusion of external influences on intelligence operations are also needed.

Civic action programs should be rethought and other ways of building community relations between the people and the security forces explored. This might even entail total withdrawal from such activity, except by specialists, until reform has been entrenched.

The president has been correct to leave responsibility for security with the police. However, the police are not organised, equipped or trained to deal with armed, politically motivated groups alone and should be able to call on TNI to assist within the rule of law. Such operations need to be set within a strategy that maintains the status quo and encourages AGAM to negotiate a peaceful outcome to the conflict.

Ending the conflict through peaceful means will require vigorous national political leadership. Appointing a lead or special minister would provide the focus and constant attention required to bring the conflict to a conclusion. Liaison between the executive, parliament and the negotiating parties will also be essential to achieving a workable solution.

Appointing a political leader in Aceh with full authority to control and coordinate all government agencies and security forces in the province will also help keep the government's campaign focussed and minimise the scope for external actors to foil the government's strategy.

If the senior leadership of the security forces is to demonstrate genuine commitment to seeking a political solution, it will have to implement a number of measures to sever relationships that have the effect of sustaining the security presence. It will also have to change the behaviour of the troops in the field and make commanders responsible for their own actions and those of their subordinates.

⁷⁹ In a newspaper poll 80 per cent of Acehnese and 76 per cent of non-Acehnese respondents were dissatisfied with the failure to prosecute offenders of human rights in Aceh. "Aceh: Konflik Tanpa Ujung", *Kompas*, 15 April 2001.

Foreign assistance can have a minor role to play in facilitating negotiations and any continuing conflict reduction measures. If a political agreement is reached, there might also be scope to assist with training AGAM members absorbed into the security forces and to assist TNI with relocating the security forces that remain in Aceh. There may also be scope to assist with auditing the implementation of any settlement to minimise the chances of the conflict being reignited by misperceptions on either side.

It must be emphasised that the security aspects discussed here are unlikely to have much effect if the Indonesian government, parliament and security forces are not prepared to make the concessions necessary to at least open the possibility of a peaceful settlement. Colonel Syarifudin Tippe's book is appropriately titled "Aceh at the Cross Roads". Will the country's leaders, both civil and military, take the road to peace and take it together? The fate of the country and the lives of the Acehnese are in their hands.

Jakarta/Brussels, 12 June 2001

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