

# Aceh Conflict Monitoring Update

1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006

World Bank/DSF



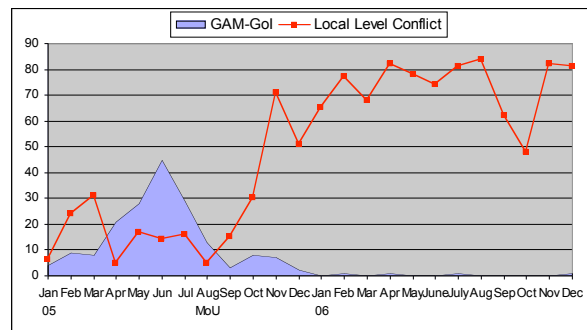
As part of an analytical support program to the peace process, the Conflict and Development Program, within the World Bank Office Indonesia, is using a newspaper conflict mapping methodology to record and categorize all incidents of conflict in Aceh as reported in two provincial newspapers (Serambi and Aceh Kita). The Program publishes monthly updates and analysis of the data, complemented by fieldwork where possible, in both English and Indonesian.<sup>1</sup>

Although no violent GAM-GoI incidents occurred, pre-MoU tensions continue to result in post-MoU conflict incidents. Vigilante attacks and *khalwat* (suspected sexual contact between non-married individuals) arrests often involve members of the security forces. Demonstrations demanding investigation into past human rights abuses have begun. The *pilkada* elections on December 11<sup>th</sup> were held with relative success but many complaints have been lodged, some results challenged, and serious tensions are present in several districts. Nevertheless, the clear win of Irwandi-Nazar in the gubernatorial race provides them with a mandate for change in Aceh. Ensuring that the abundant resources now available to the provincial and district governments are distributed in an equitable and efficient manner will be essential for a stable peace, but challenges are great and the costs of failure high. Although managing election-related disputes is vital for the short term, the long term priority is improving governance.

## ***No violent GAM-GoI incidents, but post-conflict tensions continue to manifest***

As in previous months, no violent GAM-GoI incidents occurred in December. However, tensions stemming from the pre-MoU period led to a number of disputes: over alleged abuses by the police; over human rights violations from the past; and over the use of GAM symbols. The latter resulted in one non-violent incident, which we have coded as a GAM-GoI dispute, the first in a number of months.

Figure 1: GAM-GoI and local level conflicts by month



This event (outlined in Box 1) occurred just days after initial counts from the gubernatorial contest showed that the GAM-affiliated Irwandi-Nazar pair would win, thus signaling a significant shift in power in the province. The MoU was signed by the Government of Indonesia and GAM. Yet the boundaries between the two will be increasingly hazy as GAM take their role at the center of the Acehese state. This will change the dynamics of how parties negotiate over the application of MoU provisions and over perceived violations. Increasingly, such negotiations will be between multiple parties (including elements of the Aceh government sympathetic with GAM, those not, the central government in Jakarta, the security agencies, and civil society) rather

<sup>1</sup> There are limitations to using newspapers to map conflict; for more analysis of the methodology see: Patrick Barron and Joanne Sharpe (2005). "Counting Conflict: Using Newspaper Reports to Understand Violence in Indonesia", *Indonesian Social Development Paper* No. 7. Jakarta: World Bank. This report, as well as the monthly monitoring updates, is available online at: [www.conflictanddevelopment.org](http://www.conflictanddevelopment.org). The dataset is available for those interested; please contact Blair Palmer at [bpalmer@worldbank.org](mailto:bpalmer@worldbank.org).

than between the two MoU signatories. Local political spaces (including the provincial and district DPRD) will increasingly be used for working through post-MoU issues, rather than the bi-lateral fora, such as the Committee on Security Arrangements (CoSA), that were used in the immediate post-MoU period. This will increase the complexity of resolving any tensions that arise; but it also provides opportunities for the wide range of Aceh viewpoints to contribute to Aceh's post-conflict transition. In the new Irwandi-led Aceh political climate, there will be no shortage of triggers for disputes; that the dispute over GAM symbols has so far been handled through dialogue is encouraging. Still, it suggests that protecting the peace in Aceh, while respecting the rights and views of different elements of the community, will be an ongoing balancing act.

**Box 1: Dispute over GAM symbols**

On December 14<sup>th</sup> AMM chief Peter Feith urged Irwandi-Nazar to stop using GAM symbols, saying that their use was against the spirit of the MoU, and that it would erode Jakarta's trust in the former rebel movement. Later that day, Irwandi held a press conference saying that it was military emblems that were forbidden under the MoU, that use of GAM pins, which are worn as souvenirs, were not prohibited. Flying the GAM flag was also not forbidden, he explained, although GAM has decided not to fly it. The next day the Aceh military (TNI) chief weighed in, saying that although the MoU did not specifically forbid use of GAM pins and the flag, GAM should avoid using the symbols in order to respect the spirit of the MoU, so as not to disturb the peace. He also said that the TNI had reached an agreement with Malik Mahmud at a CoSA meeting that such symbols would *not* be used.

In last month's report we highlighted five pre-MoU cleavages which we believe continue to manifest themselves in violent incidents and tensions. This month several incidents demonstrate the importance of past conflict cleavages, in particular continuing tensions between the community and the security forces.

A clear example of how these tensions can erupt occurred in Blangpidie, Aceh Barat Daya, on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Serambi reported that a police officer had been mobbed in the village of Alue Sungai Pinang. The day before, there had been an incident during *pilkada* (local elections) campaigning where one supporter was hit by someone from a rival campaign team. The victim complained to police. A number of police officers reportedly then drove motorbikes to Alue Sungai Pinang village, where they entered a house and beat all six occupants, who were aged 10 to 28. When villagers realized what was happening they became angry and attacked the police. All but one of the police managed to run away, but the remaining officer was badly beaten and slashed, and two motorcycles were set on fire.

Another incident occurred on December 12<sup>th</sup> in Lhokseumawe. A police officer got into a fight with a security guard at a parking facility, after the police officer felt that the security guard's attitude was disrespectful. The security guard had stopped the police officer from leaving since he did not have his parking ticket, while the policeman claimed that he was not given one when he entered.

These events reflect a high degree of underlying dissatisfaction with police treatment of civilians; community tolerance for such behavior may be lower in an environment where GAM is governing. Renegotiation of social hierarchies in the post-MoU era may take place through violent incidents such as these. Interventions are needed which can serve to prevent violence by building the professionalism of the police, enforcing sanctions for police who disobey the law, and to build trust between the community and the police through initiatives such as community policing.

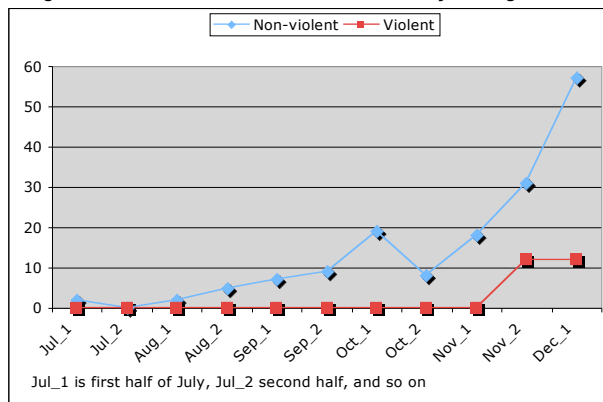
Pre-MoU tensions may also come to the fore over the issue of investigation of past human rights abuses. Although there has so far been little public demand for this, one demonstration was held on International Human Rights Day, which fell on December 10<sup>th</sup>, the day before the election. Students and conflict victims protested at the KIP (the elections agency) office in Banda Aceh, demanding that the government try ‘generals and bureaucrats’ who were involved in past human rights abuses. According to protestors, ‘the leader of Aceh must be free of past sins, and must be committed to processing cases of human rights abuse cases’. It is expected that such calls will increase with the new government’s accession; how (or whether) to proceed with such investigations is one of the challenges which must be navigated in order to build a stronger peace.

***Pilkada carried out successfully with minimal violence, but many conflicts over results***

While a dramatic increase in non-violent conflicts accompanied the lead-up to local elections (see Figure 2), violent incidents were relatively minor with only two serious cases. A bomb exploded in the early hours of election day (December 11<sup>th</sup>) in Sawang, Aceh Utara, causing no injuries, and a second bomb was defused. Other than this, election day went smoothly. Some intimidation and technical problems were reported, but, in general, the implementation was successful.

The elections installed Irwandi-Nazar as winners at the provincial level, and KPA/GAM candidates as winners of six *bupati* or mayoral races. There has been a high level of acceptance of the gubernatorial results, but many of the *bupati*/mayoral results have been disputed. Many allegations of electoral infractions have been made, including charges of money politics. Losing candidates have launched challenges to the results in Aceh Barat Daya, Singkil, Aceh Tamiang, Aceh Tengah, Aceh Tenggara, Bener Meriah, Langsa, Nagan Raya, and Simeuleu. How these legal challenges are managed will be crucial in influencing whether further violence may erupt. Tensions are high in several districts, most notably Aceh Tengah, Aceh Tenggara, and Bener Meriah; the situation looks worst in Aceh Tengah where the head of Panwas went missing on December 20<sup>th</sup>. Even if all disputes are managed without violence, it remains to be seen whether the aggrieved parties will be satisfied or whether they will pursue grievances through less democratic means, hindering the work of the new leaders.

**Figure 2: *Pilkada*-related conflict incidents by fortnight**



Source: UNDP/WB *pilkada* newspaper dataset

Three districts will require a second round of voting (Aceh Barat, Aceh Barat Daya, and Aceh Tamiang), and there have been protests in all of these districts. Only in Aceh Barat does the run-off include a GAM-affiliated candidate. The candidate pairs in the second round will be anxiously seeking coalitions with the losing candidates, and the potential for conflict is real.

The potential for political conflict thus remains high in the near future, including the risk that:

- Elite level disputes between the Governor's office and the local parliament (DPRD) could lead to mobilization of supporters;
- Elite competition over the new abundance of public resources could sideline the good governance agenda and thus lead to proliferation of grievances;
- Inexperienced new leaders could have difficulty in playing effective government roles, or have difficulty managing demands from their support networks;
- Election-related protests may not be dealt with effectively, leading to ongoing conflicts;
- Disgruntled losers could mobilize followers to disrupt the work of the new leaders.

### ***The challenge of improving governance***

Clearly, effective management of election-related disputes is vital, and technical support for inexperienced leaders will be necessary. The elections have given Irwandi-Nazar a powerful mandate for change in Aceh. If they are to make Aceh more prosperous, and ensure that peace continues, they will need to make significant efforts towards a more equitable and effective distribution of resources. To achieve this there will need to be improvements in governance capacity, anti-corruption measures, and mechanisms for managing political competition (Box 2).<sup>2</sup>

#### **Box 2. Decentralizing Inequality?**

In December the World Bank released a report highlighting the connections between decentralization, governance, and conflict in Aceh. Grievances over perceived inequalities in resource distribution were a key driving force in the conflict in Aceh. Decentralization was intended to quell some of this dissatisfaction. The report argues that the effectiveness of decentralization as a means of resolving conflict in Aceh will be determined by improvements in the local governance environment.

Under the 2006 Law on Governing Aceh (LoGA), the province of Aceh will retain 70% of natural resource revenues, and will receive additional resource allocations from Jakarta. Although oil and gas resources are projected to continue to drop over the coming decade, these will be eclipsed by the creation of a Special Autonomy Fund provided by the central government, amounting to approximately \$421 million per year from 2008 on. Local government revenues were \$232 million in 1999, rose to \$1.1 billion in 2006, and will increase to around \$1.4 billion by 2008. The \$8 billion tsunami reconstruction budget and ongoing post-conflict donor and central government support provide additional resources.

However, the extent to which such resources will help consolidate peace in Aceh will depend on local factors, in particular the extent to which there can be improvements in governing capacity, progress in combating corruption, and the development of institutions and norms for managing political competition peacefully. Mechanisms for transferring power from the center to the province of Aceh have been established, but mechanisms that will ensure that this translates into equitable resource distributions *within* Aceh are lacking. Failure to manage these resources effectively will prolong dissatisfaction and threaten the stability of the peace in Aceh.

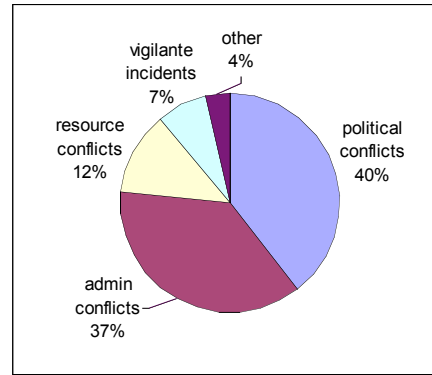
The report makes several recommendations about how donors can support the establishment of good governance in Aceh. Donors should work through local government, rather than around it. Apportioning tsunami funding to improve the technical capacity of government actors would be a worthwhile investment in this regard and reintegration funds should be delivered with transparency and accountability in order to boost the legitimacy of the state. Donors can support local government in designing institutional arrangements to deal with the new volume of resources available. An 'enabling environment' must be built to create demand for, and monitor, good governance. Building such an environment will involve showcasing effective programs, working with innovators, supporting political debates in the media, providing political and leadership training for GAM, and using research as a monitoring and accountability tool.

<sup>2</sup> See Patrick Barron and Samuel Clark (2006). "Decentralizing Inequality? Center-Periphery Relations, Local Governance, and Conflict in Aceh". *Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Paper* No. 39. Washington, D.C.: World Bank. The report is available online at: [www.conflictanddevelopment.org](http://www.conflictanddevelopment.org).

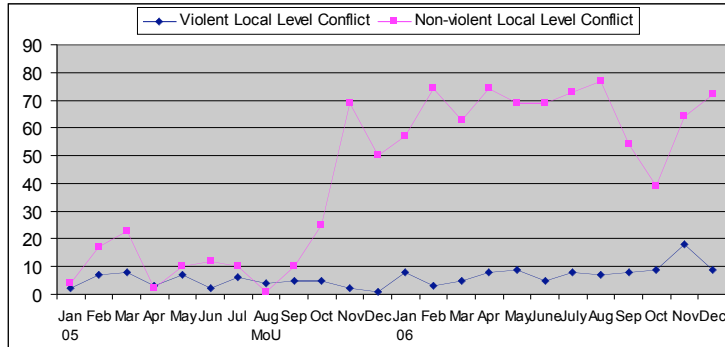
**Local level conflict remains high**

This month there were 81 incidents of local level conflict, similar to last month, and roughly the highest level of local level conflict we have recorded (see Figure 1). 32 were related to politics (mostly *pilkada* incidents), 30 to administrative matters, 10 were resource conflicts, and 6 were vigilante incidents. For 3 cases, the issue was not clear (see Figure 3). The number of violent cases fell to 9 (see Figure 4). The two incidents of physical attacks on police officers and the two election-related cases have been described above. The other cases were less serious, involving damage to property. The high number of *pilkada* incidents raises the possibility that local level conflict may drop next month, although it is also possible that election disputes will continue and various other grievances which were delayed during the election period will be taken up.

**Figure 3: Types of local level conflict, December**



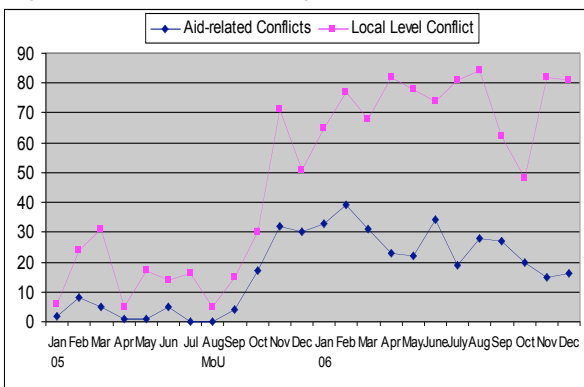
**Figure 4: Violent and non-violent local level conflicts by month**



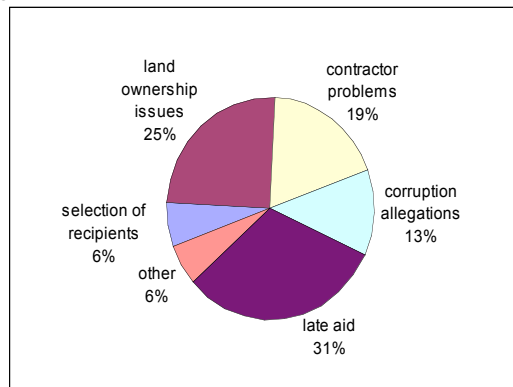
**Aid-related conflict remains important with some signs of desperation, but violent incidents decline**

This month 16 conflict incidents related to aid programming occurred (see Figure 5); even in the midst of the *pilkada* preparations, 20% of local level conflicts were related to the delivery of aid. Common issues were land ownership, problems with contractors, allegations of corruption, and the slow pace of aid (see Figure 6). Many of these conflicts are expressed initially through complaints, but if the complaints are not dealt with adequately, some aid recipients eventually protest using more serious and concrete methods. See Box 3 for some examples.

**Figure 5: Aid-related conflicts by month**



**Figure 6: Breakdown of aid-related conflicts for December**



### Box 3: Desperate Measures

The following incidents showing the frustration of citizens when their complaints did not lead to action took place this month:

- Road blocks were frequently in place on the Banda Aceh–Calang road, especially at Deah Mamplam and Curieh villages in Aceh Besar and Meudang Ghong village in Aceh Jaya. Villagers whose land has been used for the road have not received compensation and are frustrated enough to block the road or demand tolls.
- Villagers in Panteraja, Pidie, have requested that Save the Children dismantle their partially built houses, since they are tired of waiting for them to be finished. A house built by Yayasan Save Our Soul was dismantled since the villagers felt that the contractors had built it with unacceptably low quality.
- Villagers have taken the initiative to refuse contractors whose work is substandard.
- On a number of occasions, villagers have planted trees in the middle of roads protesting lengthy delays in promised repairs to roads and bridges.

### *Vigilante incidents down, but full of controversy*

Two *khalwat* (suspected sexual contact between non-married individuals) arrests were reported – these are classified as violent since the arrests were made by a mob, and not by the *shari'ah* police (*Wilayatul Hisbah*). One of the *khalwat* suspects arrested was a police officer. Although it is encouraging that the arrests did not include beatings, they are dangerous since they have the potential to lead to much more serious incidents. There are reports that a woman was gang-raped after being arrested for *khalwat* by village youths in South Aceh. The victim is being supported by women's NGOs and legal aid organizations, although the case was not reported to police, due to the victim's wish to avoid publicity.

Another activist reported hearing of a *khalwat* rape in Aceh Utara. Neither of these two cases appeared in newspaper reports (and are thus not included in our figures). It is likely that other similar violent cases have gone unreported, given the stigma women face if such events become known. Vigilante justice exposes victims to the risk of abuse at the hands of a mob who have not been properly trained for the job, and are not accountable for infractions. This is why arrests should only be carried out by the relevant authorities.

Differing opinions about the development of *shari'ah* law implementation have led to disputes. During a raid by the *shari'ah* police in Meulaboh, several women who were caught without headscarves were reported to have engaged in angry argument with their captors. On the other hand, in Singkil there was a demonstration by hundreds of women who demanded that the *shari'ah* police do *more* to prevent immoral acts, in particular to close down a house suspected of being a brothel. The women blamed the recent floods on the immoral activities of the house occupants. A newspaper poll intended to assess agreement with *shari'ah* implementation was vocally criticized by the head of the Aceh *Ulama* association (MPU), who forbade Muslims from taking part.