

Indonesia: Tackling Radicalism in Poso

I. OVERVIEW

A year after major police operations in the Central Sulawesi district of Poso, there are grounds for cautious optimism that Muslim-Christian and jihadist violence is a thing of the past. But much remains to be done to ensure that peace is sustained, including resolving underlying grievances relating to justice and accountability, and ensuring effective targeting and oversight of recovery funding.

Serious violence in Poso has had a ten-year history. Between 1998 and 2001, it had been the scene of Christian-Muslim fighting. After 2001 and a government-brokered peace pact, the violence became one-sided, with local extremists, many of them linked to and directed by the extremist organisation Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), mounting attacks on Christians, local officials and suspected informants. The 11 and 22 January 2007 operations were the culmination of almost a year's unsuccessful effort by the police to persuade those responsible for criminal acts to turn themselves in. Fourteen militants and one policeman died in the process, but Poso is quieter and safer, by all accounts, than it has been in years. As a result of the January operations:

- almost all the JI religious teachers from Java have fled the area;
- the perpetrators of all the jihadi crimes committed since the 2001 Malino peace accord have been identified, and most have been arrested, tried and convicted, without any backlash;
- the JI administrative unit (*wakalah*) in Poso appears to have been destroyed, at least temporarily;
- a major vocational training program is underway aimed at ensuring that would-be extremists have career opportunities that will keep them out of trouble;
- the central government has made new funding available, including for improving education in the hope of diluting the influence of radical teaching; and
- no serious violence has taken place in Poso in twelve months.

Despite remaining questions about whether the death toll was needlessly high, the operations have to be seen as a net gain for peace. But many problems remain, and the question is how to ensure that peace will be sustainable. Underlying grievances, particularly relating to justice and accountability, have not been fully resolved. Oversight of the new funding is poor, there are many allegations of corruption, and there are problems in ensuring equity among different groups of recipients. The problems with cash handouts to conflict victims mirror the difficulties that Aceh has faced with reintegration funding. Public distrust of the police remains high, particularly among non-governmental organisations (NGOs), hampering the prospects of community-based security.

The government at all levels – national, provincial and district – needs urgently to institute strict auditing measures and increase transparency about how and to whom funds are being disbursed. Police and NGOs need to find ways to end their cold war. And donors need to ensure that a useful vocational training program for released prisoners and young men deemed potential troublemakers can be evaluated and continued.

II. NEW INSIGHTS ON PAST EVENTS

The basic facts leading to the January 2007 operations have been set out in earlier reports.¹ The 25 October 2005 beheadings of three schoolgirls prompted the government of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to recognise, finally, that the violence in Poso was not “purely criminal”. The police national counter-terror team was sent to investigate. In February 2006, it arrested, interrogated and released a JI teacher, Sahl, from Semarang, Central Java, who worked at a boarding school (*pesantren*) for girls in Poso that seemed to be the nerve centre of militant activity. The school, in an area of the city known as Tanah Runtu, was owned by Haji Adnan Aرسال, a signatory of the 2001 peace accord and the best-known Muslim leader in Poso.

¹ See Crisis Group Asia Reports N°127, *Jihadism in Indonesia: Poso on the Edge*, 24 January 2007; N°103, *Weakening Indonesia's Mujahidin Networks: Lessons from Maluku and Poso*, 13 October 2005; and N°74, *Indonesian Backgrounder: Jihad in Central Sulawesi*, 3 February 2004.

Sahl's arrest started a chain reaction. In May 2006, police arrested three men involved in the beheadings, including a Mindanao-trained JI leader named Hasanuddin, Haji Adnan's son-in-law. Based on their information, police put together a wanted list (*daftar pencarian orang*, DPO) of 29 suspects, believed responsible for most of the major bombings and murders in Poso since 2003, and began a campaign to persuade them to surrender. Negotiations dragged on for months. Then on 22 September 2006, the government executed three men who had been sentenced to death for their roles in the May 2000 massacre of Muslims that became the single bloodiest incident of the Poso conflict. A few days later, a group of Christians murdered two Muslim fish traders in retaliation. A string of bombings followed. On 16 October 2006, the head of the Central Sulawesi Protestant Church was assassinated.

On 22 October, the day before Idul Fitri marking the end of Ramadan, police clashed with militants in and around Haji Adnan's *pesantren*, killing one student. A mob destroyed a community police post, and later the homes of two policemen were burned to the ground. Police stepped up their call on the DPO suspects to surrender, saying they were prepared to use force if they did not. On 11 January 2007 they mounted an operation in the Gebangrejo neighbourhood near Tanah Runtuh where some of the ringleaders were believed to be hiding. In one house, they killed Dedi Parsan, a wanted suspect, and arrested four other men, only two of whom were on the original list. A JI leader, Ustadz Rian, was shot and killed as he came out of Haji Adnan's *pesantren* – according to the police, bomb in hand.²

After that raid, the Tanah Runtuh militants set up roadblocks preparing for another police assault. They were joined by members of other groups who came to their defence. The police appeared on the morning of 22 January and immediately drew fire. One officer was killed, and by the time the shooting was over, thirteen of the militants were dead; another apparently died from beatings suffered in custody. One of the dead was another Javanese JI leader, Ustadz Mahmud. Dozens were arrested, and in the days and weeks that followed, others either turned themselves in or were captured. But many fled, and by the end of 2007, eight persons on the original list remained at large, and several *ustadz*, only later identified as suspects, had fled the area.

Information from a few key Poso suspects led directly to the arrests of JI leaders in Central and East Java in March and June 2007, including two top leaders, Ainul Bahri alias Abu Dujana and Zuhroni alias Nuaim alias Zarkasih,

the acting *amir*.³ From all these men, some new information emerged about the lead-up to and aftermath of the 22 January operation:

- JI's central leadership was deeply involved in events in Poso; Ustadz Rian (Riyansyah), the man killed by police on 11 January, requested and received two shipments of explosives in 2006 through the logistics unit of the military command controlled by Abu Dujana. Rian personally came from Poso to Surabaya to pick them up; he also attended a meeting of the JI military wing in Solo in October 2005.⁴ Also known as Eko and Abdul Hakim, Rian was in the prestigious class of 1987 at the JI military academy on the Afghan-Pakistan border.⁵ He was one of about seven JI men from Java working on religious outreach, recruitment and military training, but he was the one that local JI members turned to most frequently for advice. He and Ustadz Mahmud arranged for weapons as necessary.⁶
- Haji Adnan's claims that he had no idea what was going on in his own *pesantren* are belied by the statements of some of those arrested. A man involved in the beheadings said he and others hid inside the *pesantren* for two months in early 2006; Haji Adnan advised them not to go out and gave them money for basic needs.⁷
- Many of the local DPO suspects wanted to surrender by mid-January 2007 but were dissuaded by both the Javanese teachers and one of their own members. In a meeting on 10 January, on the eve of the first police raid, most of the suspects had agreed in principle to surrender but were still

³ The spellings "Abu Dujana" and "Abu Dujanah" both appear frequently in the Indonesian media, but the first is used in the formal court indictment. *Amir* or commander is the highest position in the JI organisation.

⁴ Badan Reserse Kriminal Polri, Direktorat Kamtramnas, interrogation deposition of Maulana Yusuf Wibisono alias Kholis, 27 March 2007.

⁵ The class included Aly Ghufron alias Mukhlas of the first Bali bombing and former head of Mantiqi I; Thoriquddin alias Abu Rusdan, who assumed the role of *amir* in mid-2002, was arrested in 2003, released in 2006 and has been active in trying to rebuild the JI organisation since; Mustofa alias Abu Tholut, former head of JI special operations and Nasir Abas's predecessor as head of Mantiqi III; Edy Setiyono alias Usman of the Atrium bombings; Zuhroni alias Zarkasih alias Nuaim; and many others.

⁶ Rian supplied the weapon for the assassination of Pastor Kongkoli, according to Abdul Muis, the self-confessed perpetrator. Video testimony of Abdul Muis, January 2007 (exact date not clear).

⁷ Kepolisian Daerah Sulawesi Tengah, Direktorat Reserse Kriminal, interrogation deposition of Wiwin Kalahe, 31 January 2007, in case dossier of Rasiman alias Man.

² *Ustad* is a transliteration of the Arabic for religious teacher and is frequently used as a title.

working out the details of doing so. One of the DPO suspects reportedly incited them to continue to hold out, with disastrous consequences. Ustadz Rian also said repeatedly in religious study sessions in Tanah Runtuh that it was *haram* (forbidden) to surrender to the enemy – in this case, the police.⁸ Two other JI teachers from Java, Mahmud and Hiban, both killed on 22 January, similarly urged resistance.

- The fact that Muslims from across Poso and into neighbouring districts, including areas controlled by KOMPAK, a jihadi organisation separate from JI, came to join forces with their Tanah Runtuh colleagues on 22 January may have been less a simple show of solidarity than a reflection of how far the influence of the radical JI teachers had spread, since two KOMPAK men arrested acknowledge having attended study sessions they led.
- JI wanted to retaliate at various points for police actions in Poso but was too weak to do so. In November 2006, Abu Dujana held a meeting of his field coordinators to discuss possible operations in case the JI command decided to retaliate outside Poso for the 22 October clash at Haji Adnan's school. They decided to conduct a survey in Salatiga, Central Java with a view towards possibly targeting Dr John Litay, rector of Satya Wacana Christian University there, because he had been very vocal in his support of Christians against Muslims in Poso.⁹ Three men went to Salatiga and noted the location of Litay's home and the license number of his car but also found out he was in the U.S., so nothing more was planned.¹⁰
- After the 11 January raid, JI leaders met in Central Java and watched a video made of Ustadz Rian's burial but decided against any action. They met again after 22 January and concluded the situation was too unfavourable to retaliate, despite requests

from members to do so.¹¹ Finally, Abu Dujana and his coordinators met on 4 March 2007 and decided a response would be unwise because they were not ready.¹²

- Following the January operations, the JI leadership also ordered its remaining members in Poso to leave Tanah Runtuh; to move all weapons and explosives belonging to the organisation to a safe location; and to focus only on education and *dakwah* (religious outreach).¹³

More information is likely to emerge about the relationship between Java and Poso from the trial of Abu Dujana and Zarkasih, which began in late November 2007.

III. CURRENT STATUS

Three areas around Poso that had been centres of radical activity – Gebangrejo, Kayamanya and Poso Pesisir – have been quiet since January 2007. The radical teachers at Haji Adnan's Ulil Albab Pesantren for girls in the Tanah Runtuh complex and the al-Amanah Pesantren for boys in Poso Pesisir mostly are gone. Three of the most senior are dead: Rian, Mahmud and Iban. Ustadz Sanusi, who played a role in the beheadings, is rumoured to have fled to Mindanao. Three other teachers, Rifki, Munsip and Sahid, also fled, presumably to Java, and are being sought by police. Ustadz Anshori, another JI teacher but not a suspect in any crimes, accompanied their wives back to Java, then returned to Poso where he teaches at al-Amanah. The JI-led *taklim* (religious discussion groups), held openly in local mosques for anyone who wanted to come, have stopped, but there is some suggestion they may have moved to individual members' homes.¹⁴

A. JI ACTIVITIES

JI at the height of its influence had three units (*wakalah*) in Central Sulawesi, in Poso, Pendolo (near the South Sulawesi border) and Palu, the provincial capital. The one

⁸ Kepolisian Daerah Sulawesi Tengah, Direktorat Reserse Kriminal, interrogation deposition of Basri, 4 April 2007, in case dossier of Rasiman alias Man.

⁹ Badan Reserse Kriminal Polri, Direktorat Kamtramnas, interrogation deposition of Suparjo alias Sarwo Edi Nugroho, 27 March 2007.

¹⁰ The total cost of the survey was Rp.150,000 (about \$15), another reminder of how inexpensive jihadi activities in Poso have been. The total cost of the Tentena market bombing, according to one of the perpetrators, was Rp.800,000 (\$80), including the advance surveys of the area. (The current exchange rate is roughly \$1=Rp.9,300 but for ease of calculation, a rate of \$1=Rp.10,000 is used through the remainder of the report.) See Badan Reserse Kriminal Polri, Direktorat Kamtramnas, interrogation deposition of Syaiful Anam alias Mujadid alias Brekele, 27 March 2007.

¹¹ Kejaksaan Negeri Jakarta Selatan, "Surat Dakwaan Nomor Reg.Perk. PDM-1924/Jkt-Slt/11/2007", indictment of Zuhroni alias Zainudin Fahmi alias Oni alias Mbah alias Abu Irsyad alias Zarkasih alias Nu'aim, 26 November 2007; and "Surat Dakwaan Nomor Reg.Perk. PDM/1925/Ep.2/11/2007", indictment of Ainul Bahri alias Yusron Mahmudi alias Abu Dujana, 28 November 2007.

¹² Badan Reserse Kriminal Polri, Direktorat Kamtramnas, interrogation deposition of Maulana Yusuf Wibisono alias Kholis, 27 March 2007.

¹³ Indictment of Zuhroni, op. cit.

¹⁴ Crisis Group interview, 17 December 2007.

in Poso, based in Tanah Runtuh, appears to have ceased activity, at least temporarily. The January 2007 operations were all the more effective because they struck at JI's Central Sulawesi administrative structure, where control had just been centralised. Until mid-2006, JI activities in the province had been much more spread out, with *taklim* under the direction of local leaders in different districts. After the mid-2006 arrests of Hasanuddin and two others, when it became clear that the police had far more information than they ever had before about JI structure and personnel, some local leaders were recalled from places like Pendolo and Ampana, in Toja Una-Una district, to Tanah Runtuh, and *taklim* in several places stopped altogether. With resources then concentrated in and around the Ulil Albab school there, the impact of the 22 January operations was all the more devastating.

If police estimated in February that as many as 200 people had been involved in *taklim* across the districts of Poso, Tojo Una-una and Morowali, there is little sign of activity today.¹⁵ Dr Agus Idrus, a Surabaya doctor who reportedly took over as Poso JI leader after Hasanuddin's arrest, is believed to have returned to Java and is being sought by police. Ampana, in Toja Ina-una, is quiet but under watch, as much for fugitive KOMPAK leaders as for JI. Since 2001, it had been a training site and a transit area for evacuating mujahidin from Poso to Gorontalo, to the north, and from there to other parts of the country. An Ampana area coordinator, Nurgam alias Om Gam, died in the 22 January shootout; another key figure there, Ustadz Ibnu from Gladak, Central Java, was arrested and sentenced to four years in October 2007.¹⁶

Basri, the heavily tattooed thug and rock band member-turned-mujahid, who had been the leader of a JI hit squad responsible for more than a dozen acts of violence in and around Poso, was sentenced to nineteen years in prison in December 2007. He became a media star after his arrest in February 2007 and cheerfully told anyone willing to listen what he had done and with whom he had worked. He joined JI, he said, to avenge the deaths of his relatives in the May 2000 massacre, but despite seven years with the organisation, the religious teachings do not seem to have penetrated too deeply. Other members of the hit squad received equally heavy sentences.¹⁷

The *wakalah* (administrative unit) in Pendolo has been inactive since mid-2006, when Ustadz Anshori was recalled to Tanah Runtuh. That leaves Palu as the least damaged of the three *wakalah*, but even there the toll of police operations has been heavy, leaving a divided structure. JI leaders in Java reportedly want to "sterilise" the organisation by ensuring that no one exposed through arrest occupies a formal position. The top *wakalah* leader in Palu, arrested in 2003 and released in 2007, thus was not permitted to return to his position and was replaced by a man from Solo, reportedly from a thug background. Two JI *taklim* now meet regularly in Palu, one led by the ex-prisoner, one by the thug.¹⁸

B. MUJAHIDIN KAYAMANYA

Kayamanya, the neighbourhood next to Tanah Runtuh, which had been the stronghold of a radical group first known as Mujahidin KOMPAK and since 2004 as Mujahidin Kayamanya, is also quiet, but this may be deceptive. Members apparently retain a considerable arsenal, and a few of those in hiding are reportedly planning operations in neighbouring West Sulawesi.

One Kayamanya member and former thug, Sofyan Djumpai alias Pian, released in 2006 after serving a short sentence for illegal weapons possession, has abandoned radical activity to become a successful contractor, after receiving financial assistance from the police. Hence Said Malewa, who seemed at one point to be in line to become the group's leader, was released in late 2006 after serving time on a similar charge and is likewise involved in business. Another Kayamanya man, Farid Podungge, arrested and released at the same time as Hence, was rearrested in June 2007 and charged with setting off a small bomb at a discotheque in Palu called Space Bar, which he claimed was spreading vice.

Two Kayamanya men were arrested and tried in connection with the 22 January shootout. Wikra Wardana alias Aco, 21, was sentenced to three years. He had joined Mujahidin Kayamanya in 2005, which sent him for religious training to al-Islam Pesantren, the JI school in Lamongan, East Java associated with Bali bombers Ali Ghufron alias Muchlas and Amrozi.¹⁹ He returned after a month and taught religion in the Nurul Saada Mosque in Kayamanya, one

¹⁵ "Masih 200 orang pengikut faham radikal di Poso", *Harian Nuansa Pos*, 26 February 2007.

¹⁶ Thoyib alias Ibnu, born 1982, went to Poso in 2003 at the instruction of his father, Suyadi, who had reportedly himself worked in Ampana earlier. Kepolisian Daerah Sulawesi Tengah, Berkas Perkara No Pol BP 18/IV/2007/Ditreskrim.

¹⁷ The sentences were as follows: Mujadid alias Brekele, nineteen years; Abdul Muis, eighteen years; Wiwin Kalahe, eighteen years; Yudi Parsan, ten years three months; Amril

Ngiode alais Aat, fifteen years; Agus Jenggog, Tugiran, Ardin, and Ridwan alias Duan, all fourteen years.

¹⁸ Crisis Group interview, ex-inmate, Jakarta, November 2007.

¹⁹ Al-Islam Pesantren is a JI school but it has a strong association with KOMPAK. The wives of several KOMPAK leaders were al-Islam graduates, including the first wife of Abdullah Sunata, now in Cipinang prison, and Sultan Qolbi alias Ustad Arsyad, now in Ambon prison.

of several neighbourhood mosques where the group held *taklim*.²⁰ He and Rahmat Duslan, the other Kayamanya convict, described in testimonies how the JI teachers took turns leading religious discussions. Every Wednesday night, Ustadz Sahid and Ustadz Sahl led the *taklim* at Kayamanya Mosque. On Fridays, Sahl took it alone. On Sunday nights at the al-Firdaus Mosque in Tanah Runtu that many Kayamanya members attended, Sahl taught Islamic law, and Ustadz Achmad focused on jihad. On Mondays, Ustadz Mahmud taught jihad. Kayamanya members may have had a separate command structure from JI, but the same teachers were responsible for their indoctrination.

Information from Wikra and Rahmat reveals much about the Kayamanya leadership and core membership. Of the 21 men named as members, two of whom were killed on 22 January 2007, nine were unemployed, three were fishermen, two were students, two were fish traders at the Poso central market, and the others were working in various unskilled jobs. This underscores the value of vocational training programs, of which more below. The group's reported leader, Uci, has been on the wanted list since his involvement in an attack on a paramilitary police post in Loki, West Ceram, Maluku in May 2005 in which six people were killed. Though he is from the Togian islands, off the coast of Ampaña in neighbouring Toja Una-Una district, he mostly operated out of Poso. The provincial police are keeping an eye out for him in Ampaña, but the Poso police chief, appointed in March 2007, had never heard of him, raising questions about intra-agency coordination and information sharing.²¹

C. THE FUGITIVES

Of the original wanted list of 29 Poso suspects, nine remain at large, not counting those like Uci who were on earlier lists, or the radical *ustadz* who were added later.²² The most important is Taufik Bulaga alias Upik Lawanga, the man who made the Tentena market bombs, which killed 22 people in May 2005, and studied bomb-making in Java

with an apprentice of the late master, the Malaysian Dr Azhari Husin (killed in a police operation in November 2005, following the second Bali bombing). In a report released two days after the January 2007 operations, Crisis Group expressed concern that Taufik might try to join forces with Noordin Top, the fugitive leader of a JI splinter group responsible for major bombings in Jakarta and Bali, giving the latter some badly needed expertise. However, Taufik, like the other non-Javanese fugitives, is believed to still be in Central Sulawesi.

Extremism in Poso thus has not disappeared, but a number of programs are underway to try to lessen its influence.

IV. VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Vice-President Jusuf Kalla and the police have been the driving forces behind efforts to address radicalism in Poso. Those efforts have been hit-and-miss, backed by large amounts of money, mostly channelled through the coordinating ministry for people's welfare. The successes tend to be programs with carefully chosen beneficiaries, involving training and in-kind assistance. The failures tend to involve cash grants. There has been so much corruption of post-conflict funding in Poso that virtually all assistance is suspect and needs to be subjected to rigorous auditing and independent evaluation of results. That said, some interesting initiatives are underway, including one involving vocational training and livelihood assistance. It began as a police project to keep recently released radicals and some of their colleagues out of trouble. In the hands of one NGO, entrusted by police with implementation of the project but worried that it would be perceived as rewarding violence, it is turning into something larger: an effort at reconciliation, involving creation of cross-communal economic links.

A. THE ORIGINAL PROJECT

In mid-2007, after discussions with counter-terrorism police in Jakarta, the Central Sulawesi police, under the direction of its commander Badrodin Haiti, initiated a program to train "ex-combatants" – generally used as a euphemism for newly released prisoners from jihadi groups – and some of their colleagues who had never been arrested but were involved in the same organisations. The latter were referred to as "potentials" because they were seen as potential troublemakers. To reach out to the young men in question, police used a KOMPAK and Kayamanya member named Sofyan Djumpai alias Pian, a former thug who had been deeply involved in the Poso violence and served two separate sentences on weapons charges. Now showered with favours including business

²⁰ Kepolisian Daerah Sulawesi Tengah, Direktorat Reserse Kriminal, Case Dossier of Wakra Wardana alias Aco, No Pol. BP/21/IV/2007. According to one Poso observer, *taklim* were also conducted at the al-Muhajrin Mosque in Kayamanya, but those meetings had ceased by late 2007. Crisis Group interview, 12 December 2007.

²¹ Crisis Group interview, Adeni Muhan, Poso police chief, 12 January 2008. The lack of information on Uci's whereabouts is of particular concern since Crisis Group learned in late 2007 that he is actively trying to stir up communal conflict in Mamasa, West Sulawesi.

²² They are Iin alias Brur, Kholik, Papa Isran alias Yusran, Enal Ta'o, Iwan Asapa, Nanto alias Bojel, and Taufik Bulaga alias Upik Lawanga, all from Tanah Runtu; and Zulkifli and Alex from Kayamanya.

contracts from the Poso district government, he is seen as a police asset who has been instrumental in persuading his former associates to take part in the program.

In July 2007, two groups of sixteen men were recruited, the majority of them “potentials”. The first was given training in automotive mechanics, the second in furniture-making. It is not clear whether a survey of the labour market was done to ensure that these were marketable skills, but the police are convinced they can lead to self-employment and that once trained, the men will be able to find jobs anywhere, including outside the Poso area.²³ The trainees were given the necessary tools, such as handsaws for the furniture-makers, as well as pocket money for the sixteen-day courses. The total cost was Rp.73,120,400, just under \$8,000.²⁴

This was followed by a program in December 2007-January 2008 to train nineteen wives and widows considered “conflict victims” but in fact, the wives of men on the wanted list, prisoners (including Basri’s wife) and “ex-combatants”. In an unfortunate example of gender stereotyping, the skills offered were sewing and cooking, though as a local NGO representative noted, the women would have a much better chance making money learning how to repair handphones.

The men’s training program offered not only an opportunity to provide skills but also an excuse for regular follow-ups by the provincial police to find out how the participants were doing economically and generally to keep in touch. The police commander, therefore, decided to expand it to include some 160 more “ex-combatants” and “potentials” and secured funding from the coordinating ministry for people’s welfare. Because he believed the program would have a greater chance of success (and of attracting recruits) if it were not managed by the police, he persuaded the head of an NGO in Poso to take it on, but the NGO had other ideas about how the program should be run.

B. TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

The NGO in question was the five-person Training a Self-Sufficient Nation Foundation (Yayasan Bina Bangsa Mandiri, known as YB2M), led by Syarifudin Odjobolo in Poso Pesisir. Syarifudin was a respected community leader and one of the few willing to risk disapproval from friends and others in the community for having anything to do with the deeply distrusted police. He was impressed

by Badrodin Haiti and agreed to work with him, but his first question was why no Christians were targeted for assistance. The response was that the violence was coming from Islamic extremists, and it was they who needed alternatives. Syarifudin argued that this risked leaving the impression of partisanship and suggesting that violence brought benefits.²⁵ He urged expanding the program to include Christian “potentials” as well as Muslims and Christians not involved in the conflict but who could be “rewarded” for engaging in reconciliation activities. The police agreed, as long as the 160 men initially chosen were included.

Syarifudin, like the police in the initial project, had to work through go-betweens who knew the men in question. He used four: Sofyan Djumpai, who had coordinated the original police project; Aco GM, a KOMPAK man; Guntur, known as the right-hand man of Haji Adnan; and Syahril “Ayi” Lakita from Tanah Runtu, one of those on the original DPO list, who in December 2006 turned himself in and was released a week later. Through them, the “potentials” and former prisoners were encouraged to submit proposals for livelihood projects, in a program very similar in concept to the reintegration initiative in Aceh, but on a smaller scale and better monitored.²⁶

One of the first to apply was Andi Bocor, who had also been the first on the DPO list to turn himself in, in November 2006. His proposal involved setting up a fish trading company with seventeen others, all considered “potentials”. The police suggested adding three others, Bocor agreed, and YB2M found them a used fishing boat for approximately \$8,500. The rumour in January 2008 going around the Palu and Poso NGO community (deeply distrustful of the police) was that the police gave the boat to Andi Bocor as a reward for turning himself in. While there was almost surely an element of that, the fact that it was also part of a livelihood project involving twenty people and training by a government extension agent from the fisheries department remains largely unknown.

With the help of two men from the synod of the Central Sulawesi Protestant Church, Syarifudin solicited proposals from several Christian “potentials” and ordinary villagers. One group proposed a pig-raising project; Syarifudin convinced them to change it to fish-raising.²⁷ Pigs would

²³ Crisis Group interview, Badrodin Haiti, Palu, 9 January 2008.

²⁴ Central Sulawesi Police letter No.B/1290/VIII/2007, 13 August 2007.

²⁵ Indeed, community members Crisis Group interviewed in December 2007-January 2008 accused the police of rewarding troublemakers.

²⁶ For more on reintegration programs in Aceh, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°139, *Aceh: Post-conflict Complications*, 4 October 2007.

²⁷ About 30 individuals were given three-days training in fish cultivation, provided with fish traps at Rp.1.6 million (about \$160) and twenty fish per person.

have been more lucrative, but cooperation with Muslims would have been impossible. With fish, he saw the possibility of linking it up with Andi Bocor's project, so the Christian fish-farmers could market their goods through the Muslim traders.²⁸ This may prove to be unrealistic, but it is innovative, long-term thinking.

There are also animal husbandry projects in Poso, four different kinds of automotive repair projects in Palu (involving some JI ex-prisoners), a community forest project, an organic cacao cultivation project and a savings and loan program, the latter one of the few for women only. None of the projects involve cash grants – only training and in-kind assistance.

The grant from the ministry runs out in April 2008, at which time YB2M will evaluate the projects. But it will probably be too early to judge the results fairly; an independent review of both the economic and socio-political impacts, with the prospect of additional funding by another donor, would be desirable.

C. THE CASH GRANTS PROGRAM

A separate, more controversial program for ex-prisoners is being funded by the Poso *kabupaten* (district) government out of the Rp.58 billion (about \$5.8 million) "recovery grant" from the central government for Poso. Completely independent of the police program, it initially involved cash grants of Rp.10 million (about \$1,000) to 125 Muslim ex-prisoners, again, much along the lines of the initial cash handouts to ex-rebels in Aceh. Recipients were supposed to be ineligible for the YB2M program, but there was some double-dipping. As in Aceh, some complained that they received less than promised, with reports of deductions for unspecified administrative costs. Only Muslims were targeted, again because only they were seen as the problem. But in November 2007, 83 Christian ex-prisoners involved in the violence protested to the district head's office, alleging discrimination and demanding equal treatment.²⁹ In January 2008, 85 men (two more were added) each received what the district government said was an initial Rp.2.25 million (about \$225); another tranche was promised, but it remains to be seen whether the total will reach Rp.10 million.³⁰

One of several arguments in favour of not neglecting the Christian community is that several American evangelical

organisations are hovering, looking for opportunities to expand their influence. One such group, the Oklahoma-based Voice of Martyrs, already has provided assistance to a group of conflict victims who tried and failed to get help from the government. Elsewhere in Indonesia, particularly in West Java, aggressive evangelicals have spawned a radical Muslim backlash, and this is the last thing that Poso needs.

D. NEED FOR EVALUATION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The idea of providing economic assistance and vocational training to ex-combatants from both communities and individuals involved in radical groups is appropriate for Poso and indeed, one recommended by Crisis Group in 2005.³¹ The general educational and skill level of the extremists there is low, and the possible impact of training programs greater than for similar groups in Java, where the level of both schooling and ideological indoctrination tends to be higher. But these programs, however well-intentioned, should not be assumed to be successful without a clear definition of the criteria for success and close monitoring by independent agencies to see that those criteria are met. If, at any stage, indications of corruption are found, they need to be quickly investigated, and if irregularities are found, the perpetrators need to be punished.

The police, especially at the provincial level, are involved in some useful initiatives, but there is little knowledge or appreciation of them in the community. In Poso and Palu, police and NGOs operate in a state of mutual hostility, with a few rare exceptions. The local NGOs see the police as brutal, based on a long history of wrongful arrests and ill-treatment of suspected terrorists with no accountability for the perpetrators; the police see many of the NGOs as deliberately spreading lies about their actions.

The cold war between the two is illustrated by the case of two high school girls, Ivon and Yuli, shot in November 2005. Ivon testified that one gunman had been a police officer whom she identified by name. The case became a cause célèbre, justifying all NGO suspicions of police involvement in the conflict. The officer was officially declared a suspect despite a strong alibi, while police questioned Ivon's reliability as a witness. After the January 2007 operations, Wiwin Kalahe, one of those arrested from Tanah Runtuh, admitted his role in the crime, not only to the police but privately to a friend. No police were involved. Confronted with his confession, Ivon changed her story. Wiwin and three others were convicted of this and other

²⁸ Crisis Group interview, Syarifudin Odjobolo, Poso, 11 January 2008.

²⁹ "83 Bekas Napi Kasus Poso Tuntut Perhatian Pemerintah", 8 November 2007, at <http://catatanposo.blogspot.com>.

³⁰ Crisis Group interview, Christian community leader, Tentena, 12 January 2008.

³¹ Crisis Group Report, *Weakening Indonesia's Mujahidin Networks*, op. cit.

crimes in December 2007. But many NGOs still believe the original version and that she was pressured to recant, despite the evidence presented in court. Journalists who observed the police reconstruction in 2007 said Wiwin did not seem to know what he was doing, further heightening suspicions. The case is a barrier between NGOs and police that seems impossible to break down, but improved communication would be an enormous boost to police-community relations and thus to security.

V. EDUCATION

Another deradicalisation initiative in Poso involves the construction of a new mega-*pesantren*, designed in part to siphon students away from radical schools but also to create an institution of national calibre that would be a source of pride for Poso, to the point that radical influence would be undercut. To guard against charges of bias, the government in Jakarta also made funds available for the expansion of a Protestant theological school in Tentena. The total off-budget package, channelled through the coordinating ministry for people's welfare, was Rp.27 billion (about \$2.7 million).

A. THE NEW PESANTREN

Only days after the 22 January 2007 operations, Vice-President Kalla announced that the government would construct a modern *pesantren* in Poso that would create an educated, open-minded, nationalist student body less vulnerable to recruitment than the young men persuaded to join the radical *JI ustadz* in Tanah Runtuh.³²

The model he had in mind was Gontor, a *pesantren* in Ponorogo, East Java, that pioneered modern teaching methods and emphasised English and Arabic language training. Some of Indonesia's best-known Muslim leaders are Gontor alumni: Din Syamsuddin, head of Muhammadiyah, one of the country's largest Muslim social organisations; Hidayat Nurwahid, former head of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) and currently speaker of the People's Consultative Assembly; the late Nurcholish Majid, founder of Paramadina University and one of Indonesia's most thoughtful Muslim philosophers – as well as Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, the former *JI* amir. Gontor graduates are the equal of the country's best secular high schools students, can attend any university in the country and are welcomed at al-Azhar in Cairo, the Muslim world's premier institution for advanced religious study. The school has generated a few satellites around the country, but no

one imagined one in Poso, since nothing remotely approaching its quality now exists there.

Kalla lost no time in finding the money (Rp.17 billion, some \$1.7 million). The government also quickly secured some 30 hectares for the school in Tokorondo, Poso Pesisir, not far from Haji Adnan's al-Amanah Pesantren. President Yudhoyono came to lay the cornerstone on 1 May 2007, and construction of the gigantic complex – with 22 buildings, far larger than any other educational institution in the area – is now about 70 per cent complete.³³ A few dozen students are already enrolled, and its directors hope to open it officially in April 2008. When it is fully up and running, it is expected to have about 480 students in a six-year program equivalent to junior and senior high school.

The construction has gone fairly smoothly. The politics is another story. For one thing, the Christians had to be given something, so Rp.7 billion (\$700,000) was allocated for upgrading a theological school to a university. But the real struggle was within the small circle of Poso's Muslim leaders.

The government viewed the new *pesantren* as an instrument of deradicalisation. Officials at the national, provincial and district levels saw the post-2001 violence as the product in part of misguided education, especially the radical teachings propagated in Haji Adnan's schools that they believed had divided the *ummah* (the community of the faithful). The *pesantren* would be a way to reunite it. Initially, therefore, Haji Adnan was offered a deal: close your schools and become head of the foundation behind the new *pesantren*. Sources gave slightly different versions of the story: One said Haji Adnan was not asked to disband his schools, only to render them inactive; another said that he was asked to "relocate" his students to the new *pesantren*. A third said that he promised the schools would be restricted to Koranic recitation. Whatever the truth, local Poso officials understood that at the least, the school for girls in Tanah Runtuh would be closed.³⁴

The foundation behind the new *pesantren* was given the name "Ittihadul Ummah" (Unity of the Ummah), and the hope was that representatives of all major Islamic groups in Poso would be represented on its executive council. But the prospect of Haji Adnan as head drove out his long-term rival, Ustadz Abdul Gani Israel, head of al-Chairat, the largest Muslim organisation in Poso. Ustadz Gani was reportedly unhappy with the biggest troublemaker of them all being rewarded with a place of honour on the new

³² "Wapres akan Bangun Pesantren Modern di Poso", *Kompas*, 26 January 2007.

³³ "Asrama dan Ruang Santri Mendapat Prioritas; Pembangunan Pondok Pesantren Ittihadul Ummah Poso", *Radar Sulteng*, 27 August 2007.

³⁴ Crisis Group interviews, two local government officials and a Muslim community leader, Poso, 10-11 January 2008.

school's board, although he said the reason for pulling out was that he wanted to concentrate on the main al-Chairat *pesantren* in Poso, called al-Kautsar. Perhaps to ensure his goodwill, however, the foundation made a grant of Rp.450 million (\$45,000) to an al-Chairat orphanage, Yayasan Fadillah. In an effort to neutralise the impact of Haji Adnan's presence, the government changed tack and decided to give the position as head of the foundation to a local government representative: Abuthalib Rimi, the deputy *bupati* (district head).

Whether as a consolation prize for being knocked back to deputy director or for other reasons entirely, the pressure on Haji Adnan to close his schools was lifted. Ulil Albab in Tanah Runtuh and al-Amanah are both going strong, but have been legally merged as Pesantren Amanatul Ummah. From the road in Poso Pesisir, a new building can be seen under construction at al-Amanah. About twenty girls continue to be enrolled at the "campus" in Tanah Runtuh, and about 40 boys in Poso Pesisir.³⁵ No one in the local government appears to be bothered by the shift in its position. The view seems to be that as long as Haji Adnan is taking part in the new *pesantren* in one way or another, he cannot be promoting radical ideas at the same time; the counter-terror police are more sceptical.

As for the school itself, the foundation behind it receives the money from the coordinating ministry and in turn makes payments to Gontor, with which it has signed a memorandum of understanding, giving it full operational responsibility for ten years. The East Java school, with a staff of eleven in Poso, is in charge of everything from selecting the contractors to designing the curriculum to recruiting students and teachers – many of whom will reportedly be seconded from Ponorogo at least for the initial years. Operational costs have been estimated at Rp.1.2 billion (\$120,000) per year. While Gontor is required to make monthly reports to the Ittihadul Ummah Foundation, it is not clear who is responsible for the fiscal probity of the foundation itself.

Will the new school work as a deradicalisation tactic? The problem in many schools is not the curriculum per se; recruitment into radical organisations usually takes place as an extracurricular activity. There is no guarantee that a large state-of-the-art school with the most attractive buildings and the best teachers will prevent the kind of indoctrination that has taken place in Poso over the last eight years – and Haji Adnan's schools are still in place. But if sufficient scholarships are made available for children in neighbourhoods like Gebangrejo and

Kayamanya, and the school succeeds in raising the level of local education more generally, radical elements could well lose influence.

B. THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

While most attention was focused on the *pesantren*, the government also made funds available for the expansion of the Protestant theological school in Tentena and its upgrading to university status. The Christian University of Tentena (Universitas Kristen Tentena, UNKRIT) now has some 200 students; by the time the expansion is complete, it may double that enrolment. As of January 2008 only about 20 per cent of the faculty needed had been recruited.

The school is running into a problem not uncommon in Poso: some 200 families, almost all Christian and displaced from city neighbourhoods at the height of the conflict, are living on the land slated for expansion and do not want to move, although the original agreement with the local church – the landowner – was that they could stay only until 2008. Some 40 per cent of the household heads are civil servants; others have established businesses in Tentena or married locally. A new location has been prepared for them, but they complain it has inadequate access to water, a claim challenged by a local displaced persons coordinator who said the real problem is that they simply do not want to be uprooted again. Everyone involved in UNKRIT is hoping they can be persuaded to move, and no force will be necessary; the day of reckoning will probably be sometime in March 2008.

VI. GETTING CRITICS ON SIDE

From the beginning, police and other government officials were worried about the consequences of crossing Haji Adnan. In 2004 a senior official said frankly that if he were arrested, Poso would go up in flames.³⁶ While few officials trusted him, they believed – and still believe – that having him on side was critical to peace. They therefore tried to balance incentives and disincentives but had to be careful that in doing so, they did not alienate other law-abiding members of the Muslim community.

One way to do this was to send key players on desirable trips. The most desired of all, of course, was to Mecca: the police financed three groups to make the *umroh* (little haj). The first, in May-June 2007, consisted of Haji Adnan and his wife, some other founding members of the new *pesantren*, the father-in-law of a convicted but cooperative

³⁵ One source close to the radical network had higher figures, about 40 girls and 60 boys. But all sources agreed that while police operations affected the teaching staff in both schools, they did not appreciably lower the number of enrolled students.

³⁶ Crisis Group interview, senior official in President Yudhoyono's cabinet, Jakarta, February 2004.

jihadi, Irwanto Irwano, and three people from Gontor, including the school's head, Dr Abdullah Syukri Zarkasyi. The group went on from Mecca to Cairo, where the Poso leaders met with Indonesian students, went to the sound and light show at the pyramids and took in other sights.³⁷ The second, designed in part to placate the family of a mistreated prisoner, was led by the individual's father-in-law. The third was led by Haris Rengga, the secretary of the foundation behind the new *pesantren*. He told the press that these trips had been financed entirely by the vice-president and the police.³⁸

In addition, due to the importance of kinship ties in radical networks, police are spending off-budget money for visits to imprisoned relatives in Jakarta in an effort to keep Poso-based family members on side. The outreach nearly collapsed in November 2007, when near the end of the trial of suspects involved in the most serious crimes in Poso and Palu, the prosecutor requested sentences of twenty years in prison for all. The police had promised leniency for those who turned themselves in, and Yudit Parsan, the one prisoner in the group who had (and whose role in a murder had been relatively minor) was thus threatened with the same punishment as those who were captured and resisted arrest. Unless the judges were willing to recognise the distinction, police credibility with the families would go up in smoke. A senior police officer began urgent calls to the judges, explaining the situation and the disastrous implications of the prosecutor's one-size-fits-all approach. In the end, Yudit received a substantially lighter term – good for deradicalisation efforts, bad for the principle of non-interference in the judicial process.

VII. PROBLEMS OF POST-CONFLICT FUNDING

The issue of most concern to the NGOs and community leaders Crisis Group interviewed in post-conflict Poso is not renewed deadly conflict or other violence but corruption and mismanagement of recovery funds. The whiff – or in some cases, stench – of corruption has long hung over Poso. In September 2007 the former Poso *bupati*, Andi Azikin Suyuti, was sentenced to two years in prison on charges of having defrauded the state in 2001 of Rp.1.2 billion (\$120,000) in funds meant to assist the return of the Poso displaced. At the time, he was head of the

provincial social affairs office. Earlier, in August, the former governor was acquitted in the same case, despite the fact that his role had been described in detail in the *bupati*'s trial. Seven other local officials were given light sentences for having pocketed funds set aside for house construction in Poso.

The poor oversight mechanisms and lack of transparency in distributing some of the massive funds allocated by various government agencies for Poso have only reinforced fears, particularly among NGOs, that the above cases were the tip of the iceberg. There is particular concern about the \$5.8 million "recovery grant" administered through the district government, especially as the 2009 elections approach. In July 2007, members of a special committee of the Poso district council (DPRD) produced a report showing, with detailed examples, irregularities in the distribution of that money and suggesting that the *bupati* be held responsible. They sent copies to the Central Sulawesi governor, the police, the vice-president, the national audit board (BPKP) at the provincial and national levels and the national Anti-Corruption Commission.³⁹

At issue in particular was a program whereby in the interests of Poso's economic recovery, members of the public could join together to submit proposals for cooperatives, to be funded at Rp.100 million (\$10,000). The council members found examples of cooperatives that did not exist; of managers who were asked to sign receipts for more money than they actually received; and of Rp.25 million (\$2,500) deducted from some of the grants without explanation, as well as other problems. They also found cases of apparent mark-ups on the purchase of vehicles and equipment and of apparent political favouritism. At the same time, they obtained a copy of a circular from the *bupati*, dated 12 June 2007, forbidding any members of the district government from giving information to the DPRD committee.⁴⁰ The facts that the *bupati* is head of the local branch of President Yudhoyono's political party and that the 2009 elections are approaching intensified suspicions that some of the recovery money is turning into a political slush fund – though no evidence to that effect has been produced.

Corruption is a huge problem, not just because of the actual misuse of funds but also because it distorts perceptions and undermines public trust in government more generally. When the Tentena market bombs killed 22 people in May 2005, many local NGOs were convinced that corrupt local officials had set them off to divert attention from ongoing

³⁷ Several blogs of Indonesian students in Cairo note this visit, see <http://mubayok.blogspot.com/2007/06/pak-kyai-dari-poso-sampai-kairol.html>; and http://209.85.175.104/search?q=cache:Gu5x3sWD8_AJ:taqeyyabella.naemy.net/%3Fp%3D69+umroh+Adnan+Arsal+Poso&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&client=firefox-a.

³⁸ "Asrama dan Ruang Santri Mendapat Prioritas", *Radar Sulteng*, 27 August 2007.

³⁹ "Laporan Hasil Pelaksanaan Tugas Panitia Khusus Angket DPRD Kabupaten Poso", DPRD Kabupaten, Poso, 24 July 2007.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

investigations into their misdeeds.⁴¹ Even after those responsible were arrested and tried, there was unwillingness to drop the theory. Many NGOs also remain convinced, despite all evidence to the contrary, that police deliberately allowed the violence to continue so they could get access to more counter-terrorism funding. The lack of transparency and oversight fuels this kind of thinking.

VIII. CONCLUSION

One year after the January 2007 operations, Poso is in much better shape. The JI teachers are gone for now, and some aspects of the deradicalisation program just might take hold. If corruption can be brought under control, if the vocational training programs bear fruit, if the Ittihadul Ummat Pesantren lives up to its name, and if the government can find ways to start addressing the accountability issues, perhaps the residents of Poso will have reason to hope.

Jakarta/Brussels, 22 January 2008

⁴¹ See Crisis Group Report, *Weakening Indonesia's Mujahidin Networks*, op. cit., p. 12.



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