



SERIES OF COUNTRY-RELATED CONFLICT ANALYSES

PROVINCE OF ACEH/INDONESIA

Felix Heiduk

commissioned by the
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

October 2006

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Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) was founded in 1925 as a political legacy of Germany's first democratically elected president, Friedrich Ebert.

It serves the following aims:

- furthering political and social education of individuals from all walks of life in the spirit of democracy and pluralism,
- facilitating access to university education and research for gifted young people by providing scholarships and
- contributing to international understanding and cooperation.

Approximately 500 staff members work on promoting these goals. International activities take place in more than 100 countries. It is the aim of FES projects for a democratic and social design of globalisation to transform conflicts in a constructive and peace promoting manner. Civil conflict management contains all measures before, during or after violent conflicts, which

- exert influence on the causes of conflicts, actors and their forms for dialogue
- specifically strengthen the peace potential inside the respective societies.

The FES is currently developing approaches and tools for conflict-sensitive project work. The 'FES Conflict Transformation Team' focuses on implementing 'Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA)' which puts a specific emphasis on the socio-political environment of a project and which thus corresponds well with the principles of a political foundation.

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Preface

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About this Analysis:

The research for this conflict analysis was conducted during February, March and April of 2006, and the present paper was written mainly throughout May 2006. There were some significant changes on the policy level in Aceh between the

research period and the actual publication of this paper. The Law on Governing Aceh (LoGA) was passed by the Indonesian parliament on July 11th after months of debate. The mandate of the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) was prolonged by the Indonesian government until the end of the year to ensure smooth execution of the local elections in Aceh, which have been scheduled for December 11th 2006. GAM and various local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been criticizing the LoGA for not meeting various key points of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which was signed by GAM and Jakarta in August 2005 and which marked the start of the peace process in Aceh after more than three decades of civil war. Among the main points of criticism were a lack of autonomy for the province in dealing with the management of its vast natural resources, which, under the LoGA, will be jointly managed by Jakarta and Aceh, the prevailing impunity of the security forces and bureaucratic hurdles that are too high for independent candidates to take part in the upcoming local elections. Although the LoGA does not meet the aforementioned points of the peace agreement (MoU) and has therefore been (partly) rejected by GAM and parts of Aceh's civil society, it seems unlikely for the time being that Aceh will fall back into a status quo of civil war. GAM already has declared that its rejection of the LoGA does not suggest that the organisation wants to take up the armed struggle again, but rather that it seeks to fight for its revision by democratic means. These developments seem to encourage an optimistic view on Aceh's peace process. Nevertheless, clashes between demonstrators and the police in early September 2006, spurred by disappointment about the slow political and economic developments made in Aceh so far, prove that the potential conflict issues as well as the conflict lines identified and analyzed in this paper continue to prevail. The key findings, recommendations and conclusions drawn from the research thus still seem valid.

Whereas Felix Heiduk has been in charge of most of the research and writing the study, all of this would not have been possible without major contributions from Arifah Rahmawati, Poppy Astrini, Tia Mboeik and Annette Lohmann - especially during the fieldwork phase in Aceh and Jakarta. Further contributions to this analysis came from

the staff of the FES office in Jakarta and the FES in Germany.

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Executive Summary

This conflict analysis focuses on conflict dynamics and conflict issues in post-tsunami Aceh. On August 15th 2005 a peace agreement (Memorandum of Understanding – MoU) was signed between the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement, which aimed to put an end to 30 years of conflict in Sumatra's northern province. Yet, while the security situation in Aceh has, for the most part, been safe and stable since the fall of 2005, several conflict issues still remain untouched. Among the prior conflict issues is the coming shape of government and governance in Aceh. Several main points remain unclear in this regard, for instance the question of whether independent candidates would be allowed to run in the upcoming local elections, the division of Aceh into three separate provinces or the tasks of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission set to be established. Details about the future distribution of revenues made from the exploitation of Aceh's vast natural resources were not clear either.

Whereas the question of the distribution of political and economic power between Aceh and Jakarta has remained, new conflict issues and conflict lines also emerged out of the fusion of the two phenomena: civil war and post-tsunami aid and relief work in Aceh. While pre-tsunami Aceh was characterized by the antagonism between GAM and the GoI (Government of Indonesia) over the question of independence, post-tsunami Aceh has been characterized by a shift of conflict issues and lines from the vertical to the horizontal level. Furthermore, the increasing participation of Acehnese communities and civil society organisations after the tsunami has broadened the vertical conflict

line, and it now includes (to a much higher extent than before the tsunami) Acehnese society as well. Conflict issues now include the distribution of aid and relief resources between different areas of Aceh as well as its intra- and inter-community distribution. Inequalities in this context could lead to friction and tension over issues such as compensation for former GAM fighters, the lack of a "peace dividend" for former anti-GAM militias, the rebuilding of houses, or even property rights.

Thus the work of the international community in Aceh, even if it sometimes might be "only" active in the field of relief work, does have an impact on the dynamics of the conflict on the ground. However, there are few international actors who monitor or evaluate the impact of their work in Aceh on the peace process. For the time being the main concern of the Acehnese regarding the work of the internationals in Aceh is the lack of inclusive, community-based approaches, broadly defined here as working together with all conflict parties and all stakeholders of the peace process. So far most of the projects launched are aimed at specific target groups, which are for the most part directed either at "tsunami victims", or directed to "former combatants" or "conflict victims", and thus may tend to divide communities. Other concerns mentioned were the emerging "humanitarian aid complex" producing inflation, a lack of sensitivity for Acehnese culture and customs and the lack of capacity-building on the provincial and local level.

Therefore this analysis seeks to provide various recommendations for the international community on how to structure and implement their activities in Aceh in a more conflict-sensitive manner:

- apply more systematic conflict-sensitive approaches by deepening knowledge about the conflict among international staff; apply criteria for conflict-sensitive work in Aceh; and monitor/ evaluate projects and programmes on their impact (negative and positive) on the conflict
- develop coherent, coordinated strategies together with the GoI to develop the whole province, not just the tsunami-affected areas; the strict distinction between "tsunami-affected" and "non-tsunami-affected" areas and populations only creates new problems

- improve communication and consultation with communities to avoid top-down-only approaches and enhance local acceptance and support; in this regard consultation and communication could comprise the inclusion of the beneficiaries not only in the project planning and implementation process but also in the evaluation process
- increase capacity-building for local government and civil society in order to strengthen non-military Acehese stakeholders in the peace process and bolster capabilities for sustainable democratic reforms in the context of self-governance for Aceh
- avoid increasing inequality and social conflict by employing more local staff and avoiding exclusive approaches
- establish transparent, meaningful partnerships, cooperation and links with Acehese partners and institutions to reduce gaps in understanding between local and international actors.

1. Introduction

The peace process in Aceh, based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in August 2005, seems to be working. The required number of weapons has been turned in by the guerrillas of the GAM (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka – Free Aceh Movement) and the Indonesian Military (TNI – Tentara Nasional Indonesia) has withdrawn its non-organic troops on schedule. The Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) has had little problem performing its duties so far, and there have been very few clashes between units of GAM and TNI since the signing of the MoU. Thus the security situation on the ground seems to be stable.

However the peace process still has a long way to go and many of its main obstacles still lie ahead. The main issue during the time this analysis was conducted (March and April 2006) was the new Law on Government of Aceh (LoGA), several draft versions of which had been submitted to the Indonesian parliament, which had not passed the law by the time this analysis had been completed. Several points of the LoGA, mainly concerning how far-reaching the autonomy of Aceh's provin-

cial government and parliament will be, how the revenues of Aceh's resources will be distributed in the future, and if and when independent candidates and local political parties will be allowed to run in the local elections, were still subject to change. Other, non-LoGA political and military issues evolved around the reintegration of former GAM fighters and the demilitarization of anti-GAM militias. The possibility of a partition of Aceh into three separate provinces was at stake as well.

Thus the general aim of this conflict analysis is to gain a better, more precise understanding of the present situation in Aceh, which will serve as the basis of considerations and proposals aimed at safeguarding the conflict sensitivity of the FES' work in Aceh. As part of the PCIA (Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment Process) initiated by FES, this conflict analysis serves as a basis for further systematic steps designed to ensure the conflict sensitivity of the FES' work. The study was conducted during March and April 2006 with the help of the methodological guidelines for conflict analysis prepared by FES, GTZ and FriEnt. Whereas FES conflict analyses usually have a national focus, this study is the first conflict analysis conducted by FES with a regional focus. Another distinctive feature of this analysis is the fact that, after Boxing Day, the tsunami struck Aceh at the end of 2004, and the impact of the natural disaster on the conflict has been taken into account as well. Although both phenomena, civil war and natural disaster, actually do merge on the ground, a lot of international actors in Aceh do not seem to be aware of the fact that their work can have an impact on the conflict.

The main analytical part of this conflict analysis seeks to identify current and future issues of conflict, conflict lines and key conflict actors (with their peace and conflict potential) as well as potential future scenarios of developments in Aceh. Based on a comprehensive analysis of the conflict, the author will point out possible areas of activity for conflict transformation using the instruments of a political foundation like the FES. In this regard the conflict analysis will focus on the existing programmes and the experiences made by the international community in post-tsunami Aceh in the context of conflict transformation and peace promotion, the identification of potential factors

in the existing programmes that might exacerbate existing conflict issues and cause tension as well as the identification of areas of future activity for the international donors and especially for FES in order to support the peace process.

2. The Genesis and different phases of the conflict in Aceh

Aceh has been a trouble spot throughout most of Indonesia's history. Once an independent sultanate, it was conquered by the Dutch and then successfully integrated into the Dutch East Indies only after 30 years of war, from 1873 - 1903. Sporadic resistance against the colonial power continued until the whole of the Indonesian archipelago fell to the Japanese during World War II. When the Japanese occupation ended in 1945 the Acehnese elites supported the national movement for an independent Indonesia led by Sukarno, who was to become Indonesia's first president in 1949. Acehnese elites hoped for an independent Indonesia, which was to be federal in structure and Islamic in nature. Their hopes were shattered shortly after Indonesia's independence. After victory over the Dutch all political and economic power was centralized on Java, in the hands of the central government in Jakarta. Furthermore, the newly established state was to be secular, abjuring Islam as the basis of the state. Shortly Indonesia gained independence regional uprisings occurred in many of its outer provinces, including Aceh. After several years of low-level conflict the central government made political concessions in the form of a special status for Aceh, granting to the province autonomy rights concerning religious, cultural, educational and legal affairs.

Aceh therefore remained calm from the early 1960s on. Renewed outbursts of violence did not occur until the GAM (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka - Free Aceh Movement) was founded in 1976, demanding an independent Aceh. The contemporary literature on the Aceh conflict names two main reasons for the rise of a separatist movement on the northern tip of Sumatra Island: First and foremost the central government under Indonesia's second president, Suharto, who came to power in 1965, legitimised itself by claiming to provide "security" and "development" for the whole of Indo-

nesia. Thus the central government implemented plans to "industrialize" the country. While the manufacturing companies were established on Java, the outer provinces merely served to provide natural resources for the manufacturing industries on Java. Resource-rich provinces like Aceh, with its large reserves of natural gas and oil did not profit from "industrialization", as the vast majority of the profits made with its natural resources were transferred to Java or to foreign countries. Only about five percent of the profits made it back to Aceh, whereas the negative side-effects of "industrialization" were to be felt increasingly among its inhabitants. Furthermore, Suharto's state-centred development policies led to an even greater centralisation of power in the hands of the central government and made Aceh's "Special Status" de facto a farce. The lack of self-determination in political and economic issues led to the establishment of GAM, which fought for an independent Aceh from 1976 until August 2005, when a peace deal was signed between GAM and the central government in the wake of the Boxing Day tsunami disaster, which had cost more than 160,000 lives in Aceh alone.

Until the fall of Suharto in 1998 the central government primarily tried to solve the "Aceh problem" through military repression. While this turned out to be successful (in military terms) during the initial phase of the conflict between 1976 and 1979, forcing GAM founder Hasan di Tiro to go into exile in Stockholm/ Sweden, it led to a change in Aceh's public opinion in favour of GAM. The second phase of the conflict began around 1989 after GAM fighters, who were trained in Libyan camps in the mid-1980s, returned to Aceh and GAM re-consolidated its presence in the province. Again Jakarta's policy towards GAM and Aceh consisted primarily of military operations. Facing more and more public support for GAM, Aceh was declared a *Daerah Operasi Militer* (DOM - military operation zone) from 1989 - 1998. The military began to target not only GAM units, but also, with increasing frequency, civilians who were believed to be potential GAM supporters. Furthermore, anti-GAM militias were founded by the military, largely among Javanese transmigrants in Aceh, in order to exploit parts of civil society to join in the fight against GAM. The counterinsurgency tactics of the military and its allies not only saw GAM at

the verge of a defeat again, but also served as a catalyst for the friction already existing between the Acehnese and the central government. During the first three years of DOM alone it is believed that more than 3,000 people were killed – most of them civilians. Extra-judicial killings, arbitrary arrest, rape and torture committed by Indonesian security forces throughout the DOM period enraged large parts of Acehnese society against the central government and led to increased support for GAM. Opposition to the central government, and especially to the Indonesian security apparatus, started to increase in 1998, when, after the fall of Suharto's authoritarian regime, the vast human rights violations in Aceh were made public by the media. GAM, encouraged by the successful secession of East Timor in 1998, began to intensify its struggle for an independent Aceh – on the one hand through a newly consolidated and better equipped military arm, on the other hand through affiliated NGOs pressuring for a referendum on Aceh's future (following what is often called the "East Timor blueprint"). Jakarta's reaction in the third phase of the conflict, after the fall of Suharto, can be described as "hybrid": On the one hand, troubled Aceh was granted special autonomy status, including the implementation of Sharia laws, on the other hand the full implementation of the special autonomy status was bound to fail in the context of ongoing military operations and clashes between the Indonesian military and GAM.

Two peace agreements in 2000 and 2002, brokered by Swiss NGO Henri-Dunant Centre (HDC), failed because GAM was unwilling to give up its goal of independence in exchange for special autonomy status, the central government not being willing to allow GAM's transformation into a legal political party and elements of the Indonesian military impeding a ceasefire due to their own political and economic interests in Aceh and beyond. After the 2002 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA) failed, the central government imposed martial law over Aceh in May 2003 and the conflict entered its fourth phase. Nearly all foreign organisations and journalists working in Aceh were forced to leave, and journalists from the national media were only allowed to report out of Aceh when "embedded" with Indonesian military units. From this point on, 30,000 soldiers and more than 10,000 policemen were supposed to "wipe out" an esti-

mated 5,000 guerrilla fighters. In the context of "all out war" military operations during martial law, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, among other human rights organisations, again criticised extra-judicial killings, torture, forced migration etc. committed by the security apparatus, whereas the "tough hand" on Aceh gained the support of the majority of the Indonesian population. Although informal talks between representatives of Jakarta and GAM were taken up again after newly elected President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono came into power in the fall of 2004, the conflict situation on the ground was stuck in a deadlock until the Boxing Day tsunami struck the province at the end of 2004. National and international pressure brought both conflict parties back to the negotiating table in the face of Indonesia's biggest humanitarian catastrophe, resulting in the signing of a peace agreement settling the three-decade-long armed conflict in August 2005.

3. Root causes

3.1 The "resource curse" – rich yet poor Aceh

In the context of Indonesia's economic development under Suharto, profitable natural resources played an important part in keeping the national economy going. Aceh, which was rather unimportant economically up until the end of the 1960s, was soon to be one of the catalysts of Indonesia's developing industrial sector thanks to its vast natural resources. In particular, the discovery of large natural gas and oil fields in the north of the province, near the town of Lhokseumawe, made Aceh important for the national economy. A joint venture between the state-run oil company Pertamina and Mobil-Oil (now Exxon-Mobil) started to exploit the fields for their enormous yields. Billions of US dollars were made through profits, taxes and bribes in Aceh and Jakarta, but the promised "trickle-down effects" of all this proved to be very limited for Aceh. As mentioned before, only about five percent of the profits flowed back into the province, whereas the rest stayed in Jakarta or was transferred to foreign bank accounts. Besides the unjust distribution of the profits made with the exploitation of Aceh's resources, it was also the way of doing business which sparked re-

sentment within Aceh's population. The large investments made in Aceh needed extensive foreign funding, leading to a nexus between foreign capital and the Suharto government. This, combined with the centralisation of all political and economic powers in Jakarta, led to a lack of autonomy for the provincial government and to disadvantages for local businessmen compared to their competitors from Java. Moreover, promises of improving standards of living, jobs and economic prosperity were not kept: farmers were dispossessed without compensation and the ecological system was damaged.

In the mid-eighties, for example, less than 10 percent of all villages in resource-rich Aceh had a sufficient electrical power supply. These processes were further aggravated through the ongoing armed conflict and the 1997 Asian economic crisis, so that by 2002 about 50 percent of the population had no access to clean water, every third child was malnourished and 29.8 percent of the population officially lived below the poverty line.

3.2 The centralisation of power and the lack of self-determination

As mentioned above, victory over the colonial powers did not lead to the establishment of the federal state the Acehnese elites had wanted, but rather to the centralisation of most political and economic powers in the hands of the central government. After Suharto came to power the already existing centre-periphery frictions deepened, leading for example to the de facto denial of Aceh's special region status. Acehnese elites were further marginalized through the filling of jobs in Aceh's administration with only loyal followers of Suharto, opening a gap between the local people and a state apparatus put in place by the powers in Jakarta. In the economy most jobs were given to higher-qualified workers from other provinces and contracts were made with Javanese or foreign companies. Furthermore, the policy of "homogenisation" of state and society, which was to guarantee Indonesia's stability as a nation, forced all political organisations to become incorporated into the collusive, neo-patrimonial system set up by Suharto - leaving no political space for opposition on the national or local level at all.

Besides these two main root causes, which are mentioned in every contemporary work on the Aceh conflict, there are two other important causes that have shaped the specifics of the conflict over the years. Although it should be noted that these are not root causes in the sense that they explain the outbreak of the conflict in Aceh, they are nevertheless important for explaining the decade-long violence in Aceh, as well as the difficulties mediators had in solving the conflict.

3.3 State terror and impunity

The terror carried out by the Indonesian security apparatus, officially declared "counter-insurgency tactics", helped to reinforce existing political and economic grievances since the 1980s. The "shock therapy" approach towards any form of opposition in Suharto's Indonesia permitted the security forces to wage a war more or less against the majority of the people of Aceh, who were primarily seen as potential GAM supporters. Human Rights Watch described the effect of the DOM period on the Acehnese population as follows: "So many people were affected that, today, virtually every Acehnese in the hardest-hit areas can cite a family member who was the direct target of a human rights violation and who had no link to GAM at the time." The countless human rights violations committed by members of the armed forces and police, and the failed attempts to bring justice and reconciliation to victims of human rights violations after the fall of Suharto, led to a general feeling of mistrust towards the Indonesian state. Furthermore, the absence of a troop reduction after 1998 and ongoing assaults on civilians made the idea of independence seem, amongst many Acehnese, to be the only solution for ending the conflict.

3.4 In the shadow of violence: the political economy of the conflict

Another factor explaining the ongoing conflict in Aceh is to be found in the various sources of economic and political power it provided some of its actors with. The end of Suharto saw a massive decline in political power for the Indonesian military through a re-structuring of the armed forces and the loss of the army's seats in parliament. The

instability of outer provinces like Aceh and Papua in the post-Suharto era and the fear of political elites and observers that Indonesia could break-up in the aftermath of East Timor's secession made it possible for the armed forces to present themselves as the single force capable of maintaining the country's integrity. Beyond polishing the image of the armed forces as the nation's safeguard, the Aceh conflict was also a source of economic power for the military. Due to years of ongoing conflict, a lack of civilian control and the nearly complete breakdown of the regular economic sector, Aceh became a fertile ground for entrepreneurs of violence. Arms and drug trafficking, illegal logging, extortion and various other illegal businesses were established by members of the military; the profits made were used to finance military operations and equipment, military pensions and to benefit individuals in the armed forces.

Similarly, GAM had political and economic interests in Aceh as well. Refusing to compromise on its demand for full independence, which had served as one of the pitfalls of the peace deals in 2000 and 2002, led to renewed armed violence and enabled GAM to present itself as the only legitimate representative of Acehnese society. During the ongoing conflict all "neutral" parties were forced to take sides with one of the armed actors and therefore were unable to gain political influence. Furthermore, GAM benefited economically by imposing a GAM tax on all businesses in Aceh as well as by siphoning off funds from humanitarian projects in Aceh. In addition, it is claimed that production of and trafficking in marijuana, kidnapping and extortion served as other sources of income for GAM in the context of Aceh's war economy.

4. Pre-tsunami conflict lines

In looking at the genesis of the conflict, it seems obvious that the fundamental conflict line runs between GAM and what GAM sees as "Javanese colonialism" and its allies. "Javanese colonialism" includes not only the central government in Jakarta but also its security apparatus, the provincial government, other state institutions and the province administration. GAM's armed struggle against what it perceives as "Javanese colonia-

lism" therefore not only included attacks on army posts or police patrols, but also death threats against local politicians seen as "loyal" to the Indonesian state or the burning of schools with an "Indonesian" curriculum. Furthermore, foreign companies like Exxon-Mobil became targets of GAM, too; not only because they took part in what GAM sees as the illegitimate exploitation of Aceh's natural resources and the theft of the profits made, but also by directly supporting the Indonesian military through payments, the erection of military barracks, provision of vehicles, etc. Besides this fundamental conflict line between GAM and what can be called "the Indonesian state" and its allies in Aceh, a second conflict line developed as early as the 1980s between the Indonesian security apparatus and large parts of the Acehnese people.

The ongoing military operations and the attendant terror carried out against Acehnese civilians, GAM members or not, led to severe friction between the security apparatus and large parts of Aceh's population. Finally, alienation between the military and the people brought about what some authors called a "negative identification" of the people with GAM. When GAM managed to control large parts of Aceh's rural areas starting in 1999, another conflict line started to take shape on the local level between the guerrilla fighters and parts of the civilian population. Resistance to GAM's collection of taxes and incidents of extortion and theft committed by individuals who claimed to be GAM members led to friction within communities, but never resulted in outbreaks of armed violence. The latter may be neglected to a certain extent, because, after all, the Indonesian security apparatus and state were seen as enemy No. 1. The two major conflict lines polarized large parts of the province's political, economic and social structures, and therefore overshadowed most existing or possible conflicts within Acehnese society over a long time.

5. The post-tsunami situation

5.1 The impact of the tsunami on the conflict

The situation in Aceh changed fundamentally after a tsunami struck the province on December 26th 2004: 160,000 lost lives and the humanitarian catastrophe following the natural disaster worked as a sort of catalyst for change. While there had been informal talks between GAM and Jakarta in the fall of 2004, the adversaries were put under pressure from the Indonesian population and the international community to end the armed conflict in order to make humanitarian aid work and reconstruction possible. In the wake of the biggest natural disaster ever to strike Indonesia the two sides opened peace negotiations under mediation of the Finish NGO Crisis Management Initiative in Helsinki less than one month after the tsunami. The preamble of the MOU states, that “both parties are convinced that only the peaceful settlement of the conflict will enable the rebuilding of Aceh...”. Thus the opening of peace negotiations at first had little effect on the situation on the ground, where armed clashes between GAM and TNI units occurred within days after the tsunami. It was not until a peace deal was signed in August of 2005 that violence on the ground halted. The core achievements of the Memorandum of Understanding, signed by GAM and the Indonesian government on August 15th, were:

- the transformation of GAM into a local political party
- GAM dropping its demand for independence in exchange for “self-government” of Aceh within the framework of a special autonomy status
- a general amnesty for imprisoned GAM fighters and activists
- Indonesia pulling back all non-organic troops from the province within three months (ca. 25,000)
- the demilitarization of GAM within three months after the signing of the agreement
- the establishment of an unarmed Aceh Monitoring Mission consisting of representatives of the EU and several ASEAN countries; close monitoring of the pullback of the Indonesian troops and the demilitarization process

The first phase of the peace process, which was completed in early 2006, mainly consisted of the withdrawal of all non-organic troops from Aceh and the demilitarization of GAM, both under the surveillance of the AMM. Thus analysts frequently have described the initial phase as the easiest one to cope with. Tackling the root causes of the conflict in the mid-term is expected to be a lot more difficult. Hence the implementation of the MoU continues in the first half of 2006 with the reintegration of former combatants, the return of conflict-affected persons to their homes and communities, and debate in the legislature on the new Law on Governing Aceh (LoGA). The provisions of the MoU also include the withdrawal of the AMM in June of 2006 due to the end of its mandate.

In the mid-term perspective the key tasks in the context of the implementation of the MoU will include: the local elections in 2006, originally scheduled for late April but now pushed back to late summer 2006, the passing of the LoGA by the Indonesian parliament, establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission for Aceh, facilitation of the formation of local political parties in 2007 and, finally, the 2009 local elections in Aceh. It was stated in the introduction that the armed conflict and the post-tsunami aid and reconstruction processes in Aceh often merge on the ground, creating new potential security issues, conflicts of interests and broad political, economic and social challenges for all actors involved. With regard to the above-mentioned implementation of the MoU, the relationship between reconstruction efforts and peace process will most likely become more apparent in 2006. Thus the peace process is entering a critical stage.

5.2 Post-tsunami conflict issues

5.2.1 Reintegration of former GAM fighters

The reintegration of former combatants has begun under the supervision of the AMM and with initial support from the IOM. According to the MoU, up to 3,000 former combatants and 2,000 amnestied prisoners need to be reintegrated. The MoU promises that the “GoI (Government of Indonesia) and the authorities of Aceh will take measures to assist persons who have participated in GAM ac-

tivities to facilitate their reintegration into civil society. These measures include economic facilitation to former combatants, amnestied political prisoners and affected civilians." For the time being, reintegration measures have mainly consisted of disbursing what one of our interview partners called "compensation money" to former combatants and amnestied prisoners by the Indonesian government. The prisoner package of 5 Million Rp. in cash has been implemented without encountering many problems. The implementation of the planned package for the combatants proved to be more difficult due to political disagreement between the GoI and GAM over a list of those former 3,000 combatants in need of the package. Although GAM agreed on its "demobilization" it refused to provide lists of the names of its 3,000 former fighters. Therefore the budget for the reintegration of former GAM-combatants provided by the GoI, which consisted of a living allowance of three rounds of 1 Million Rp. per person, was disbursed through the GAM military chain of command.

A study conducted by the World Bank (entitled "GAM Reintegration Needs Assessment") shows that the amounts of money reaching former combatants differs substantially from village to village. The report points out that this is due to the fact that GAM commanders have used the living allowances to support other categories of GAM (civil units of GAM, GAM police, etc.) as well. The specifics of the distribution of the living allowances make two issues clear: First, the number of ex-GAM people - according to the MoU - is far too low. The World Bank study shows that the number of ex-GAM fighters in Aceh exceeds the 5,000 people mentioned in the MoU. According to GAM sources it might even be as high as 30,000 people. Second, this shows that reintegration measures cannot only focus on former combatants and prisoners, but have to include their families and communities. While there have been very few cases of tension between returning former GAM fighters and members of their communities, the continuing lack of sustainable livelihoods for former combatants might make the "way back to the jungle" appear just as economically auspicious. More than half a year after the signing of the MoU it is estimated that about 75 percent of all former GAM fighters have not yet been able to obtain work and to earn a livelihood. Furthermore, the exclusive focus of the reintegration measures the aforemen-

tioned 5,000 ex-combatants, setting off "normal" Acehness against the guerrilla fighters, might lead to social friction and envy within Acehness communities in the future. Although, according to the World Bank study, the communities have played an important role in supporting the returning GAM fighters, there are no systematic community-based approaches for the reintegration of the ex-GAM fighters being implemented so far. The potential social friction arising from the division of communities into GAM combatants, tsunami victims, conflict victims, etc. was a point of concern that nearly all our interview partners pointed out during the research conducted in Aceh.

5.2.2 Governing Aceh

The way in which Aceh is to be governed in the future is currently the most contentious issue in the province. According to the MoU the provision made in the agreement must be incorporated into a new LoGA, which will replace the 2001 special autonomy law. The new law not only includes the general matter of power sharing between Jakarta and the provincial government, but also provisions on the mechanics of local elections (e.g. the possibility of allowing independent candidates to stand in the 2006 elections) and the formation of local political parties for 2007. Three draft versions have been prepared by the Aceh legislative team, which consists of members of Acehness civil society, the GAM, and the GoI. The Indonesian parliament is currently debating the bill and is expected to pass it into law later this year. Although there have been concerns about a broad disaffirmation in the Indonesian parliament - nationalist parliamentarians have frequently claimed that the bill goes too far and might be just the first step to secession for Aceh and other provinces - it does not seem likely that the LoGA will be turned down by the Indonesian parliament. After all, the SBY government still seems to hold enough support in the parliament to ensure that the bill will pass.

While Acehness civil society had little influence on the formal brokering of the peace process, it participated in the post-MoU political process through a consultative process for submitting a legal draft for the LoGA. Community hearings, workshops and conferences on the way Aceh was

to be governed in the future were held by the local government, and the issues and points they raised were to a large extent included in the draft submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs, which revised the draft and handed it over to the president who sent it to parliament for deliberation. In the version the parliament received, some crucial points made by the Acehnese, such as independent candidates, had already been cancelled out and the overall authority of the Aceh government vis-à-vis Jakarta had been weakened. With increased grassroots participation also comes the potential for much disappointment if the law passed by the Indonesian parliament does not meet the interests and demands of Acehnese society. For example, civil society strongly opposes the plans of conservative elites in Jakarta to include a paragraph in the LoGA that would make possible a division of Aceh into three different provinces. Other issues in this context are how the distribution of revenues and reconciliation for the victims of human rights violations are to be handled in the LoGA. According to Aceh's special autonomy status, 70 percent of revenues need to flow back into the province, but it is not yet clear whether Jakarta or the provincial government will collect and distribute the revenues or what price – the world market price or the much cheaper national price, which is due to high government subsidies) – will serve as the base for determining the 70 percent revenue share. Concerning the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission, as stated in the MoU, the GoI wants to remove any reference to pre-MoU abuses and opposes the possibility of UN special rapporteurs investigating human rights violations, whereas the Acehnese demand an investigation of all human rights violations that happened between 1976 and the present. The TNI and parts of the national political establishment see the inclusion of a truth and reconciliation commission in the MoU in the light of the amnesty granted for more than 2,000 former GAM prisoners. In any event, these issues are not at the top of the agenda right now in Aceh, but they will most likely appear there if the political and economic development and the peace process do not provide the anticipated “peace dividends” for certain – aforementioned – interest groups in Aceh.

5.2.3 Transformation of GAM into a political party

The issue of GAM's transformation from a guerrilla movement to a political party is closely associated with the LoGA. The problem here is two-fold: First, the MoU stipulates that by 2007 the GoI must establish the legal framework for the formation of local (“Aceh-based”) political parties, although the current structures of Indonesia's political system and the constitution do not allow the formation of local political parties. Second, this point has increased fears within the central government and the parliament that this might lead to similar demands from other regions of Indonesia, thus further weakening the position of the central government. The conservative majority of the Indonesian parliament has been very critical of the peace process in Aceh, which is widely seen as making too many concessions to GAM.

To be able to take part in the 2006 local elections as independent candidates and to form a local political party in 2007 to run for the 2009 elections as an independent party are crucial points for GAM if its to remain in the peace process. At the time this analysis was conducted the question whether GAM – through independent candidates – would be able to run in the 2006 elections was of particular political importance. The Aceh draft of the LoGA allowed for independent candidates, the government draft only allowed candidates of political parties – thus it is not yet clear whether or not independent candidates will be allowed in the 2006 elections. Some interview partners found it appropriate that independent candidates should be allowed, as this could be considered as some sort of “peace dividend” on the political level for higher-ranking GAM officers in order to convince them that giving up the armed struggle means political gains for them. If the government draft were to be adopted, GAM members could only run in the elections as representatives of the existing national political parties.

So far the GAM leadership has officially denounced this option and made clear that GAM would only run in the elections as independent candidates. During the field study in Aceh realities on the ground concerning the participation of GAM members were not so black and white. It seems that some members of GAM would actually consider running in the 2006 elections as members of

national parties and that the Acehese branches of some national parties have already actively started to lobby for local GAM members to join their election campaigns, believing this would surely win them new voters. On the other hand, attaining leading positions in the Acehese branches of these parties is very costly ("money politics"), and this in turn might discourage many GAM members who are willing to run in the elections as independent candidates from joining existing parties. Furthermore, the issue of whether individuals who became foreign citizens would automatically be disqualified from running in the local elections, which is of utmost importance for a large number of GAM's exiled elite, needs to be clarified as well. For the most part these issues still seem to be subject to change from day to day.

In this context it seems clear that there is still great doubt in Jakarta concerning the extent to which GAM's political intentions and goals can be trusted. The military and the secret service in Aceh voiced concern that GAM is already trying to control strategic areas in Aceh and establishing structures for a shadow government and will eventually opt for independence again if powerful enough to do so. Allowing GAM to have independent candidates would, in the eyes of the military, grant the movement even more power because it would certainly win several districts and perhaps even the governorship. Although it seems unlikely that failure to allow independent candidates would seriously endanger the peace process, it would certainly increase distrust within GAM concerning Jakarta's commitment to the peace process.

An issue that remains mainly untouched so far is GAM's actual transformation into a local political party starting in 2007, which goes far beyond the question of whether and to what extent independent candidates will be allowed to take part in the local elections in August of 2006. So far hardly anyone in GAM has experience in party politics, institutional policies or even democratic participation. Some high-level GAM representatives have gained a fair amount of diplomatic experience throughout their years in exile, but there is a clear lack of experience and preparation on all levels of the movement regarding how party politics work and how a party is to be set up, structured and maintained. Furthermore, GAM lacks a coherent political programme. Many analysts and activists as well as ac-

tual GAM members therefore question the ability of the movement to transform itself into a functioning political party and to participate successfully in the elections of 2009 without the help of external partners. Interestingly, the issue of transforming GAM into a political party seems to be of less importance right now in comparison to the reintegration of the guerrilla ex-combatants (mainly of lower rank). But in the mid- and long-term view GAM's transformation will have to function as a (political) peace dividend for the higher ranks. It seems unlikely that, after the former guerrilla fighters are reintegrated, GAM as an organisation will somehow disappear, and this makes it necessary for the GoI and the international community to develop concepts and strategies to successfully transform the guerrillas into a functioning democratic party.

5.2.4 Division of Aceh

One indicator of the emerging range of actors competing for political and economic power in Aceh is the fact that a group of local officials in south Aceh are campaigning for a division of Aceh into three separate provinces. According to their demands, Aceh Leuser Antara (ALA) and Aceh Barat Selatan (ABAS) would be the names of the two proposed new provinces, consisting of ten of Aceh's 21 districts. The areas of ALA and ABAS are mostly inhabited by non-Acehnese "ethnic minorities" (Gayo, Alas, Singkil), and here GAM, according to several observers, has the least powerful support base in Aceh. There are various reasons for local officials to push for a division of Aceh: First, it is obvious that the establishment of new provinces not only creates new career opportunities for local officials and politicians but also creates similar opportunities for the military, due to its territorial structure. Furthermore, members of anti-GAM militias are also at the forefront of the campaign for a division of Aceh. Thus some interview partners pointed out that the campaign for a division of Aceh is very likely getting direct financial and logistic support from conservative elites in Jakarta, the local TNI and the intelligence service in order to weaken the peace process. Second, support within parts of the local population for ALA and ABAS seems to come from a feeling of neglect by the provincial governments. Development and economic progress in ALA and ABAS lag behind other parts

of Aceh, which could potentially facilitate an instrumentalisation of ethnic and cultural differences between the ethnic minorities and the Acehnese.

This is legally backed by existing law regulations set out in the Regional Autonomy Law (32/ 2004), which allows the division of provinces – although in every case the provinces to be established must seek the approval of the provincial governor and legislature, which is highly unlikely to be granted in Aceh for the time being. The draft version of the LoGA does not contain any provision for a division of Aceh. Therefore the leaders of the campaign for a division of Aceh announced that the people of ALA and ABAS would boycott the 2006 local elections. Among the Acehnese political elites in Banda Aceh (GAM and non-GAM) there is strong resentment against any kind of division of Aceh. To GAM the campaign is nothing more than the continuation of the central government's strategy to weaken GAM's public support in Aceh. To observers, members of Acehnese civil society and politicians in Banda Aceh, this appeared to be a potential violation of the MoU, which states that Aceh will retain the same borders as those with which the province was established in 1956. Including a provision in the LoGA to divide Aceh would most likely make GAM and other Acehnese stakeholders of the peace process highly suspicious of Jakarta's "real" ambitions with the LoGA. On the national level the campaign for a division of Aceh clearly lacks a strong support base: Neither the Indonesian parliament, even though it is at times outspokenly critical of the peace process, nor the Yudhoyono government expressed public support for ALA or ABAS. Unlike Papua in 2003, the division of yet another "trouble spot" is not government policy for Aceh, which makes a division of Aceh highly unlikely. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, there is support for ALA and ABAS in south Aceh, which is something not only the new provincial government but also international donors working in Aceh will have to take into account.

5.2.5 Demobilizing former anti-GAM militias

The establishment of anti-GAM militias by the Indonesian military starting in the late 1980s could prove to be one of the perils of the peace deal in

the future. Though estimated to number more than 20,000 fighters armed with bamboo spears, machetes and even firearms having units in all 21 districts of Aceh, the militias are not explicitly mentioned in the Memorandum of Understanding, nor does the GoI or the TNI acknowledge the existence of military-backed militia groups. Since the militias are not mentioned in the MoU, the AMM is not confronting this issue and therefore no specific plans for their demobilization seem to exist. Furthermore, whereas former GAM fighters receive compensation in the form of "reinsertion" assistance packages, etc., the militias, who officially do not exist, do not at present receive any form of "peace dividend." However, there is evidence that local officials have given small amounts of government funds for reintegration to local militia leaders in order to stabilize the security situation in their areas. Although there have been very few reports about former militia fighters turning into spoilers of the peace process, either by settling old scores or by shifting towards criminal activities, the attacks in February of 2006 by militias on the offices of SIRA, an NGO closely affiliated with GAM, made it clear that militias could very well become spoilers of the peace process again, as was the case during the breakdown of the previous peace agreement in 2003. In this context one must understand that the history of internal conflicts in Indonesia clearly shows that militias hardly ever act autonomously, but are rather to be seen as an instrument in the hands of the state security apparatus. Therefore the potential danger does not lie only in the existence of militias themselves. This issue could become important when Jakarta changes its policy concerning the peace process in Aceh.

5.2.6. Monitoring the peace process after the AMM withdraws

After the definite withdrawal of the Aceh Monitoring Mission, which is set to happen after the local elections in August 2006, it remains unclear if and in what form there will be a continuation of independent monitoring on the ground in Aceh. AMM's extension until the local elections are held in August is definitely important as this will be the time period when violent clashes will most likely happen in Aceh. If the date of the local elections is postponed again, as has already happened three times now, another delay will then certainly

produce a timeframe in Aceh when no independent monitors are on the ground. This possibility is especially worrying to all parts of Acehnese society. In their opinion the AMM played a key role in the peace process - not only by monitoring Aceh's demilitarization and reinforcing the peace process, but also by providing the ordinary people with some trust in the peace process. All of the Acehnese interviewed for this report commented on AMM's importance for the future of the peace process in Aceh and made clear that its withdrawal could endanger the surprisingly good security situation in the province so far. Successful, free and fair local elections backed by international monitoring will certainly be a cornerstone of the peace process. Still, conflict issues and potential will not cease to exist by August of 2006, though there will not be any independent observers left to investigate issues between the conflict parties and to monitor the peace process.

6. Conflict lines in post-tsunami Aceh

Since the signing of the MoU in August of 2005 the Aceh conflict has for the most part been transferred to the political level. Armed clashes between GAM and TNI units have, with very few exceptions in the fall of 2005, ceased. As of right now the risk of Aceh falling back into a status of all-out war seems relatively low. That does not necessarily mean that either the issues of conflict or the lines of conflict have disappeared. In fact the conflict issues and lines remain present, and in turn have been somewhat extended. The main vertical conflict line still runs between the two armed opponents: GAM and the central government in Jakarta. However, the increasing participation of Acehnese communities and civil society organisations after the tsunami has broadened the vertical conflict line, and this now includes (to a much higher extent than before the tsunami) Acehnese society as well. In fact, one could now argue that in the context of decentralisation and "self-governance" for Aceh, competition and political conflict is likely to take place between Jakarta and the provincial government as well - the latter of which has always been seen as nothing more than Jakarta's subordinate. Not only does GAM and Aceh's civil society hold high expectations for the outcome of the LoGA, the provincial govern-

ment and its administration do as well, as new power positions and career opportunities would emerge in a largely self-governed Aceh. In addition, horizontal conflict lines and issues are developing that are, strangely enough, partly a result of the very phenomena that bolstered the peace process in the first place: the post-tsunami reconstruction and development policies of the GoI and the foreign donors in Aceh. Whereas the core issues of the conflict - the distribution of political and economic power between Aceh and Jakarta - still remain, these issues are beginning to shift to the local level as well.

In general it can be stated that inequalities and friction are arising between and inside Acehnese communities and among the victims of the tsunami and the victims of the conflict. Potential conflict lines on the horizontal level run between different regions of Aceh (tsunami-affected and non-tsunami-affected areas). Whereas the tsunami-affected areas on the east coast have received a lot of assistance by the GoI and the international donors, the impoverished conflict-affected areas around Aceh's west coast and in central Aceh have received little to no assistance so far, although a lot of houses, infrastructure and general livelihoods had already been destroyed in these areas prior to the natural disaster. This is especially problematic as some of the areas that received little assistance are inhabited by ethnic minorities (see conflict issue: division of Aceh). Furthermore, potential conflict lines run within communities between people who were displaced during the years of conflict and are now returning to their communities and those who stayed. As mentioned above, the civil war did not only cost an estimated 12,000 lives, but also produced forced migration and displacement among many inhabitants of conflict-ridden areas inside the province. Most of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) found shelter in refugee camps inside or outside Aceh. The return of some thousand IDPs raises not only questions of their general social and economic reintegration and their resettlement, but also - and in particular - of property rights concerning houses, farming land, etc. Thus envy and jealousy have emerged in the horizontal areas not only between different regions/ districts of Aceh, or among the relevant local elites, but also within communities between what a report of the NGO "Eye on Aceh" called

“the haves and the have-nots.” To everyone visiting Aceh at the moment it is striking that, generally speaking, the better-off have economically benefited more from the aid and reconstruction programmes. Many of the houses of upper-class Acehnese have been rented out for huge amounts of money to international organisations and NGOs. Those with higher education and/or language skills now hold jobs with the foreign donors. And those with access to resources like transportation (i.e. vehicles they can rent) have done comparatively well over the past 15 months. Thus friction is not only possible between IDPs or refugees and their old or new communities, but also between the haves and the have-nots. It should also be noted that GAM, as an entirely Acehnese organisation, seems to be no exception here: higher-ranking GAM members have done comparatively well by establishing new businesses, etc. in the post-MoU phase, whereas, to a large extent, the lower ranks are still struggling to establish sustainable livelihoods for themselves and their families. Furthermore, the reconstruction process itself could create lines of conflict. By making the Acehnese objects as opposed to subjects of the reconstruction process, the alienation of the Acehnese during the reconstruction process will, in the worst case, probably make it appear as just another form of “colonisation” or heteronomy by “Javanese” or “foreign” powers.

In general, large parts of Acehnese society have been identified either as identical to GAM (“hard-line” Indonesian position) or at least supportive of its cause, or were seen as some sort of “black box” with its power structures, key actors, etc. basically hidden in the dominant paradigm of the conflict between GAM and the Government of Indonesia. While many observers found large parts of the Acehnese population to be either in support of GAM or at least supportive of the idea of an independent Aceh during the times of armed conflict, this may have changed by now. The diverse range of civil society actors competing for political and economic power emerging in post-tsunami Aceh has yet to be further identified. What role are religious organisations and the Acehnese Ulama going to play in the future? So far non-Acehnese religious organisations do not possess any kind of influence on Aceh’s political sphere. In fact, all Acehnese actors seem to portray themselves as

Muslims. Thus a conflict line between more Islamic and more secular groups does not (yet) exist within Aceh, although various interview partners have observed an increase in the distribution of radical Islamist pamphlets and literature among the markets of Aceh. The sources of these items were identified as non-Acehnese, which makes the question of the importance of hardline religious groups in Aceh difficult to answer. It seems obvious that at least the Acehnese Ulama has no aspirations to gain direct influence on politics or even to forming a party of its own. The Acehnese widely consider them as functioning as advisors and moral guides rather than political leaders. But what role will non-Acehnese religious groups play in the future? Another important question linked to the still very broad issue of possible intra-Acehnese friction is the question of other political forces and their political orientation. Research in Aceh showed that, because large parts of civil society show potential interest in forming local parties and competing for political power in Aceh, a wide scope of local political parties can be expected to be established when the LoGA is passed. Hence the scope of their political goals may range from socialist to Islamist ideologies. Who will gain access to political power and how will political power be distributed? And what role will the international community and the Jakarta government play in these matters? If, in the context of “democratisation,” certain political groups feel marginalized by either the Jakarta government or the international donors, they could very well ride on such a ticket in the local elections.

In general there currently seems to be little risk that Aceh will fall back to a status of all-out war. On the other hand, it does seem possible that, especially during the local elections, violent clashes between GAM and anti-GAM militias may occur, particularly in central Aceh. Potential intra-community tension resulting in violence on the local level is conceivable as well. Still, the only conflict line that has the potential to create a renewed, large-scale outbreak of violence is on the vertical level between Jakarta and GAM. Convincing both parties, and their respective allies, to stick to the peace process is still the main challenge.

7. Post-tsunami actors in Aceh: spoilers or supporters of the peace process?

So far, with the exception of two incidents – one being the attack on offices of GAM-linked NGO SIRA and the other an assault on a motorcyclist by the police in east Aceh which sparked a local riot – there have been surprisingly few attempts to disturb the peace process. Neither during the first phase, which saw all non-organic troops pull back and GAM hand in more than 800 weapons, nor during the second phase, which up until now has seen more than 5,000 former GAM combatants and amnestied prisoners return to their villages, have any major clashes occurred between GAM and the Indonesian security apparatus. Overall, however, certain actors could become spoilers of the peace process – especially if their economic needs and political aspirations are not met during the implementation of the MoU.

GAM:

According to the numbers stated in the MoU, GAM consisted of about 3,000 armed fighters and 2,000 imprisoned activists before the tsunami. GAM founder Hasan di Tiro and the organisation's key political leaders were forced into exile in 1979, hence most ideological input and policy-making competence was based within GAM's central office in Stockholm/ Sweden. Especially in the eastern and northern parts of the province, which saw the worst of the civil war, GAM had gained broad support from the local population. With the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, GAM's armed wing (TNA) was officially defunct and demilitarized, and GAM is now willing to make the big step from being a guerrilla organisation to establishing itself as a local political party within the Indonesian political system. Therefore, as one interview partner described it, GAM "by now has all its cards open on the table." Beyond handing in more than 800 weapons and officially giving up on the idea of independence for Aceh, GAM demonstrated its commitment to the peace process in a more important way when its once exiled leaders (with the exception of Hasan di Tiro, who is too ill to travel) returned to Aceh at the beginning of April 2006.

Although the political will to take the step from a guerrilla organisation to a political party is there, several objectives stand in the way that could very well hamper GAM's transformation.

First of all, it is as yet unclear who is going to be Hasan di Tiro's political successor. So far his son has made no attempts to follow in his political footsteps, and none of the members of the government in exile has been identified by di Tiro as his successor. Second, it is unclear to what extent GAM, as a guerrilla organisation, will be capable of transforming itself into a political party. GAM neither has nor ever had a functioning party apparatus. GAM's leadership may have gained some experience in international diplomacy by brokering three peace deals since 2000, but it has no political experience in democratic party politics. Nevertheless, they do want to compete in the local elections and they expect to win them. Furthermore, GAM's middle and lower ranks mainly consist of farmers and fishermen, who neither have the educational background nor the aspirations to form the basis of a political party. After all, their main concern right now seems to be to achieve sustainable livelihoods for themselves and their families. This leads to the possibility that those inside GAM who see themselves as "losers" of the post-tsunami situation could therefore become spoilers of the peace process. Third, GAM lacks any kind of political programme going beyond the demand for Aceh's independence. By giving up the ultimate goal of independence, GAM might be able to win the first elections due to its reputation in Aceh as an organisation of freedom fighters, but there will be a definite need for the movement to develop a party programme that addresses the needs and demands of Aceh's population in order to become a lasting and powerful local political party.

Developing a party programme might become difficult in regard to the heterogeneity of GAM's membership. For example, the secularism of the Swedish elite is not necessarily shared by local GAM units. Those on the ground in Aceh often consider both being Muslim and being Acehnese as equally important for their political struggle. Thus Acehnese nationalism and religious beliefs merge and GAM members seem not to separate their own religious beliefs from their political struggle as much as the di Tiro government in

Sweden does. Therefore opposition to implementation of Sharia law does not seem entirely secularly motivated; more often it is not Sharia itself the Acehnese seem to oppose but its implementation by the central government. The extent to which Islam will play a role in GAM's party programme is yet to be seen. While a division of the movement seems unrealistic for the time being, it is clear that GAM's transformation into a functioning political party will not be a simple process. The risk that the movement itself will resume the armed struggle is equally unrealistic, but there is a risk of losing control over the lower ranks when GAM's - until now still intact - military command structure is abandoning. In turn, those who see themselves economically and/ or politically as losers of the peace deal might take up arms again. Therefore it is of utmost importance to provide some sort of peace dividend not only to the middle and lower ranks in the form of monetary compensation, but also to the higher ranks in some form of political peace dividend. The foundation for such a dividend must be created within the LoGA (allowing local political parties and independent candidates). Yet for the second and far more difficult step of transforming GAM into a local political party, the movement will most certainly depend on financial and logistical help as well as political cooperation. So far little effort has been made to prepare GAM for the second step.

TNI:

The Indonesian military has lost more and more political power since the fall of Suharto and the beginning of the transition to democracy. Thus intra-state conflicts like Aceh or Papua served as a platform for the weakened military to regain political influence. The threat of a disintegration (or "Balkanisation" as some observers have even called it) of Indonesia seemed likely after the successful secession of East Timor in 1999 and was constantly used by the military to highlight its function as preserver of the nation's territorial integrity. The deteriorating security situation in Aceh was used to increase the military budget as well. Furthermore, Aceh served as a lucrative source of income for the military, which happens to be chronically under funded in Indonesia, through its involvement in illegal logging,

drug trafficking, illegal roadblocks, etc. The escalation of the conflict starting in 2000 made Aceh de facto the most powerful actor in the province - a position which was enhanced by the declaration of martial law in Aceh in May 2003, making Aceh's civil governor a "subordinate" of the military commander. In this case the military, as well as the militarily backed militias, have suffered the biggest loss in power (both economically and politically) in the province. Nevertheless, the TNI has kept quiet since the signing of the MoU. The pullback of its non-organic troops did not cause any problems and there have been no indications that the TNI actively plans to undermine the peace agreement. However, the TNI is very suspicious about GAM's "real" intentions. Intelligence reports seem to indicate that GAM may be using the peace process to regroup, recruit new fighters and further establish its political and administrative shadow structures in the province. Still, with the TNI hardliners marginalized in the Yudhoyono government, it seems questionable that the TNI itself will initiate violence on the ground in the short term, as long as there is no paradigmatic policy change towards the Aceh question in Jakarta in the meantime. The aforementioned militias seem to be of far more importance in this context, as various militia leaders have political aspirations in the upcoming local elections that compete with those of GAM. Because the militias are not included in the MoU, they are neither monitored by the AMM nor have they retained any sort of peace dividend. This is a circumstance which definitely makes them potential spoilers of the peace process. The extent to which the TNI will support these groups remains unclear, but looking back on Aceh's history and the TNI's links to local militia groups, the TNI needs (at least theoretically) to be counted among the potential spoilers of the peace process.

Civil society

During the conflict Aceh's civil society was for the most part marginalized. The military saw all non-governmental Acehnese organisations, no matter if they were de facto affiliated with GAM or not, as GAM supporters. On the other hand, GAM took a hard stance towards civilians whom it perceived to be guilty of collaboration with the

Indonesian side. Aceh's civil society has for this reason suffered from constant repression in recent years, particularly since it is hardly able to formulate independent political strategies or develop its own policies. The political space has been highly polarised between GAM and TNI, which makes the existence of a functioning civil society virtually impossible. As a result of this, Acehnese civil society had a very narrow impact on the outcome of the Memorandum of Understanding, but it was able to regain some political power during the drafting phase of the LoGA. Nearly all interview partners pointed out how united and cooperative the various CSOs involved in the drafting interacted with each other across the whole political spectrum. On the other hand, there have been reports about a growing factionalisation of civil society as of late. The civil society movement that was once united in the struggle for Aceh's self-determination and against military oppression might become increasingly weakened by narcissism, jealousy and competition for power. Competition among civil society actors for donor funding might further increase such tendencies. After all, it must be said that there is very little evidence that gives reason to overemphasise the role and power of Aceh's civil society at the moment. Civil society in Aceh is still weak and lacks capacities to effectively monitor local government. In order to establish itself as a powerful force in the stabilisation of the peace process throughout the coming years, local CSOs need to build far more capacities, develop and/ or enhance cooperation amongst themselves and professionalize to a greater degree.

Provincial government:

Aceh's provincial government and administration has merely been little more than the extension of Jakarta for the last 30 years. For the most part there has been very little trust within the Acehnese population towards state institutions, due to their direct affiliation with Jakarta's patrimonial elites, widespread corruption and the malfunction of state services. In addition to the previous bad performance, big parts of Aceh's governmental and administrative infrastructure were destroyed by the tsunami and many members of its staff were killed. The perception of the provincial go-

vernment as the "extended arm" of Jakarta could change after the LoGA is passed. The Acehnese draft grants the provincial government far more authority vis-à-vis Jakarta. The new LoGA and its weakness and dependency could be reduced and the provincial government could develop into an independent political player. The problem is two-fold: First it is as yet unclear how much authority vis-à-vis Jakarta the provincial government will be given in the final version of the LoGA. Second, it will be equally as important that the new LoGA, instead of merely shifting responsibilities for corruption, mismanagement, etc. from the national to the provincial level, serves to deprive the existing patrimonial and corrupt elites of their power and to increase good governance on the provincial level. Otherwise the proclaimed benefits of special autonomy status (incl. a greater share of the profits made with Aceh's natural resources) will not reach the local population. Depending on the developments on the national and provincial levels, the provincial government and administration could, theoretically, very well become either spoilers or stabilisers of the peace process.

Central government and parliament in Jakarta:

Indonesia's president, Yudhoyono, made solving of the Aceh problem one of the points of his electoral campaign, nevertheless considering Indonesia's territorial integrity as sacrosanct. After the tsunami the central government, led by Yudhoyono, was the driving force behind the peace process on the national level, despite opposition from large parts of the military and the parliament. Thus a stabilized, peaceful Aceh is widely believed to be very important for the president's image – nationally and internationally. A successful peace process, reconstruction and the implementation of the special autonomy status in Aceh could therefore be seen as some sort of "litmus test" for the central government. On the other hand, and as mentioned above, a conservative majority in the Indonesian parliament has been highly opposed to passing a bill which would allow GAM to form its own local political party. Political observers in Jakarta pointed out that the Yudhoyono government holds the majority of seats in the parliament and thus the LoGA will definitely be passed by the Indonesian parlia-

ment. The only question is: with what content and provisions? Until then there is a possibility that, unlike the central government, the national parliament could take on the role of a spoiler.

Although it has been made clear that not all actors in Aceh can put the province back into its pre-tsunami status quo of all-out war, they are all, to a certain extent, stakeholders of the peace process. This makes it seem appropriate to continue to include all relevant actors in the planning and implementation of the peace process on various levels of political decision making. For an institution like the Aceh Joint Forum to support peace can be seen as a step in the right direction, as joint forums not only create dialogues between the different stakeholders on the local, national and international levels, but also can offer advice on and improvement for the peace-strengthening efforts planned or underway.

8. International actors in Aceh - the role of the international response

Before 1998, with the exception of Libya's direct support for GAM in the form of military training, the international community had either acted differently or openly supported the Suharto regime. Criticism concerning Jakarta's Aceh policy came mainly from international human rights organisations, but it had little or no impact on the indifference or open support of the international community concerning Jakarta's Aceh policy. The fall of Suharto, the East Timor experience and Indonesia's transition to democracy caused some Western governments to adopt a more proactive stance on the Aceh conflict, resulting in two internationally mediated peace agreements in 2000 and 2002. After the breakdown of the 2002 peace agreement, international interest in brokering a solution for the Aceh problem declined rapidly. In the context of the emerging war on terror in Southeast Asia (the Bali nightclub bombings) "hard" security concerns (terrorism) came to the fore. There was therefore little open criticism and few diplomatic initiatives from the international community in the context of the declaration of martial law in Aceh. Besides the lack of concern within the international community, nearly all non-governmental and international organisations active

in Aceh were forced to leave the province after martial law was declared. For that matter, hardly any of the international actors who are active in Aceh now had established projects, offices or contacts previous to the tsunami.

As stated before, the tsunami drastically changed the scope of actors active in Aceh to an extent that Aceh could be called "internationalised." Furthermore, large sums of money, nearly all of it earmarked for the reconstruction of the province, poured into Aceh. Peace negotiations took place and resulted in the aforementioned MoU, signed in August 2005. Surprisingly, besides the above-mentioned international involvement/ support for the peace negotiations, the actual role of the internationals in the peace process is fairly small, although nearly every representative of foreign governments, NGOs or international organisations active in Aceh points out that any kind of reconstruction effort is meaningless without a solid peace process. Why then is there so little international involvement and impact? There are two main reasons:

First, as mentioned above, nearly all of the money pouring into Aceh is clearly earmarked for aid and reconstruction projects and thus cannot simply be disbursed for projects related to conflict resolution. The majority of the international actors therefore work only in the field of physical reconstruction of the province. The primary regions of international involvement are the coastal areas, which were hardest-hit by the tsunami. Thus the north and east of the province and the mountainous areas in central Aceh, which were affected worst by the civil war, have been covered by international reconstruction and development projects to a much lesser extent. In addition to that, many international donors are facing pressure to disburse their funds rather quickly in order to be able to present facts and results of their work. For this reason not enough efforts are made to include the local communities and local partners in ongoing projects, let alone make them a part of the project planning process. At present the Acehnese are more the objects of the reconstruction process than its subjects. Thus the internationals themselves are contributing to the lack of empowerment and capacities of the majority of the Acehnese, although this is certainly not part of their agenda. The importance of local capacity-building in order

to give the peace process a social basis is one of the core issues that emerged from this study – yet this is largely not part of the ongoing projects. Most relief and aid agencies plan to leave Aceh in 2009 at the latest and after that the responsibility not only for the implementation of the reconstruction programmes but also for maintaining peace, democracy and good governance will be handed over to the Acehnese. This is of particular importance for Aceh's local government and administration, which has been weakened not only by the tsunami but also by years of conflict. However, few donors – with the exception of the European Commission Aceh Local Governance Action Program, which has a volume of three million Euros, is implemented by the GTZ and aims to strengthen the capacity of local governance in all 21 districts of the province – are working to rebuild sustainable government capacities.

Second, the Government of Indonesia is simply not granting any international actor in Aceh much room to become active in the peace process. Any kind of direct, political involvement is carefully watched by the Indonesian political elites. Since East Timor's secession in 1999 international involvement in Indonesia's conflict zones has become an even more sensitive political issue. Any kind of direct, political involvement of internationals is potentially seen as potentially providing support for separatism and thus for Indonesia's disintegration. There are three key areas where the GoI explicitly invited international donors to provide assistance: socialisation and communication of the content of the MoU, police and local government capacity-building and assistance with reintegration of former GAM fighters. Thus there are few international actors working on conflict: in cooperation with the GoI and the BRA, the IOM is facilitating the reintegration of ex-GAM fighters by providing them with economic livelihoods. The World Bank ran a big information campaign throughout Aceh trying to provide remote communities with information about the contents of the MoU and the current state of the peace process. Furthermore, the organisation facilitated dialogues between high level GAM and GoI officials. The EC, with its implementing partner UNDP, plans to support the local elections in Aceh, and, also with the UNDP, is working on reform of the justice sector with particular regard

to human rights (access-to-justice project) and the establishment of an independent court system. A good example of grass-roots work "on conflict" is the work of Peace Brigades International in Aceh, which support local human rights workers and provides positive peacebuilding activities, drawing on local culture and the experiences of the participants for a variety of local NGOs. Yet again, the international NGOs for the most part have not played a big role in the peace process so far – mostly due to the sensitivity of the issue, something which all international actors we interviewed were very aware of. Nevertheless, according to many Acehnese interview partners international NGOs do have the potential to support the peace process indirectly by strengthening the capacities of civil society and communities. Furthermore, from the viewpoint of most Acehnese, the mere presence of the large number of internationals in Aceh is regarded as having a deescalating effect. Regardless of their actual (small) role in the peace process, the Acehnese see the presence of internationals in Aceh as an internationalisation of the conflict and therefore as having a positive impact through their presence alone. Nevertheless, certain issues/ problems concerning the work of internationals, be it in or on conflict, do exist that could either aggravate existing conflict issues, create new conflict issues or cause tension between the Acehnese and the internationals in the future.

In this context the most frequently raised issue seems to be the lack of inclusive, community-based projects in Aceh. Inclusive, community-based approaches are here broadly defined as working together with all conflict parties (GAM, TNI, central and provincial government, civil society, etc.) and all stakeholders of the peace process. So far most of the projects launched are targeting specific target groups and target for the most part either "tsunami victims" or "former combatants" or "conflict victims." Basically all Acehnese interview partners voiced their concern on these approaches, which they referred to as "exclusive." First and foremost, any kind of exclusive cooperation with just one of the conflict parties on the provincial or national level can undermine the neutrality attributed to the international community by both conflict parties and is likely to create mistrust among the conflict parties, thus

hampering the peace process. Furthermore, any kind of exclusive approach on the local level, by either the Indonesian government and/ or the international donors, will most likely create horizontal friction and envy between the different “target groups” on the ground. One example frequently mentioned was the reconstruction of housing facilities and their impact on Acehese communities. While current housing reconstruction is directed only at those who lost their homes during the tsunami, there are people who lost their houses during the war in most tsunami-affected communities. These people are largely excluded from the housing reconstruction process simply due to the fact that they are not “tsunami victims.”

Another example is the reintegration measures for former GAM fighters, which only target the armed wing of GAM and thus leave out other, non-armed GAM members as well as the families of the combatants. In general, targeting only one of the conflict parties exclusively has the potential to create even more disparities between the different conflict parties. By giving a peace dividend only to ex-GAM members, chances are high that this could, for example, create tension between ex-GAM members and former anti-GAM militias who (at least officially) have been left out of the existing reintegration programmes so far. As one Acehese interview partner put it: “In Aceh everybody is a victim – if not of the tsunami than for sure of the conflict.” “Exclusive” approaches can potentially cause friction within communities and eventually even deepen existing conflict issues and dynamics.

Alongside the above-mentioned exclusive approaches on specific target groups there is also an exclusive approach towards only those areas hit by the tsunami. The primary regions of international involvement are therefore the coastal areas which were most affected by the tsunami. The north and east of the province and the mountainous areas in central Aceh that suffered the most during the civil war have been covered by international reconstruction and development projects to a much lesser extent so far – although these are the areas where armed violence is most likely to break out again.

Overall, in order to plan and launch inclusive, community-based projects, it is first and foremost

necessary to find out about the needs, demands and prospects of the specific communities. Community-based needs assessments would be the first step to being able to give the affected populations a platform to voice their concerns and opinions. This would not only enhance democratic participation within the local population, but also make a valid and much needed contribution to increasing capacities on the ground. Another issue raised concerning the presence of many foreigners in Aceh is the development of what one interview partner called a “humanitarian industrial complex.” During 2005 not only did prices for food, transport and especially rent skyrocket, leading to an increase in inflation of over 20 percent in one year alone, but also the presence of such a large number of internationals willing and able to pay far higher wages and salaries than usual created a huge gap between the Acehese. Therefore, due to a lack of qualified workers in Aceh, both internationals and the Indonesian government have recruited more and more non-Acehese staff for Aceh, leading to fears on the part of locals of being pushed aside in the job market. This “humanitarian industrial complex,” and what is considered by many Acehese as “culturally insensitive behaviour” on the part of the internationals, and was also mentioned as a potential source of conflict by most internationals interviewed as well, could spark tension between the Acehese and the internationals in the future.

All in all, conflict-sensitive reconstruction and relief work, as well as conscious efforts to support the peace process, can help not only to rebuild livelihoods, but also, to a certain extent, to stabilize the Aceh peace process. It is not so much the outputs of development and reconstruction programmes (i.e. houses, bridges or roads) that can contribute towards an improvement of the situation in Aceh, but even more the processes by which they are planned and implemented. Inclusive projects have the potential to bring different parties together, encourage dialogue and thus generally improve relations within and between Acehese communities and between society and the state. On the other hand, unequal, exclusive, unjust distribution of funds and projects that ignore the specifics of the conflict can exacerbate existing conflict issues or even create new ones. Therefore the international actors in Aceh, even

if they are “only” involved in humanitarian aid or reconstruction, can take on the role of either a stabiliser or a spoiler in Aceh. So far there are few international actors who monitor or evaluate the impact of their work in Aceh on the peace process, let alone actively contribute to the stabilisation of the peace process. This fact is most striking because a wide gap exists between the possibilities for international actors to support the peace process (i.e. inclusive approaches, capacity-building, etc.), the high expectations of some members of the Acehnese communities concerning the future role of the internationals in the peace process and the realities on the ground. This gap needs to be bridged in the near future in order to secure the robustness of the peace process in Aceh for possible future specifics of political, social and economic developments in the province.

9. Future scenarios

The following chapter does not aim to develop best, most probable, and worst-case scenarios for Aceh. Such an approach would not only be highly questionable from a methodological point of view, but also would seem to be generally dysfunctional at such an early stage of the post-tsunami political, social and economic developments in Aceh. Misplaced concreteness would only help to blind decision makers to surprise. Thus rather than try to predict the future of Aceh, this chapter seeks to raise attention to the possible uncertainties and risks that need to be taken into consideration for any kind of policy planning or implementation in Aceh in the future. Therefore decision makers need to seek robust strategies and policies which perform reasonably well compared to all the uncertainties, risks and possible socio-political and economic developments which are described in the following paragraphs.

Against all odds and perils, the peace process has been highly successful so far. The demilitarisation of GAM and Indonesia’s pullback of non-organic troops have been completed. The local elections have been set for August of 2006 and the mandate of the AMM has been extended until after the local elections. The GAM leadership, with the exception of Hasan di Tiro, who has been ill for a long time, has returned from exile to Aceh. Their

return, which seems only logical after considering that there is little that would be able to derail the peace process, further bolstered hopes of a permanent, peaceful resolution of the conflict. Thus the current risk of Aceh returning to a status of all-out war appears to be rather small. Nevertheless, there are issues of concern in the mid-term and long-term perspective that have the potential to negatively influence the peace process and therefore need to be addressed:

Whereas the facts mentioned above support the assumption that the peace process in Aceh is running relatively smoothly, certain things are subject to change within the next couple of months that have the potential to have negative impacts of one kind or another on the peace process. First of all, two questions will be of great importance concerning the future of the peace process. The first concerns what the final version of the Law on Governing Aceh will be when it is passed by the Indonesian parliament. The second is whether or not the LoGA will meet the demands of the Acehnese, and to what extent. In particular, the two main issues concerning the distribution of political power between Aceh and Jakarta and control over Aceh’s economic resources - which are part of the batch of the conflict’s root causes - need to be resolved in the form of a compromise between Aceh and Jakarta. It is important to acknowledge the fact that not only GAM but also a large share of the Acehnese political elites and civil society, see themselves as stakeholders in this process. Thus a lack of democratic reforms, decentralisation, integration of GAM into the political system and economic independence from Jakarta could be triggers of change, as could be a premature withdrawal of the Aceh Monitoring Mission.

Based on the outcome of the LoGA, though extending far beyond it, are the issues bound up with fighting the endemic problems of Aceh, including the weakness of the local government and administration, rampant corruption and poverty. Another issue that will have a large impact on the stability and progress of the peace process is whether or not the GoI, in cooperation with the international donors, will be able to develop and implement a comprehensive, sustainable development strategy in order to tackle another one of the root causes of the conflict. Of particular relevance in this context seem to be the large unemployment rate and the

increasing inflation in the province, which, if not resolved, could not only lead to social friction in Aceh and tension between the province and Jakarta, but also give rise to a more radical and therefore anti-western interpretation of Islam.

Nonetheless, there is a range of potential high-impact events (so-called “wildcards”) that have the potential to counteract the above-mentioned characteristics of Aceh’s status quo and their variables. These incalculable high-impact events would certainly frustrate not only the expected results of the peace process and the strategies of nearly all national stakeholders, but also have a vast impact on most of the current policies and policy strategies of the international donors. Amongst the first possible high-impact events is a terrorist attack in Aceh, which would most likely be targeted against the international donor community in the province. The political consequences of such an act of terror would hardly be calculable because they would have a large-scale impact on Aceh’s, or even Indonesia’s, political and economical status quo. A second high-impact event would be the sudden death of GAM leader Hasan di Tiro. Hasan di Tiro’s successor remains unnamed. His son has voiced no ambitions to follow in his father’s footsteps in the realm of Acehese politics, and none of the members of GAM’s high-level political elite has been publicly announced as di Tiro’s successor. Thus, at least for analysts outside the GAM, it is as yet unclear what effect the sudden death of GAM’s leader would have on an organisation which finds itself in a period of transition. One possible outcome could be an internal power struggle resulting in the formation of competing fractions within GAM, the formation of GAM splinter groups or a break-up of the movement.

Outbreaks of armed clashes on the local level, either between or within communities, could also have a large-scale impact on the peace process. Most likely this would lead the TNI to step back into Aceh in order to uphold security in the province, which in turn could lead to tension between TNI and GAM. A well-timed, coordinated and appropriate reaction by the international actors would be of the utmost importance to prevent an escalation of the violence on the ground. Just as influential as the above-mentioned “wildcards” would be a government crisis involving Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Jussuf Kalla. The SBY government has

been the strongest supporter of Aceh’s peace process on the national level – mostly against the resistance of the conservative hardliners in the Indonesian parliament. The political prize for obtaining the peace process in Aceh already seems high – will it still be worth the price for the SBY government in the wake of a government crisis? Although the impact of all this is, as with all other high-impact events, largely unpredictable, it seems plausible that a government crisis would draw attention away from Aceh’s peace process. This alone will be a factor to keep in mind for all stakeholders of the peace process. Another “wildcard” that could set back Aceh’s status quo is of course another major natural disaster, which, according to scientists, could happen again at any time. Like the Boxing Day tsunami on December 26th of 2004 it would fundamentally change the situation on the ground again. Further attention needs to be paid to the state of nationwide security sector reform. To what extent will the political and, most of all, economic interests and needs of the security apparatus be met through wide-ranging reforms? If those reforms fail, this could very well lead to changes within the military leadership in favour of the – at present – politically marginalized hardliners.

10. Recommendations for the international donor community

10.1. Application of conflict-sensitive approaches

For the time being there is not enough knowledge present among most internationals working in Aceh about the roots, conflict lines, dynamics and the status quo of the conflict in Aceh and current or potential interdependencies between the reconstruction process and the peace process. Nor does there seem to be much understanding of Aceh’s culture, customs and history, especially among the many short-term contractors. To act and work in a conflict-sensitive manner requires first and foremost a solid understanding of the conflict and the conflict area. Such understanding could be further enhanced amongst international staff through workshops and briefings. Furthermore, it is important to use systematic approaches for a conflict sensitive reconstruction process. So far most donors that claim to work in a conflict-sen-

sitive manner do so by relying on “experience,” “trial and error” and lessons learned from other crisis zones. Internationals need to apply criteria for conflict-sensitive work in Aceh on the basis of an analysis of the current status quo of the conflict: What are the issues at stake at the moment and how do we avoid “doing harm?” This is not to say that all internationals in Aceh actually “do harm.” Some of the organisations present actually do apply conflict-sensitive approaches successfully. But it is important to point out that if they actually were to “do harm,” far too many of the internationals working in Aceh would, because they often fail to apply conflict-sensitive approaches, not be aware of it. In addition, internationals need to follow the developments of the conflict closely and constantly, gradually adapt their strategies to ongoing significant changes, and monitor/ evaluate the conflict sensitivity of their projects in order to be able to correct and adjust them later. There is a need to come up with more high-quality, coherent and up-to-date information and to make it available to all the internationals working in Aceh. Beyond determining where and how existing and planned activities might exacerbate the potential for conflict, donors should also take into account how best to support efforts to promote peace. For many donors it might simply not be appropriate to work on conflict directly. Still, they should consider what working in a conflict area means for their efforts and whether they are in a position to tackle issues like the lack of capacity-building, exclusiveness or even corruption through their existing and future programmes and projects.

2.2 Develop coherent strategies for sustainable development in Aceh

So far there is a clear lack of a coherent strategy among the GoI and the international community on how to develop Aceh as a whole. Aid and reconstruction regionally prioritize the tsunami-affected areas above the rest of the province – although poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment pose problems across the whole of the province. Moreover, the term “tsunami-affected area” can easily be extended to the whole of Aceh: not only did the earthquake destroy local infrastructure and transport systems all over the province, but also the collapse of markets and most

of the business sector following the destruction of the infrastructure has also affected the economy of the whole province. The distinction between “tsunami-affected” and “non-tsunami-affected” areas creates further problems: Migration of people to “tsunami-affected areas” where possibilities of employment are higher causes a brain-drain from non-tsunami-affected areas and thus could further impoverish those living in conflict-ridden areas. Alongside the aid gap between different parts of the province, the GoI and the international community need to reconsider their “exclusive,” target-group-based approaches, which divide communities, in terms of distribution of food, housing, aid, or reintegration measures – into “tsunami victims,” “conflict victims,” former GAM fighters,” etc. This division of communities poses a challenge to the established social structures of Acehese society, which have already been weakened by the large loss of human life through the tsunami. Furthermore, it creates potentials for intra-community jealousy, envy and greed and so helps to establish new conflict issues and new horizontal conflict lines.

2.3 Improve consultation and communication with communities

Aid duplication, corruption and other sources of ineffective projects can be tackled to a certain extent by accurately consulting and communicating with all members of communities: rich and poor, men and women, etc. The existing top-down needs assessments need to be changed into bottom-up needs assessments that take the needs and demands of the communities as the initial point for policy making for Aceh. This not only includes reconstruction, and aid funds and the local economy, but also the future of governance in Aceh. If political institutions remain formalised by Jakarta they will continue to lack acceptance on the local level. Information needs to flow not only from the international agencies and Jakarta or Banda Aceh to the villages, but also, in return, channels need to be established and maintained to secure a flow of information from the bottom to the top. International donors could, for example, avoid duplicating aid by establishing joint community needs assessment teams in order to make possible well-planned, coordinated efforts in certain areas.

Unless changes are made, the feeling of being ultimately dependent on Jakarta and the international donors, and thus being somewhat “cut off” from shaping their own future, will grow amongst the Acehnese. Lack of political and economic self-determination has been a source of conflict for most of Aceh’s history. Therefore, if not improved, the current lack of community consultation will certainly cause tension in the future.

Furthermore, consultation and communication could comprise the inclusion of the beneficiaries not only in the project planning and implementation process but also in the evaluation process. A lot of donors only engage in internal evaluations, most of which are not even made public or only appear in the form of a modified versions. Making the beneficiaries stakeholders in the evaluation process could, through adding local expertise and knowledge to the evaluation process, produce a more qualitative assessment of the “good” and “bad.”

2.4 Increase capacity-building for civil society and local government and support democratic reform of government in Aceh

So far provincial and district government has held very little stake in the reconstruction and the peace process. Not unlike the pre-tsunami situation, most decisions concerning Aceh’s future have been made in Jakarta. This is, of course, to a certain extent due to the weakness of Aceh’s government and administration. Thus it is of great importance to boost capacity-building for local government and administration to empower them to take on their role in the reconstruction and peace process. Therefore their ownership needs to be strengthened, i.e. local officials need to be included in planning, monitoring, evaluation and - especially - training measures. To boost good governance in Aceh, structural reforms of governmental structures need to be facilitated with the assistance of the international community. There will be a need for support in order to enable institutions to be reformed and to perform better. Among most Acehnese interviewed, good local governance was widely regarded as critical for not only the development of the province but also for the peace process.

The same need to boost capacities applies for Aceh’s civil society. So far most NGOs only obtain capacity-building measures associated with specific projects undertaken in collaboration with them. This short-term approach to project-based capacity-building will not enable local NGOs to fulfil project goals and tasks independently when their international partners have left Aceh in 2009. Nor will it help to erase the complaints of many internationals about their local partners, who often seem to be unable to fulfil international standards of project application, planning and reporting. General (and thus independent of ongoing or planned projects) capacity-building opportunities could empower civil society to take on a more important role in the peace and reconstruction processes.

2.5 Avoid increasing inequality and social conflict

Partly through the aforementioned “humanitarian aid complex,” Aceh has become a region of Indonesia with major opportunities for some and great losses for others. The great number of people from Java and other areas of Indonesia migrating to Aceh to take up well-paid jobs with government institutions (especially the BRR) or international donors have raised concerns among the Acehnese about being “marginalized” in the job market - especially in cases in which different rates of payment continue in force for Acehnese and other Indonesians. The GoI and the international donors need to be more aware of the fact that if vacancies are filled more and more with non-Acehnese people while unemployment remains high throughout the province, then resentment will certainly spark tension between “Acehnese” and “Javanese” that could result in renewed assaults on migrant workers. It is obvious that on the one hand there is a lack of qualified staff in Aceh and that on the other hand vacancies need to be filled immediately, but since most agencies will be in Aceh for the next couple of years, more training schemes to increase the skills of the Acehnese need to be offered in order to reduce the gap between Acehnese and other Indonesian workers and in order to help bolster local ownership.

10.6 Establish links with Acehese civil society and local government

If people are not to feel “left out” of the policy process, a circumstance which has been haunting Aceh for decades, the GoI and the international community need to establish transparent, meaningful partnerships, cooperation and links with Acehese partners and institutions. First, this will help to empower Acehese civil society and local government. Second, this also has the potential to make the transfer of knowledge, criticism and complaints from the ground to the decision makers easier and faster, as most donors have very little policy-level staff in the province and most policy decisions are made outside Aceh. The conflict is not a critical factor for most of the aid and reconstruction agencies present in Aceh. Their main concern is repairing the damage caused by the natural disaster. However, the civil war is the most critical factor for most of the Acehese NGOs, academics and politicians who were interviewed for this analysis. To bridge this gulf, better relations and links with Acehese civil society and local government are crucial because they will help to reduce gaps in understanding between local and international actors. In this context it might become more and more important for the international donors to keep in mind the aforementioned growing competition and jealousy between various Acehese civil society actors. The consequences of a fractionalisation within Aceh’s civil society might be hard to predict at present, but, due to the fact that they might seriously weaken civil society’s ability to pressure the local and national governments for reforms, they could become a factor that might possibly obstruct the Acehese reform process and thus impart new dynamics to old and new conflict issues.

11. Recommendations for FES

11.1 Make use of inclusive approaches

As mentioned before, the possible future conflict lines in Aceh are very likely to run horizontally. Programmes and projects should therefore be inclusive, which means that FES should be aware of the need to work together with all conflict parties. This includes not only the former armed comba-

tants (military, GAM, militias) but also non-military parties that have been involved in or affected by the conflict (civil society, Ulama, community representatives). It is especially important to apply inclusive approaches in the context of Aceh’s democratisation (local elections, formation of local parties, etc.). Existing or upcoming projects in the context of Aceh’s democratisation should therefore be open for a large variety of community or civil society actors to attend. This could help to lower tension and increase dialogue amongst the conflict parties and the different stakeholders of the peace process. It is obvious that such projects will especially have to target former armed groups within the Acehese communities (i.e. GAM, militia groups) and other non-military Acehese stakeholders. Inclusive approaches targeting the Indonesian security apparatus are - due to the latter’s hierarchical structure - more likely to bring about positive effects on the national level - especially if they are embedded in ongoing or future systematic approaches towards a general reform of Indonesia’s security sector. Thus any FES work on security sector reform in Aceh needs to be systematically interlocked with national projects/programmes.

So far most development agencies’ democratisation concepts heavily focus on “agents of change” - i.e. community representatives, former guerrilla commanders or other leaders who are able to present themselves as the “voice” of their communities/ people. In Aceh neither the goals and motivations of these “agents of change,” nor their political programmes are transparent to many of the internationals and the Acehese people, which makes the underlying assumption that “agents of change” per se bolster democratisation highly questionable. Furthermore, it is not likely that the majority of the Acehese actually see these “agents of change” as their representatives. Thus FES should take into account that helping to create a plurality of “voices,” “interest groups,” “parties,” etc. could have an even greater positive impact on the democratisation of local politics in Aceh. If working with special target groups and “agents of change” is a necessity for various reasons, FES needs to make sure that such an approach is embedded in a wider strategy of democratisation and peace support for Aceh. The same goes for any cooperation with other international agencies within

this context. A broad and inclusive democratisation approach will ensure that FES and all its potential partner organisations on the international level do not draw conclusions too early as to who is the “right” and “wrong” local partner. After all, the success of FES’ work depends not only on outputs but also on the processes. The output or goal of political cooperation, for example, might be the creation of a secular, democratic party. But in order to achieve such output successfully and act in a conflict-sensitive manner at the same time, it might be necessary to include a wide range of actors in the process of political cooperation. Inclusive approaches have been proven to be more likely to be perceived as neutral, transparent and hence acceptable by all conflict parties. Moreover, such an approach might be needed to be able to engage in peace-related work in a manner that is acceptable to the authorities as well.

11.2 Support the socialisation of the peace process in Aceh

There have been attempts by the donor community to support the socialisation of the peace process, mainly by trying to help in disseminating the relevant information about the peace process to the communities involved. This has been a necessary first step in supporting the socialisation of the peace process, but it is certainly not the only one that needs to be taken. A much broader concept of socialising the peace process could include - instead of continuing to provide information for the Acehnese - projects designed to enable the people in the communities to acquire information about the peace process themselves. The Aceh Media Centre is already a first step in the right direction; more in-depth projects could follow. The many workshops and discussions held throughout Aceh during the drafting phase of the LoGA were a good example of “giving the people a voice.” These discussions and workshops need to be continued in order to raise issues and encourage public debate about the future of the peace process, the democratisation of the province, etc. In the future FES could hold workshops, dialogues and discussions across the province on various topics that are currently on the agenda in Aceh. Besides that, socialisation of the peace process is further needed amongst the various stake-

holders of the peace process on the province level. Whereas there has been a great deal of high-level discussion and consultation abroad and in Jakarta, thus far little trust and dialogue has been established among the stakeholders on the provincial level - especially amongst the Indonesian security apparatus. The lack of trust among stakeholders is an important factor serving, according to most of the persons interviewed for this analysis, to obstruct the peace process.

11.3 Support the implementation of an early warning system for Aceh

At some point after the local elections have been held during August 2006, the AMM will definitely leave Aceh. It is not yet clear whether and in what form there will be any replacement. As of now it seems most likely that there will not be any international observers present after August 2006. Nevertheless, due to the massive support for the peace process within the Acehnese communities, this does not necessarily have to become a problem for Aceh’s security situation. There has been a monthly Aceh Conflict Monitoring Update provided by the World Bank using a newspaper conflict mapping methodology to record and categorise all incidents of conflict in Aceh reported in two provincial newspapers (Serambi and Aceh Kita) between the two vertical opponents GAM and GoI. Regarding the potential for a shift of existing conflict issues and conflict lines to the horizontal level, a more qualitative and on-the-spot early warning system could be established throughout the province in order to provide even more precise information on tension, disputes, etc. on the ground.

The possible tasks of the FES here would not so much include the gathering and evaluation of information on tension, clashes, etc. on the ground as it would the use of FES’ well-established links to civil society and government authorities to establish a network consisting of all stakeholders of the peace process, which would closely monitor developments on the ground all over Aceh. To prevent any kind of biased monitoring, clear criteria for how to report and how to evaluate information need to be established beforehand (“peace” as well as “conflict criteria”). Hence conflict moni-

toring would just comprise the first step towards a functioning, robust early warning system. In addition to the establishment of a network to gather and evaluate information, FES could help to facilitate the establishment of a “roundtable,” again with all stakeholders being present. A conflict-monitoring roundtable consisting of all different stakeholders would potentially ensure a more clear and transparent flow of information regarding the security situation on the ground. The roundtable would need not only to monitor and analyse the conflict, but also to develop strategies for conflict transformation and address these strategies to decision makers on the local, national and international levels. In the end one should not forget that ongoing “conflict monitoring” has proven to be necessary for all international donors active in conflict regions to enable them to react to new developments, issues and threats on time and with the appropriate strategies at hand. Thus early warning reports could be launched at regular intervals and provide both internationals and local stakeholders with up-to-date information on the security situation on the ground. The establishment of an early warning system would also help to constitute a link between the practical work of the FES in Aceh and the PCIA process: In the end, close conflict monitoring is required for any kind of peace and conflict impact assessment.

11.4 Initiate dialogues on Sharia law and criminal law, Sharia law enforcement and police reform in Aceh

Religious affairs will certainly play a big role in Aceh’s political future. One key element in this regard will be Sharia law, although so far there has been a great deal of misconception and ambivalence about how and in which ways the Sharia is going to be implemented in Aceh. In order to prevent the creation of just another “formalised” institution that is mainly engaged within the Indonesian security apparatus and thus seen as an instrument of repression installed by Jakarta, a dialogue board could be facilitated, with the help of FES, between different actors on the relation between Sharia and criminal law and how the Sharia could be enforced. Seeing that Sharia law already has a precedent and that a large part of Aceh’s population seems to support it, it is stunning that

there has been little to no public debate about its concrete form, function and mission within the province. Any kind of support for democratisation must facilitate and/ or bolster public dialogue on controversial political issues and thus attempt to facilitate the establishment of differentiating, controversial opinions. Open dialogues could serve to challenge the present discourse hegemony of religious hardliners on issues like Sharia law. In the wide context of support for dialogues and transparency on political issues, Sharia law is definitely the least controversially discussed issue at present. Topics to be discussed in the context of Sharia law could range from the aforementioned broad issues (function and mission of Sharia law in Aceh) to rather specific yet politically important questions about the relation between the national police and the Sharia police.

11.5 Support democratisation through democracy training

Democratisation is at the top of the agenda in Aceh right now. Supporting democratic reforms, good governance and civil society is seen as a way to establish a political framework for the peace process. But the interviews conducted in the province revealed that for many people in Aceh “democracy” itself still seems to be some kind of empty “shell” which still needs to be filled with content. As mentioned before, there are not many people in Aceh who have experience with democratic politics, nor are there many people familiar in some way with the basics of democracy. As a matter of fact, little is known about the origin of democracy, the compatibility of Islam and democracy, voter’s rights, or the Indonesian constitution. It is clear that FES cannot provide four million Acehnese with democracy training. Therefore democracy training for the local parties soon to be established could be a first step. Again it would be necessary to open up such democracy trainings to the broad spectrum of future political activists in order to avoid exclusive approaches which could create tension and envy between political opponents, especially those stemming from former conflict parties. After all, a multi-party system seems the most appropriate to ensure democratic political competition and, backed by strong democratic institutions, to stabilize the post-conflict situation.

Looked at in the context of Aceh's democratisation as part of a sustainable peace process, it is clear that the issue of transforming GAM from a guerrilla movement to a political party will certainly be at the top of the agenda once the LoGA has been passed. At present GAM does not have the ability to make such a wide-ranging transformation without external assistance. Future ways of assisting GAM's transformation could therefore include training programmes for party members, support - in form and content - for creating a party programme, setting up, maintaining and expanding party structures, etc. Yet since any kind of external political cooperation with GAM is still seen by large parts of Indonesia's political elite as potentially supporting separatism, the aforementioned issues have proven to be difficult to tackle. This far, open cooperation with GAM has been possible on in the field of reintegration measures, and only as long as close ties are maintained to the Indonesian government. Thus, due to the sensitivity of the issue, any political cooperation with GAM would need to be placed in a framework of inclusive approaches directed at bolstering democratisation on the ground (for example by setting up province-level multi-stakeholder dialogues, workshops, training, etc. for those wishing to form their own local political party). FES, like any other international organisation, needs to be very aware not only of the sensitivity of the issue (i.e. political cooperation with GAM), but also of the balancing act it has to perform between avoiding approaches that are too exclusive on the one hand, and on the other hand effectively assisting GAM's transformation while not interfering with the policies of the GoI. It is obvious that an organisation like FES is simply not capable of dealing with all newly emerging political parties while simultaneously trying to avoid the use of overly exclusive approaches. Thus finding the right partners (on the local, national, and international levels) and coordinating FES' work closely with them is crucial for making any kind of future political cooperation (with GAM or other emerging local parties) a real part of a coherent strategy to support sustainable democratisation in Aceh.

11.6 Support civil society dialogue on how to deal with the "burdened past"

Although the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission is part of the MoU, dealing with the burdened past is not really part of the mainstream debates in Aceh right now. This could change rapidly if the peace process - and especially the LoGA - do not meet the demands and aspirations of the majority of the people. It is a lesson learned from other crisis zones that memories of a burdened past and of past human rights violations can suddenly become apparent as a sort of "proxy issue": If structural problems like poverty or unemployment are not tackled in the mid- to long-term perspective, the issue of past human rights violations might appear all of a sudden at the top of the public agenda. Past mistakes in dealing with such a burdened past can easily increase mistrust towards state institutions. Thus it will be a step towards the prevention of future conflict issues to initiate and support dialogues within Aceh's civil society about ways on how to deal with past abuses. Dealing with past abuses must be the responsibility of the GoI. International actors like FES can only help to stimulate awareness about the need to deal with past abuses in a sustainable way and to stimulate activity amongst civil society actors to pressure the government to find a sustainable solution. Truth and reconciliation clearly not only needs to be debated with governmental institutions in Banda Aceh or Jakarta alone, but it also needs the support, and to a certain extent, the input of the Acehnese public in order to become sustainable in the end. In this regard it is important to understand the ways in which traditional approaches to reconciliation can be taken into account. "Acehnese paths to reconciliation" might therefore be one of the topics of dialogue forums established by the FES.

11.7 Focus more on gender issues

Much more awareness and understanding of the role of women in Acehnese society are needed to improve the role of women in Acehnese society both in general and in peacebuilding in particular. In addition, "creating multiple voices on the ground" would definitely mean supporting the empowerment of women in the communities. Most conflict victims are females, so the first lo-

gical step would be to make an assessment of the gender sensitivity of the current programmes and projects. Looking at the ongoing reintegration programmes for example, the female GAM fighters interviewed for this study told us that they are, to a large extent, left out of the existing reintegration programmes. It will therefore be even harder to rebuild sustainable livelihoods and to provide former female combatants with a source of income than it will for former male combatants and conflict victims. Empowering women in Aceh is also a need for the upcoming political reforms. The Acehese draft version of the LoGA proposes a party quota of 30 percent for women; this will, if approved by the Indonesian parliament, make it necessary for the local parties to have many women join their ranks. Like most male Acehese, women have no experience with democratic party politics, and they are faced with the above-mentioned gender issues. There is therefore a need for special workshops and trainings for coming female party members and parliamentarians – a task that could very well be taken on by FES in the future.

12. Final remarks

The situation in Aceh has far-reaching consequences on the national and possibly on the international level as well. Aceh has received an unprecedented amount of international aid. Furthermore, there has been strong pressure on both sides to end the civil war in Aceh to ensure the reconstruction of the province. A successful and robust peace process combined with democratic reforms and a comprehensive autonomy for the province could serve as a positive example for maintaining the territorial integrity of the country through means of autonomy and decentralisation. This is especially important in setting an example for a non-military solution for other conflict-ridden provinces of the archipelago, like Papua. Furthermore, maintaining the peace in Aceh against opposition from conservative hardliners in the parliament and in the Indonesian security apparatus has been described as a litmus test for Indonesia's

new government under Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. A successful peace process in Aceh could therefore become a starting point for a new, balanced relationship between the civil authorities and the country's security apparatus. It could have an spill-over effect for the reform of the security sector, which began with the country's transition from authoritarianism to democracy in 1998, but so far has made little real progress. The generous support of the international community for a successful reconstruction and sustainable peace process in Aceh – which is often referred to as the “veranda of Mecca” – might even help to improve the image of “the West” within the Muslim world. At present, the main image of “the West,” in Indonesia and elsewhere in the Muslim world, seems to be based on biased perceptions of a “clash of cultures,” the war on terror and hegemony. On the other hand, failed reconstruction might very well have the opposite effect – i.e. it could strengthen existing stereotypes and biases.

In the end the internationals active in Aceh need to remember that in the end the root causes of the conflict lie in the unjust distribution of political and economic power between Jakarta and Aceh. These root causes will have to be addressed mainly on the national and provincial levels. The international community certainly has direct and indirect means to support conflict transformation efforts, but it needs to keep in mind that the future of the peace process lies, to a large extent, in the hands of the two conflict parties. It is those in power in Jakarta and Aceh who set the rules for any kind of international engagement and thus will have to ensure that some of the trickle-down effects (“peace dividends”) reach the people on the ground. For the internationals in Aceh it is thus important neither to underestimate nor to overestimate their impact on the peace process. In the end it is the awareness of not only the potentials and prospects, but also of the limits set to the role and impact of the international community, which should stand in the foreground of any consideration about conflict sensitivity and any peace and conflict impact analysis.

Appendix I: List of Acronyms

ABAS	Aceh Barat Selatan
AIPRD	Australia Indonesia Partnership for Reconstruction and Development
ALA	Aceh Leuser Antara
AJI	Aliansi Jurnalistik Independen (Alliance of Independent Journalists)
AMM	Aceh Monitoring Mission
ASNLF	Aceh Sumatra National Liberation Front
BRA	Badan Reintegrasi Aceh (Aceh Reintegration Agency)
BRR	Badan Rehabilitasi dan Rekonstruksi (Aceh and Nias Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency)
CMI	Crisis Management Initiative
COHA	Cessation of Hostilities Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DOM	Daerah Operasi Militer (Military Operations Zone)
EC	European Commission
FPSG	Front Perlawanan Separatist GAM (The Anti Separatism GAM Front)
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement)
GoI	Government of Indonesia
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (German Development Cooperation)
HDC	Henri Dunant Centre
ICG	International Crisis Group
IOM	International Organisation of Migration
LoGA	Law on Governing Aceh
NAD	Nanggröe Aceh Darussalam (official name of the province of Aceh)
PDI-P	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party)
RCTI	Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia
SIRA	Sentra Informasi untuk Referendum Aceh (Aceh Referendum Information Centre)
TNA	Tentara Nasional Aceh (Aceh Defence Force)
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian Defence Forces)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNORC	Office of the United Nations Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias

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Appendix III: List of Interview partners

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Nizar – former TNA commander in Tamiang

Ngu, Henny – Indonesia Programme Co-ordinator, CAFOD

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Sofyan Ali – Leader of FPSG (The Anti Separatism GAM Front)

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Tarmizi – Director of Forum Rakyat (Aceh's People Forum)

Widjaya, Agung – Jaringan Democracy Aceh (Aceh Democracy Network)

Zakaria, Sayed Fuad – Head of NAD Parliament

Zain, Munawarliza – Deputy Spokesman, GAM/ ASNLF



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Pakistan	2004
Sudan	2004
Tadzhikistan	2004
Colombia	2005
Bosnia and Herzegowina	2005
Angola	2006
Georgia	2006
Bolivia	2006
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