INDONESIA: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DISPLACEMENT
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1 Introduction: Macropolitical Stability and Its Discontents

The past ten months in Indonesia have been characterized by considerably greater stability and security in the national political arena than were seen in the preceding four years since the fall of President Suharto. In large part, this trend towards restabilization and reconsolidation must be attributed to the strength of the Indonesian presidency under Megawati Soekarnoputri, who ascended to the national leadership from the vice-presidency in mid-2001. Megawati has enjoyed considerable popularity, a strong position in parliament given the plurality of seats held by the political party she chairs, and both enduring support and an underlying sense of shared goals among the leadership of the powerful Indonesian Armed Forces. Compared to her predecessors, Megawati is much more securely entrenched and equipped to contend with rival centres of power in Indonesian politics, and no major politicians have yet dared to go into open opposition to her regime. Thus Megawati’s first year in office went by without any serious challenges to her presidency, and with the administration enjoying continued cooperation from all the major political parties and the military establishment.

These trends at the national level have had important consequences for the situation and prospects of IDPs and other vulnerable members of the population in those areas of Indonesia affected by violent conflict. On the one hand, the strength of President Megawati’s position in particular, and the stability of the national-level political party configuration more generally, have helped to contain, if not reduce, the level of tension and violence found in localities torn by communal conflict in recent years. The pattern of enduring accommodation between the leaders of various political parties in Jakarta has to some extent trickled down to provinces where local politicians previously promoted mobilization along narrowly religious and ethnic lines to protect or expand their electoral constituencies under conditions of increased electoral competition since 1998.

The composition, orientation, and strength of Megawati’s own political party, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan, or PDI-P) have provided a measure of added security to certain key groups in localities around the country wracked by communal violence. In particular, the PDI-P from its inception has always been a party of non-Muslims and “secular nationalists”, and the party’s representatives in the national parliament today include many Christians (almost one-third of the entire party “fraction”) and virtually no Muslims with any serious religious educational history or associational affiliation. Thus the Christian minority in Maluku, Maluku Utara, Central Sulawesi, and other localities which have experienced serious inter-religious tensions and violence today enjoy a measure of protection through their local PDI-P representatives and their connections to the administration in Jakarta. Meanwhile, local politicians who have promoted “Dayak” interests and violent mobilization against Madurese immigrants in West and Central Kalimantan have likewise affiliated themselves with the PDI-P and thereby gained a measure of continued tolerance, if not active backing, for their “ethnic cleansing” of localities in these two provinces.

On the other hand, the conservative and centralist tendencies of the Megawati administration have combined with the president’s closeness and condominium with the Armed Forces leadership to promote hard-line policies in those provinces of the country where separatist movements and aspirations have enjoyed strong popular support. Megawati’s government has shown a marked tendency to put a brake on the process of decentralization under way in the
country since the passage of legislation for regional autonomy in 1999. Meanwhile, despite formal moves to recognize the independence of East Timor and to provide special autonomy packages for Aceh and Papua, residual military interests in these war-weary areas have promoted the escalation of armed conflict in the two provinces. The Armed Forces have enjoyed a free hand to combat threats to “national integrity”. Within the Armed Forces, moreover, officers favouring a hard-line approach to “separatist” movements have been elevated to key leadership posts.

Thus despite the passage of legislation awarding special autonomy to Aceh and Papua, the past year has seen a dramatic rise in the number of Indonesian troops in the provinces, intensified Army operations in Papua, and continued military interference and intimidation in West Timor, where thousands of refugees from East Timor remain encamped. With the US Government now restoring full military assistance to the Indonesian Armed Forces and focusing on the “war against terrorism” rather than the promotion of human rights, prospects for demilitarization in these provinces will remain weak for the foreseeable future.1

Meanwhile, there is substantial likelihood of continued macropolitical political stability at the national level. The position of Megawati as President is sufficiently strong that even those politicians whose parties could spearhead parliamentary opposition to the administration have been persuaded to accept the status quo despite the limited benefits they enjoy therein. Through their position in Parliament, token representation in the Cabinet, and lobbying and horsetrading with key power brokers in the Megawati administration, the leaders of Golkar, PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan - United Development Party), and other key parties have enjoyed a measure of access to state patronage. Thus virtually every major political party – including the PDI-P – has been racked by tensions between well-heeled leaders working “on the inside” and restless and resentful backbenchers eager for a bigger piece of the action, thus reinforcing party leaders’ fears of disruption to the status quo.

But as the 2004 general elections draw nearer, the possibility of major Islamic parties and Golkar shifting into outright opposition to Megawati’s administration and the PDI-P becomes ever more likely. In particular, if the new constitutional amendment mandating direct presidential elections is implemented in time for the election, the political environment will encourage polarization rather than “rainbow coalition”-building, and Golkar may be sorely tempted to join PPP and other Muslim parties in a loosely “Islamic” challenge to the PDI-P’s continued rule. Under such circumstances, communal tensions are certain to be exacerbated in areas of the country such as Maluku, North Maluku, Central Sulawesi, and Western and Central Kalimantan, where political competition played a role in encouraging inter-religious or inter-ethnic violence in the past.

Meanwhile, the rise and possible triumph of a loosely “Islamic” coalition of parties in 2004 would also have important, if mixed, consequences for government policy in provinces suffering from conflict in connection with separatist or nationalist movements. Judging from the public pronouncements of the leaders of key “Islamic” parties in recent months, they would be likely to encourage a measure of restraint on military operations in predominantly devout Muslim province of Aceh. But given the small minority of Muslims in Papua and their inability to win more votes in this overwhelmingly Christian province, these Muslim politicians would probably not be similarly concerned about military abuses and local

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responses in this second zone of armed “separatist” conflict. In any event, as the elections of 2004 approach, it is important to keep in mind the “trickle-down” effects of likely trends towards political polarization and mobilization under the banner of “Islam” at the national level upon localities plagued by violence, social dislocation, and internal displacement.

2 Communal Violence: Maluku, Sulawesi, and Kalimantan

Overall, the past year’s trends in favour of stabilization and continuity at the national level have been fairly matched in those areas of Indonesia plagued by inter-religious or inter-ethnic violence since 1999. For better or for worse, the strength of Megawati and the PDI-P in Jakarta and the forms of accommodation worked out between the President, other political parties, and the military leadership since late 2001 have combined to help preserve the broad contours of the status quo in localities troubled by communal conflict. Thus the basic pattern over the past ten months has been one wherein inter-religious and inter-ethnic tensions and resentments have variously continued or cooled, but the possibility for renewed collective violence has been largely contained.

2.1 Maluku and Maluku Utara

Most striking in this regard is the stabilization of the situation in Maluku and Maluku Utara (North Maluku), where violence between Christians and Muslims has claimed thousands of lives and driven hundreds of thousands away from their homes since 1999. From mid-2000 through mid-2001, the local balance of forces was shifted by the arrival of armed contingents of the Islamic militant group Laskar Jihad, who spearheaded a series of attacks on Christian communities in different parts of the islands and otherwise rallied disparate local Muslim groups to renew hostilities against their perceived enemies in the local population and the ranks of the security forces. By this time, urban neighbourhoods and rural villages had been effectively partitioned into separate zones along religious lines, and the contrasting sympathies of local police and military forces for their variously Christian and Muslim co-religionists had promoted collusion and connivance in armed attacks across the religious divide.

But by mid-2001 the tide began to turn in tandem with developments in Jakarta leading up to the inauguration of Megawati as president in July of that year. In particular, efforts to control the violence in Maluku had been led since mid-2000 by a Combined Battalion (Yon Gab) drawn from various crack units of the Armed Forces, of mixed faiths, with home areas outside Maluku and commanded by a Hindu Balinese general. This Yon Gab was often pitted against Laskar Jihad and other Muslim forces and involved in defending local Christian communities against Muslim offensives, and was widely perceived and resented among Muslims as biased in favour of Christians. By early-mid 2001, Yon Gab began to undertake a serious offensive against Laskar Jihad, culminating in an attack on a Laskar Jihad contingent in the provincial capital of Ambon in June 2001, which led to the deaths of more than a dozen armed Islamic militants.2

Subsequent months saw a diminution of Laskar Jihad strength and activism in the province and more generally a pattern in which incidents of violence across the religious divide were kept to a minimum. Complaints against the Yon Gab by Muslim leaders in Maluku and their

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2 On these trends, see: International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: The Search for Peace in Maluku*, Jakarta; Brussels, 8 February 2002; Schulze, K., *Islamists Complicate Conflict in Ambon*, *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, 1 February 2002
counterparts in Jakarta led to the withdrawal of the battalion and its replacement by a large contingent of Special Forces (Kopassus) troops in November 2001, but the basic pattern continued. It was in this context that in mid-February 2002 the leaders of the Christian and Muslim communities in Maluku signed an agreement to resolve the conflict in the province. The terms of the agreement included promises to facilitate the removal and prosecution of “outside” parties to the conflict, to surrender the huge numbers of firearms accumulated by armed groups on both sides of the religious divide, and to form an independent commission to investigate the roots of the conflict and various crimes committed since its inception.

Signs of improving conditions in Maluku were reported by a variety of sources in subsequent months. In the provincial capital city of Ambon, for example, observers noted the removal of barricades between some neighbourhoods and the opening of marketplaces and other shopping areas in which Christians and Muslims freely mixed. Reports of conditions elsewhere in Maluku were likewise cautiously optimistic, noting evidence of reduced inter-religious tension and small trickles of returning refugees. In the predominantly Muslim new province of North Maluku (Maluku Utara), security conditions were said to have reached a point where civil emergency status was no longer warranted. The situation in the predominantly Christian regency of Southeastern Maluku (Maluku Tenggara) was likewise said to have stabilized.

Clearly the sheer size and strong stance of the security forces have contributed to the downturn in the violence. The leader of Laskar Jihad was arrested in May and put on trial for inciting violence in Maluku, and the group has faced continuing, if not increasing, restrictions on its presence and operations in Maluku, as the Indonesian government has tried to establish itself as a reliable US ally in the “war against terrorism”. More generally, hundreds, if not thousands, of weapons were surrendered around Maluku in the weeks leading up to the Armed Forces’ imposed deadline of 30 June, and the regional Army commander initiated “sweeps” for remaining unauthorized firearms in early July. With an 8,000-strong Rapid Reaction Strike Force conducting training exercises in Ambon in August, the Armed Forces are maintaining a high level of visibility and vigilance in the months ahead.

That said, incidents of violence have continued to mar the uneasy calm settling in around the provinces of Maluku and Maluku Utara. Most tragic in this regard was an attack on a Christian village in Ambon in late April which claimed 12 lives and was blamed on Laskar Jihad and allied local Muslim forces. Also quite revealing was a subsequent armed encounter between Special Forces (Kopassus) troops and elements of the local anti-riot police

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3 Dari Pertemuan ‘Malino II’: Dua Pihak Dambakan Penghentian Konflik, Kompas, 12 February 2002; Pertemuan Dua Pihak Maluku: Disepakati untuk Mengakhiri Konflik, Kompas, 13 February 2002
4 Kristen dan Muslim di Ambon Berbaur Lagi, Kompas, 2 March 2002; Pasar Kaget Ambon: Kawasan Damai Tanpa Rekayasa, Kompas, 5 March 2002
5 Warga Maluku Utara Sambut Baik Rencana Pencabutan Darsi, Republika, 2 August 2002
6 3,094 Pengungsi Malteng Sudah Pulang Kampung, Republika, 30 July 2002
7 Panglima Laskar Jihad Ja’far Umar ditangkap, Media Indonesia, 4 May 2002
8 See, for example, Warga Kristen Kudamatii serahkan senjata, Republika, 30 June 2002; and Sweeping tetap dilaksanakan, Jawa Pos, 2 July 2002
9 8,000 personel PPRC akan diterjunkan di Ambon, Kompas, 11 July 2002
10 Ambon Mencekam, 11 Orang Tewas, Surabaya Post, 28 April 2002; Rusuh di Ambon, 12 Orang Tewas, Suara Merdeka, 29 April 2001
force (Brimob), which drew renewed attention to the involvement of active and retired members of the security forces in the conflict. However, overall, since February of this year incidents of armed combat have been very infrequent and limited in their scope. Instead, the provincial capital city of Ambon and several other localities have been occasionally troubled by bombings or by the discovery of explosive materials clearly intended for imminent use.

2.2 Central Sulawesi

Meanwhile, a somewhat similar pattern of contained but not resolved inter-religious conflict has been observed in the Central Sulawesi regency of Poso, where inter-religious violence has claimed hundreds of lives and displaced thousands of local residents over the past few years. As in Maluku, the pattern of dislocation, partitioning of communities along religious lines “defended” by armed para-military groups, and sporadic incidents of violence was already well established by early 2001. As in Maluku, moreover, the balance of forces was reportedly shifted by the arrival and incursions of Laskar Jihad forces, in this case beginning in late 2001 as the group faced increasing difficulties in Maluku and shifted focus to Poso and the neighbouring regency of Tentena.

According to Christian groups monitoring the situation in Poso, Laskar Jihad forces began to arrive in the area in September 2001. By early October armed contingents had begun to attack Christian villages, in a pattern that continued through the end of November of the same year. As many as 4,000 homes were said to have been destroyed in the violence, with tens of thousands of local Christian residents forced to flee to safety in the nearby town of Tentena, whose population is predominantly Protestant in faith.

By the end of November, even more Laskar Jihad forces had arrived in Poso, their estimated 1,500-plus troops reportedly armed with AK-47 machine guns, grenades, and rocket launchers, thus indicating the close collusion and connivance of some elements of the Indonesian Armed Forces. By December, Tentena was swelling with Christian IDPs from Poso, said to number well over 23,000 people, thus doubling the population of the town. With Laskar Jihad and other armed Muslim forces threatening to attack Tentena, a remote town connected to the regional capital of Makassar by a single road, leaders of the Christian community made frantic appeals to the national government – and to their co-religionists around the world – for assistance.

As it happened, the timing of this growing crisis in Central Sulawesi coincided with the ascent of Megawati to the presidency and the entrenchment of the PDI-P as the dominant party in Parliament and the Cabinet, thus guaranteeing a measure of protection – however belated – for the party’s Christian constituency in Poso and Tentena. At the end of November, the Armed Forces dispatched more than 2,500 Army troops to the area, thus halting the attack on Tentena and forcing Laskar Jihad forces to disperse. By the end of December 2001, civilian and military officials from Jakarta had succeeded in bringing together local Christian and Muslim leaders from Poso and Tentena to sign a peace accord, in

11 Jurus Baru Membat Para Desertir, Tempo, 10-16 June 2002
12 See, for example, Upaya Perdamaian di Maluku Diwarnai Empat Ledakan di Ambon, Kompas, 14 February 2002; Maluku Utara diguncang bom, Jawa Pos, 12 July 2002; and Ambon Calm after Major Bomb Blast Injures 53, Jakarta Post, 28 July 2002.
13 See, Pasukan Jihad Mengubah Strategi Penyerangan; Poso dan Tentena Kembali Bergolak, Radio Nederland Wereldomroep, 3 December 2001
which both sides agreed to promote conflict resolution, the return of IDPs, and the prosecution of those involved in violence. By early January 2002, local authorities were reporting a cessation of hostilities as well as the surrender of thousands of loose firearms from groups in both Christian and Muslim areas of Central Sulawesi. Efforts to prosecute those involved in the violence – including members of the security forces – were also reported at the time.

Months later, however, there appears to have been only limited movement towards the resolution or amelioration of the problems underlying the conflict in Poso and Tentena. Christian groups are still complaining about the continuation of Laskar Jihad camps and activities in the area, and their Muslim counterparts likewise claim that armed Christian gangs and their protectors in the security forces enjoy impunity thanks to the support they enjoy from the administration in Jakarta. A few thousand Armed Forces troops remain stationed in Poso and Tentena, but tens of thousands of IDPs from the conflict have not yet been able to return to their homes and communities given the continuing threat of violence in the area.

More worrying still has been the recent resurgence of violence in the Poso-Tentena area. Recent months have witnessed sporadic bombings in Poso and Tentena as well as occasional small-scale attacks on villages in the area. August has seen a series of violent incidents which have claimed several lives, heightened fears and tensions, and destroyed efforts to renew the peace-making process between Christian and Muslim leaders. Local police forces have been accused by Christian leaders of colluding with armed Muslim groups and committing atrocities against Christian villagers, while Muslim leaders have likewise launched charges of partisanship against Army troops stationed in the area. Thus the months ahead are unlikely to see serious strides towards the resolution of the conflict in Poso and Tentena, with the broad contours of the status quo preserved and protected but the underlying tensions between Christians and Muslims remaining in place, and most of the IDPs unable or unwilling to return.

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15 Kapolda Sulteng: Kelompok yang Bertikai Telah Serahkan Senjata, Kompas, 4 January 2002
16 Enam Prajurit TNI AD Jadi Tersangka Penculikan Warga Poso, Tempo Interaktif, 18 January 2002
17 Security Forces Blamed for Poso Attacks, Jakarta Post, 15 August 2002
18 Farrell, T., Uneasy Peace in Sulawesi, Jane’s Intelligence Review, 1 August 2002
19 Agence France Presse, Four Dead, 17 Injured in Bus Blast in Indonesia’s Riot-hit Poso, 6 June 2002; Agence France Presse, One Dead, Four Hurt in Explosion outside Bus in Riot-hit Poso, 13 July 2002; Agence France Presse, Attacks on Christian Villages Strain Peace in Indonesia’s Sulawesi, 7 August 2002
2.3 Central and South Kalimantan

A final source of IDP problems stemming from communal violence has been a set of localities in West and Central Kalimantan, where armed groups claiming to represent the Dayak majority in the area have led sporadic attacks on Madurese immigrant communities from the late 1990s up to the present day. The most recent wave of collective violence along these lines occurred in the early months of 2001 in areas of Central Kalimantan, leading to a mass exodus of Madurese residents to safe havens elsewhere in Kalimantan, the island of Madura, and Madurese areas of East Java. For more than a year after the massacres and mass flight of early 2001, however, there has been precious little attention paid to the fate of the Madurese IDPs, whose numbers are said to run to well over 100,000 in total. Occasional press reports indicate that the remaining Madurese residents in some areas of West and Central Kalimantan – and IDPs attempting to return to these localities – have faced continuing intimidation and acts of violence. In one recent incident, for example, four Madurese residents were decapitated in a village in the district of Kotawaringin Timur, Central Kalimantan, which saw considerable bloodshed in early 2001.22

3 Separatist/Nationalist Struggles: Aceh and Papua

Meanwhile, the ascent of Megawati and the PDI-P to power in Jakarta has also had important consequences for ongoing conflicts and residual problems in areas of Indonesia affected by “separatist” struggles for national independence. Most notable in this regard is the escalation of the armed conflict in Aceh, where thousands of Indonesian Armed Forces troops are now waging a vigorous “counterinsurgency” operation against a secessionist movement. But in Papua, on the opposite side of the archipelago, the national government has also stepped up its moves against a lower-intensity struggle for independence. Only in West Timor, where tens of thousands of refugees from East Timor remain encamped following the referendum on independence in August 1999 and subsequent violence, does there appear to be positive movement towards the reduction – if not elimination – of the problems of violence and social dislocation associated with the Armed Forces’ efforts to preserve Indonesia’s “national integrity”.

3.1 Aceh

In Aceh, the past ten months have seen considerable change due to the Megawati administration’s harsh military approach to separatist aspirations and mobilization in the province. Although the administration signed into law a special autonomy package for Aceh in mid-2001, its implementation has been delayed and complicated by the escalation of the Armed Forces’ presence and operations in the province in subsequent months. Even the much vaunted provisions awarding the provincial government in oil and gas rich Aceh the lion’s share of natural resource revenues have not yet been put into effect. As noted in a report by the International Crisis Group, “the size and timing of the gas revenue payments will be determined by Jakarta, raising the possibility that money might at some point be withdrawn … Aceh has no veto rights over the use of troops in the province”.

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21 International Crisis Group, Communal Violence in Indonesia: Lessons from Kalimantan, Jakarta; Brussels, 27 June 2001
22 Agence France Presse, Return of Ethnic Tension Forces Madurese to Flee Indonesian Borneo, 28 July 2002.
Against this backdrop, it is unsurprising that the Armed Forces have been keen to reassert the central government’s claims to key economic assets and activities in Aceh over the past year. Thanks to the presence of more than 20,000 troops, many of which are drawn from Special Forces (Kopassus) and the Army Strategic Reserve Command (Kostrad), the key areas for industry and oil/gas extraction and processing along the northern coast have been “secured” from the threat posed by the armed separatist group GAM (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka - Free Aceh Movement). In many districts in the interior of the province, moreover, GAM’s presence and activities have been drastically reduced over the past few months in the face of a very aggressive military campaign waged by Jakarta.  

Aside from reducing GAM’s ability to exert influence and exact “taxes” on businesses and residents in various parts of Aceh, the campaign by the Indonesian Armed Forces has strengthened the central government’s hand and economic leverage in the province, precisely when the provisions of the special autonomy package were supposed to come into effect. Major foreign oil firms like Exxon-Mobil are utterly reliant on the security provided by Jakarta, as the kidnapping of nine sailors from a ship chartered by the company made clear in June. The enormous illegal economies in Aceh that thrive on the province’s coast-line access to the Strait of Malacca and neighbouring Malaysia are also a key target of the Indonesian military’s recent aggression. Rampant smuggling and marijuana cultivation have been key sources of revenue for both GAM and the Armed Forces in Aceh, and the arrival and incursions of fresh troops from Jakarta over the past year have increased the “turf” and the “cut” controlled by the Indonesian military.

The military campaign in Aceh has taken a severe toll on the local population over the past several months, leading to many deaths and considerable disruption and dislocation. In June and July of this year, military operations and armed encounters with GAM forces tended to leave more than 30 casualties per week. Hundreds if not thousands more have been uprooted from their homes in the face of violence and intimidation by Indonesian Armed Forces troops and GAM forces, who have meted out harsh punishment to residents suspected of serving as informers (cuak) and accomplices on either side of the conflict. The stepped-up militarization of the conflict has also worked to silence through intimidation those forces in Aceh who emerged in 1998-1999 as proponents of non-violent forms of political mobilization, and the elected politicians in the province whose powers were supposed to expand with “special autonomy”.

In the face of continuing resistance by GAM and its supporters, and sporadic criticisms of military abuses in Jakarta and abroad, the Armed Forces have in recent months stepped up their campaign to justify – and expand – their increasing presence and role in Aceh. Thus the military leadership in Jakarta used to great effect the media coverage of kidnappings in June and an early July bomb blast in a Jakarta shopping mall, both of which were blamed on GAM. Dubious “revelations” that Osama bin Laden had been planning to relocate Al Qaeda operations to Aceh since mid-2001 were also floated to major international media outlets.

24 For an early account of these trends, see Schulze, K., Battle to Quell GAM Moves to Rural Aceh, Jane’s Intelligence Review, 1 March 2002
25 On these dimensions of the conflict, see, Jones, S., Indonesia’s Aceh Rebellion: The Key Step for Peace is Ending Corruption, International Herald Tribune, 23 July 2002
26 On these developments, see, Tusukan Terakhir buat GAM?, Tempo, 22-28 July 2002
By early July the government was calling for the infusion of more troops and the proclamation of a state of civil emergency in Aceh.\textsuperscript{27}

Against this backdrop, the situation in Aceh appears to be worsening, with further militarization expected in the weeks and months ahead. Regardless of the outcome of the ongoing debate on civil emergency status for Aceh, plans for a new military campaign in the province have been readied and major manoeuvres and troop movements are expected in the weeks ahead, as are concomitant casualties, abuses, and dislocations.\textsuperscript{28} Thanks to the renewal of US-military ties and the invocation of “Islamic terrorism” as the basis for cooperation between the two governments, the Indonesian Armed Forces also enjoy a new measure of protection against foreign criticisms of military operations in Aceh, which have long been characterized by high civilian casualties and gross human rights abuses.\textsuperscript{29} In recent weeks there have been reports of new flows of Acehnese IDPs from the fighting fleeing into the neighbouring province of North Sumatra. Thus the weeks and months ahead are likely to witness the continuation and expansion of the military campaign by the Armed Forces against GAM and its supporters in the province, as well as concomitant problems of violence and dislocation for the local population.

\subsection*{3.2 Papua}

Meanwhile in Papua, trends similar to those in Aceh have also been observed in recent months, albeit at a lower level of intensity and violence, and further militarization of the conflict is anticipated in the period ahead. As in Aceh, the conflict has involved both a small-scale armed separatist movement operating since at least the 1970s and a surge of popular non-violent mobilization against the central government since the fall of President Suharto in 1998. As in Aceh, resentment against Papua’s inclusion in Indonesia has stemmed in part from Jakarta’s long-standing monopoly on local profits from natural resource extraction (e.g. the vast Freeport McMoran mining concession) and from the intrusions, abuses, and exactions of the government’s security forces in the province. As in Aceh, moreover, the Megawati administration signed into law new legislation in mid-2001 awarding “special autonomy” to Papua and promising the provincial government a considerable share of mining and logging revenues as well as a broader set of local powers. This new dispensation, which represented on paper at least a considerable redistribution of state resources and powers, neither satisfied pro-independence forces nor sat well with entrenched military business interests which had accumulated over the decades since the forced incorporation of the territory into Indonesia in the 1960s.\textsuperscript{30}

Thus the past ten months have seen a noticeable escalation of military operations in Papua, albeit without the numbers of troops or levels of violence found in Aceh on the opposite side of the archipelago. An early sign of this stepped-up Armed Forces campaign in Papua was the apparent abduction and assassination of pro-independence leader Theys Eluay, Chairman of the Papua Presidium Council, following his visit to a Special Forces (Kopassus) camp in the province. While spokesmen for the security forces and the government asserted that Eluay

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{27} Agence France Presse, Aceh Military Chief Seeks 2,000 More Troops, Request Still Being Studied, 16 July 2002
\textsuperscript{28} Agence France Presse, Jakarta Postpones Announcing New Policy on Aceh, 5 August 2002; Susilo in Aceh amid Suspicion of Govt Plan, \textit{Jakarta Post}, 13 August 2002
\textsuperscript{29} See, for example, State Dept. Opposes Suit ...
\textsuperscript{30} On the “special autonomy” package, see, Special Autonomy for Papua, \textit{Jakarta Post}, 26 October 2001
\end{footnotes}
had died as the result of a heart attack, well-informed sources – and the population at large – believe that he was murdered by the military to eliminate a popular and well-connected pro-independence leader and intimidate the pro-independence movement more broadly.\(^{31}\)

Subsequent months have seen a marked increase in the presence and activities of the security forces in Papua, as well as heightened fears and rumours as to military operations being planned. As in Aceh, the Armed Forces created local militia groups in Papua, and the province is also awash with rumours and reports of Army-backed incursions by Laskar Jihad forces in the province. In July, a local newspaper published a report detailing a new campaign by police forces and Army troops targeting “separatist” groups in the province. The campaign, identified as Operation Adil Matoa is being promoted as a government push to make Papua a “peace zone”, but it is also said to entail both attacks on the armed Free Papua Organization (OPM - Organisasi Papua Merdeka) and a campaign to arrest and prosecute members of the Papua Presidium Council for threatening the national integrity of the Indonesian state.\(^{32}\)

Thus the months ahead are likely to see a further escalation of the conflict in Papua, with a crackdown by government security forces extending beyond the OPM to those above-ground forces promoting non-violent forms of struggle for independence for the territory. In the short term, these trends are certain to bring considerable violence, disruption, and dislocation for the local population, albeit on a less intense scale than in Aceh. Given the small size of Papua’s dispersed and overwhelmingly rural population and the vast stretch of territory that constitutes the province, the consequent problems arising from internal displacement are likely to be much less visible and hopefully much less severe. In the longer term, however, the failure to move forward with autonomy and demilitarization is likely to prolong the conflict, as demands for full independence will only retain or increase their popularity if the Indonesian security forces remain in power in the province.

4 Cross Border Refugee Movements: East Timor and Malaysia

4.1 East Timor

Recent developments in East and West Timor stand in stark contrast with trends towards increasing violence and growing refugee problems in Aceh and, to a lesser extent, Papua. As discussed in the previous report,\(^{33}\) over the past several years West Timor has played host to camps housing tens of thousands of refugees from East Timor, who fled the troubled territory in the wake of the violence following the referendum on independence in August 1999. These camps have been largely controlled by pro-Indonesian armed militia leaders backed by the Indonesian Armed Forces, who led the forced flight of about 290,000 people from East Timor to West Timor in 1999.

As is well known, refugees from the camps have been returning to East Timor since 1999, but with the flow of returnees constrained by the active intimidation of the militia leaders in the camps and their Indonesian military backers, as well as by the fears of some refugees as to


\(^{32}\) See, Operation ‘Adil Matoa’ to Combat Separatist Movement in Papua, *Cendrawasih Pos*, 17 July 2002,

their likely fate upon return. The past ten months, however, have seen a dramatic acceleration of the pace and scope of repatriation. This process has been facilitated by the ongoing political transition in East Timor, which culminated in general elections and the proclamation of independence in May of this year. In addition, the militia leaders have shown themselves increasingly willing to negotiate for the return of the refugees, trading their gestures of cooperation for pecuniary rewards and/or assurances as to protection from retribution, should they choose to return to East Timor themselves. This more cooperative stance also reflects the waning of support in Indonesian government circles for the militia leaders, for the refugees, and for a continued Indonesian role in East Timor.

Thus the numbers of East Timorese refugees remaining in West Timor have steadily dwindled. By June, estimates of the size of the remaining refugee population suggested that some 30,000-40,000 were still housed in the camps in West Timor, with thousands returning every month. More than 5,000 refugees returned to East Timor in July alone. Yet the remaining refugees in West Timor still suffer from continued uncertainty and insecurity with regard to their life in the camps and their prospects for return to East Timor, under conditions in which the militia leaders and their backers in the Indonesian security forces retain considerable influence and capacity for intimidation. Even if the current pace of repatriation is maintained or stepped up, it is not clear that all the refugees will be able or willing to return to East Timor by the end of the year, by which time Indonesian support for the process may well have dried up, leaving the remaining refugees stranded in West Timor.34

4.2 Malaysia

The continuing economic difficulties in Indonesia and elsewhere in the world have contributed to the worsening of other problems of social displacement, most notably those associated with the plight of Indonesian illegal immigrants in neighbouring Malaysia. As is well known, hundreds of thousands of Indonesians have been working illegally in Malaysia over the past decades, and their numbers have only increased since the onset of the economic crisis in the region in 1997-1998. Estimates run from 200,000 to 3,000,000 Indonesians scattered around Malaysia, of whom the vast majority are said to lack proper papers permitting them to work in the country. In the past few months, however, tens of thousands of these migrant workers have returned to Indonesia in order to avoid punishment under Malaysia’s harsh new immigration law, which came into effect on 1 August of this year. The new law stipulates prison sentences of six to twelve months, canings, as well as stiff fines, for illegal immigrants and the authorities appear keen to begin its implementation. Thus tens of thousands of Indonesians have crowded into various Malaysian port cities in search of transport back to their home country, with as many as 265,000 said to be awaiting ships as of mid-August.35

The impact of this mass exodus from Malaysia is already palpable in certain parts of Indonesia. Many migrant workers have returned through Riau, East and West Kalimantan, and South Sulawesi, financing their trip home through their earnings or availing themselves of ships provided by the Malaysian and Indonesian governments for the returning workers. Tens of thousands of Indonesians have participated in an official repatriation programme

34 East Nusa Tenggara Governor Asks UN to Lift ‘Alert V’ Status, Jakarta Post, 19 August 2002; Agence France Presse, Some Soldiers Discourage East Timor Repatriation, 22 July 2002; The Journey Home to East Timor: Repatriation from West Timor, Jesuit Refugee Services East Timor Alert, 23 July 2002

35 See, Menjelang Tenggat 15 Agustus, Tempo, 5-11 August 2002; Hujan Batu di Negeri Orang, Tempo, 5-11 August 2002
initiated under a temporary amnesty declared by the Malaysian government from March to the end of July this year.\textsuperscript{36}

But some of the returning migrant workers have not been so fortunate. In the North Sumatra port city of Medan, for example, thousands of returning migrant workers are now virtually stranded, unable to pay for transport to their hometowns in Java or Eastern Indonesia. In Nunukan, East Kalimantan, temporary camps for the 16,000 returning migrants unable to move on from the town are now suffering from shortages of food and deteriorating health conditions.\textsuperscript{37} Tens of thousands more have been arriving in port cities of varying size in Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, their plans to continue travel to their home provinces hampered by lack of funds.\textsuperscript{38}

5 Conclusions

In conclusion, the past ten months have witnessed a highly complex and varied set of developments and trends unfolding with regard to the fate of displaced persons in various parts of the Indonesian archipelago. In those areas of the country where inter-religious or inter-ethnic tensions have given rise to collective violence and caused serious internal dislocation, the impact of the new political constellation in Jakarta has been obvious. In Maluku and Maluku Utara, for example, the efforts of Laskar Jihad forces and other armed Muslim groups to escalate hostilities with their Christian counterparts have been halted in the face of a harsh crackdown by the security forces maintained since mid-2001. In the Poso-Tentena area of Central Sulawesi, moreover, a similar pattern has prevailed since the August-November armed initiative reportedly launched by Laskar Jihad, with thousands of Armed Forces troops providing essential protection to the embattled local Christian population. In both cases, the pro-Christian complexion of the PDI-P has combined with the high profile of Laskar Jihad forces and the international context of the US-led “war against terrorism” to preserve the broad contours of the status quo. Large-scale episodes of collective violence have become less and less frequent, with small-scale attacks and bombings replacing the mass pogroms and sustained warfare seen in 1999-2000.

Under these conditions, some of the thousands of IDPs who fled these areas in the earlier stages of the conflict have been able to return to their homes. The effective repartitioning of communities along religious lines has provided a basic framework for the recreation – if not the resumption – of “normal life” for many residents. But large-scale repatriation has proceeded only in pockets, in fits and starts, perhaps most successfully in areas with well-established religious majorities (e.g. predominantly Muslim North Maluku and mostly Christian Southeast Maluku). The months and years ahead, moreover, will test the fragility of this version of “peace and order”, as local elections for new regents and governors, and the general elections of 2004, encourage renewed mobilization by armed groups defined and divided along religious lines.

In West and Central Kalimantan, by contrast, the fate of the Madurese IDPs driven from their homes and their communities by armed Dayak groups in recent years remains both more uncertain and more obscure than that of their counterparts in Maluku and Central Sulawesi.

\textsuperscript{36} Jalur Kabur, Jalur Herder, \textit{Tempo}, 5-11 August 2002

\textsuperscript{37} Seven Refugee Workers Die in Nunukan Camps, \textit{Jakarta Post}, 13 August 2002

\textsuperscript{38} Governors Told to Assist Returnee Workers, \textit{Jakarta Post}, 5 August 2002; Pertemuan Megawati-Mahathir Diharapkan Selesaikan Soal TKI Ilegal, \textit{Kompas}, 4 August 2002
In part, the lack of movement on this question suggests that the “ethnic cleansing” undertaken by armed Dayak groups in 1999-2001 in various localities in West and Central Kalimantan has been successful, leaving Madurese IDPs to languish in Pontianak and other safe havens in Kalimantan, in Madura, and in Madurese areas of East Java. In no small measure, moreover, this lack of movement must be attributed to national and international political circumstances. For Megawati and the PDI-P, after all, the Dayak groups who mobilized against Madurese communities in West and Central Kalimantan represent political constituencies to be protected and promoted, while the Madurese are assumed to be supporters of PPP and other Islamic parties. For the civilian and military leadership in Jakarta, and for potentially interested foreign parties like the US government, moreover, the failure of the conflict to fit into the pattern of “Islamic violence” also makes for relative disinterest. But the problem is unlikely to disappear in the future as easily as the Madurese IDPs have melted into the background in the past. With elections looming ahead in the future, the remaining pockets of Madurese migrants – and other migrant communities as well – are still vulnerable in various parts of West and Central Kalimantan.

Meanwhile, in those areas of the country affected by long-standing conflict between the Indonesian Armed Forces and local separatist/nationalist groups, the past ten months have seen dramatic change. In large part, this change is the product of the free hand awarded the military establishment in these provinces by President Megawati, whose conservative “centralist” tendencies and close ties to active and retired Army officers are well known. After the two years of accommodations and negotiations pushed by the then president, Abdurrahman Wahid, and the passage of “special autonomy” packages for Aceh and Papua, the Armed Forces have been keen to reassert their claims to a role in these provinces, as providers of “protection” to major foreign firms and to those engaged in illegal economic activities as well. Thus the campaigns to step up the level of military presence and activity in Aceh and Papua are hardly surprising. The months ahead are likely to see continuing – if not increasing – IDP problems in Aceh and, to a much lesser extent, Papua in the face of intensified military operations and attacks on GAM and OPM, and on unarmed pro-independence groups as well.

Meanwhile, the situation in West Timor is much more heartening, in terms of the steady flow of refugees back to East Timor over the past months and, in all likelihood, the months ahead. While militia leaders and their Indonesian military backers have been dragging their heels (and filling their pockets) in recent months, the repatriation process has moved forward and the vast majority of the refugees have returned home to East Timor, with many more to follow before the end of 2002. This relatively favourable outcome reflects Jakarta’s rapidly diminishing interests in East Timor as well as the heavy involvement and close scrutiny of major international institutions like the UN and key foreign governments, whose continued support is of great concern to Jakarta. However, the recasting of the conflict in Aceh in terms of “Islamic terrorism” and international neglect of developments in Papua have denied these two troubled provinces any such protection from the predations of the Indonesian Armed Forces.

Thus as Indonesia enters the second year of the Megawati presidency, the country remains plagued by myriad problems, including those associated with forced displacement in various parts of the country. According to estimates made in late July of this year, the total number of IDPs has more than doubled since January 2000 and today runs as high as 1.3 million persons. Most of these IDPs are victims of communal violence in areas like Maluku and Maluku Utara (536,000+), Central Sulawesi (425,000+), and West and Central Kalimantan.
(41,000+). The remainder are mostly victims of conflict between the Indonesian Armed Forces and separatist movements in Aceh (192,000) and Papua (17,000). As the recent return of workers from Malaysia suggests, economic necessity has also made for complex and arduous migratory patterns for hundreds of thousands, indeed millions, of Indonesians, and economic slowdown has not made life any easier for them. But there are hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons in Indonesia whose plight and prospects are largely determined by the machinations of the civilian politicians and military officers who run the country.

Overall, the displacement problems in Indonesia are largely a function of the inter-related processes of democratization and demilitarization ongoing in the country today. The fate of Muslim and Christian families in Maluku and Central Sulawesi, and of Madurese fleeing violence in parts of West and Central Kalimantan hinges largely on the forms of electoral competition and mobilization which have emerged in the wake of the long Suharto years. So long as votes can be garnered and access to state offices can be won through mobilization along narrowly religious and/or ethnic lines, Indonesia will remain haunted by the threat and practice of communal violence. Meanwhile, the fate of the Acehnese and Papuan populations rests largely in the hands of the government authorities, with civilian leaders willing to allow the Armed Forces’ leadership to retain and reassert claims over these two residual pockets of military influence, activity, and economic power. So long as the civilian authorities in Jakarta allow the Armed Forces to supplant locally elected officials and other legitimate sources of authority in Aceh and Papua, “special autonomy” will remain an undelivered promise that makes independence the only route to demilitarization in these two provinces.

39 Norwegian Refugee Council, Background Information on the IDP Situation in Indonesia, Oslo, 28 August 2002 (Summary of updated Global IDP Database Indonesia Country Profile)
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