

SPECIAL REPORT

May 2011 — Issue 40

Jihadists in jail Radicalisation and the Indonesian prison experience An ASPI-RSIS joint report



by Carl Ungerer

Foreword

The issue of terrorist motivations and pathways towards violent extremism has been the subject of numerous studies in recent years. Much of that work, however, has focused on open source literature. Less attention has been given to understanding the individuals themselves and their personal experiences within terrorist organisations.

To help address this gap, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) in Canberra and the Centre of Excellence for National Security, a constituent research unit of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) in Singapore undertook a twelve month joint research project to conduct personal interviews with members of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) terrorist organisation who are serving or have served prison sentences in Indonesia.

This project is the first detailed study of both the former leadership group and the foot soldiers of the JI organisation in prison. Interviews were conducted across four Indonesian prisons and detention centres with more than thirty convicted terrorists.

The results of this study will contribute to a better understanding of radicalisation among Indonesia's terrorist groups. Following the arrest of the former JI leader, Umar Patek, in Pakistan, this study also highlights the continuing threat from individuals who seek to link Southeast Asian terrorist groups to al-Qaeda's global networks.

Despite the death of the al-Qaeda leader, Osama bin Laden, the narrative of violent religious extremism will continue to resonate among a small group of jihadists in Indonesia. And recidivism rates are a growing problem, as several of these men transition out of the prison system and return to their old networks.

This paper outlines several policy options to counter the problem of radicalisation, including strategies for promoting simple disengagement from terrorism, improving coordination between counter-terrorism agencies and prison authorities, and supporting efforts to increase penalties for inciting religious intolerance.

This project was directed by Dr Carl Ungerer from ASPI and supported by a team of researchers in Singapore and Indonesia. We're grateful to all the contributors to this project and continue to place a high value on the productive research linkages between ASPI and RSIS.

Peter Abigail
Executive Director
Australian Strategic Policy Institute

Barry Desker
Dean
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

1. Introduction

In February 2010, the Indonesian counter-terrorism police uncovered the *lintas tandzim* project, a cross-institutional Islamist group operating in Aceh whose members planned to carry out political assassinations and Mumbai-style terrorist attacks in Jakarta. Later, a spate of violent robberies—reportedly to fund terrorist activities—took place across northern Sumatra. Subsequent attacks targeting the Indonesian police culminated in an assault by a dozen masked gunmen on a police station at Hamparan Perak in September 2010 that left three officers dead.

Terrorism stemming from the actions of these Islamist militants continues to be a real threat to Indonesia and the region. A worrying aspect of the *lintas tandzim* group is that recidivists appear to be at the centre of these latest operations. Terrorist convicts, many of whom were apprehended in the aftermath of the first Bali bombings in 2002, have been gradually released in recent years, and some have returned to their old networks.

Abdullah Sunata and Aman Abdurrahman, for instance, the men central to the establishment of the militant cell in Aceh, were previously imprisoned for instigating violence against local Christians in Ambon and for running a bomb-making school, respectively. Abu Tholut, the ringleader of the gang of robbers in Sumatra, had served time for stockpiling illegal arms in Semarang in 2003. And Bagus Budi Pranoto and Rohmat Puji Prabowo, both involved in the July 2009 hotel bombings in Jakarta, had been imprisoned for having played similar roles in the 2003 bomb attack on the JW Marriott hotel.

Clearly, the actions of these men demonstrate that spending time in prison didn't serve as a deterrent. Nor were they persuaded to abandon the pathway of violence. It's important to understand why this is so.

Most *jihadis* released from Indonesian detention so far haven't engaged in further unlawful activities, but some of the 'hardcore' members have—the ones who pose the most immediate threat to Indonesian society. What would make the former group turn away from violence and the latter group continue to see armed violence as a viable political action? In either case, it's crucial to examine the individual motivations for their actions—which is the central concern of this report. Among other things, understanding terrorist motivations can help us to identify factors that have the potential to lead individuals to violent acts in the future.

Based on face-to-face semistructured interviews inside the Indonesian prison system with more than thirty individuals convicted on charges of terrorism, this report details:

- how and why the men first became involved in terrorist operations
- why some of them, despite having served time in prison, have later chosen to re-engage in violence
- why others have decided to disengage from violent activities altogether.

This report addresses some of the most important issues concerning Islamist political violence and terrorism in Indonesia on three different levels of analysis: the individual (the violent militant), the societal (the sociopolitical environment in which militancy operates) and the institutional (in particular, the prison service and the police).

The report asks whether time spent in detention—an episode that may or may not have included participation in official rehabilitation or 'de-radicalisation' programs—has any impact on an individual's decision to return to, or turn away from, violence. Based on the responses of those interviewed, the future of Islamist militancy in Indonesia is examined.

The report concludes with some policy recommendations, including tailoring counter-terrorism responses according to individual motivations for violence, promoting simple 'disengagement' strategies, and improving coordination between the prison services and the national police. In addition, the conceptual and practical approaches towards 'disengagement' and 'de-radicalisation' programs are discussed.

Methodology

Thirty-three men convicted on charges of terrorism by the Indonesian courts were interviewed for this study between July and December 2010.

Two researchers were employed to conduct the interviews in four main prisons in Java (Jakarta, Solo, Surabaya and Semarang). Meetings were arranged either in prison facilities and detention centres for those still serving their sentences, or in public meeting venues for those who've been released. The list of interviewees includes former senior members of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) terrorist organisation, as well as numerous 'foot soldiers'. Although most of those interviewed identified themselves as former members of JI, a small number were associated with other terrorist organisations, including KOMPAK and Ring Banten. Focusing the field work on Java matches the general picture of terrorism in Indonesia; most of the convicted men were originally from Java, and the remaining few were from outer islands, mainly southern Sulawesi.

The interview questions were designed to cover five broad themes:

- the sociological background of the individual
- their involvement in terrorism activities
- their experiences with the Indonesian police and the prison service
- their engagement (if any) in counter-radicalisation programs
- their own perspectives on future directions of terrorism in Indonesia.

The semistructured nature of the interviews, and the personalised nature of the interactions, meant that not all prisoners were asked exactly the same questions. However, the overall pattern of questioning was consistent for all interviews.

Transcripts of each interview were produced in both Bahasa Indonesia and English. All quotes in this report are taken directly from the transcripts of interviews and are faithful representations of the stated views of the current and former prisoners.

A caveat

It's necessary to approach any study of violent Islamist movements by first appreciating the wider political dynamics of Islam. However, this report is neither a study of political Islam in Indonesia nor geared towards understanding the modern phenomenon of Islamic resurgence and revival. The report confines itself to a more security-focused objective of understanding why particular individuals turn towards violence, and the circumstances of their detention. It seeks to explain Islamist militancy in Indonesia, not political radicalism or religious fundamentalism *per se*. In short, the focus here is on individual decisions to engage in or disengage from terrorism and political violence.

2. Terrorist motivations and pathways towards violence

This section examines the motivations of the men convicted on terrorism charges and the factors that led them down that path. Their stated motivations are considered the proximate causes of violence, whereas

particular aspects of their lives that made them more susceptible to adopting an extremist mindset are considered as underlying factors leading to violence.

One of the principal factors that influences violent action is the individual's personal interpretation of what constitutes a legitimate *medan jihad* (jihad battlefield). Militants conceptualise the battlefield space (along with who and/or what occupies it) in different ways. As such, they can be divided into two broad groups: those who favour a *geographically bounded jihad* and those who see themselves as part of a broader *global jihad*.

The geographically bounded *jihadi* only wages armed conflict in conflict zones where Muslims are already involved in combat or there are perceived injustices against Muslims. Inter-religious violence has made the historical conflict zones of Ambon and Poso a favoured *medan* for Indonesian jihadists for many years, but other battlegrounds outside Indonesia, such as Mindanao and Afghanistan, are often referred to as well. Once outside the realms of their adopted or 'local' *medan*, these individuals generally reintegrate into larger society and return to live civilian lives.

The global *jihadi*, on the other hand, sees the entire world as a legitimate battlespace, taking armed jihad as a personal obligation that can be waged at any time and in any place. These individuals are more likely to gravitate towards al-Qaeda's narrative of a global war against the West.

The two categories aren't clear-cut or without significant overlap, but the differences are nevertheless important because they influence the kinds of operations the militants choose to engage in. Furthermore, they also reflect the varying threat levels that different militants can pose to society at large.

Machmudi Haryono alias Yusuf Adirama, for example, favours the concept of a geographically bounded jihad. First inducted into JI by Mustofa alias Abu Tholut, Yusuf had made his way into the southern Philippines in 2000 to help local Muslim militants fight the military. He kept his armed jihad engagement limited to Mindanao, reflecting his personal belief that waging armed jihad was permissible only within a legitimate *medan*. When he returned to Semarang a couple of years later, he resumed normal civilian life, in much the same way as a professional soldier would be demobilised. According to Yusuf, taking up arms wasn't an activity that could be undertaken lightly or simply when one pleased. Indiscriminate bombings like those in Bali, Jakarta and other places in Indonesia where no conflict was evident, in his opinion, weren't at all proper.

Similarly, Adhi Suryana alias Qital is an Afghanistan veteran and senior JI member, first arrested in 2004 on suspicion of withholding information on the Bali bombers and then later charged with conducting a bomb-making class. He wasn't directly linked to any particular terrorist incident, and had no wish to fight the 'far enemy' from within Indonesia. He said that he'd carried out his jihad obligations by fighting in Afghanistan and later helping to train local militants in Mindanao. On return, he wanted to live a quiet life back on home soil. He insisted that there was nothing inherently wrong about Indonesia or having to live among non-Muslims—pointing out that his immediate neighbours were Christians and that they were on friendly terms. He explained that peaceful coexistence was what he, like everyone else, sought.

On the other hand, of the men interviewed for this study, one in particular, Mohammad Hassan Saynudin alias Fajar Taslim, could

arguably be categorised as belonging to the global jihad movement and akin to the likes of the Bali bombing trio of Imam Samudra, Ali Ghufron alias Mukhlas and Amrozi.

Taslim was arrested in 2008 for his part in the killing of a Christian schoolteacher and a bomb plot on a cafe in Bukit Tinggi, West Sumatra. He later admitted to being part of the foiled 2002 plot to hijack a plane in Bangkok and crash it into Singapore's Changi Airport. He was given an eighteen-year prison sentence. From the interviews conducted for this study, incarceration hasn't put a damper on his extremist rhetoric. Taslim openly admitted that if he were released today he would bomb the US Embassy in Jakarta, reflecting an unwavering conviction that violence was still the right choice for him. He believed that, since the world belonged solely to God, waging jihad wasn't only a religious duty but permissible anywhere across the globe.

These examples show that the JI members who engage in armed jihad aren't a homogeneous group and that their respective interpretations of the concept of jihad differ according to their understanding of the legitimate geographical 'space' within which jihad can take place.

This distinction between 'local' and 'global' jihadists adds a different contextual layer to the common assumption that Indonesian terrorists are focused on either the 'near enemy' (the Indonesian state and its government agencies) or the 'far enemy' (usually the US, or just the West in general). For many of these militants, the legitimate battlefield is limited by concepts of time and space. Only under certain conditions is violence considered appropriate or necessary. It's clear that the individuals, such as Taslim, who identify with the 'global' jihadist cause are a higher threat to Western interests in

Southeast Asia. Like Umar Patek, the JI leader arrested in Pakistan in January 2011, they're also more likely to seek out transnational networks of other terrorist organisations for operational support, training and funding.

Motivations for violence

It's difficult to identify a specific 'type' of individual who embraces violence, even within radical groups like JI. As other studies have shown, there's no single 'terrorist profile'. Although some graduates of the Ngruki *pesantren* in Solo were involved in a number of terrorist operations, individuals from more secular social and educational backgrounds have also participated in religious violence. In addition, it isn't just politically or economically disenfranchised individuals who've chosen violence, but youthful adventurers and idealists as well.

Nevertheless, the one factor that ties such individuals together is their motivation to engage in armed struggle. Those motivations are important to understand, as they're based on the individual's conceptualisation of jihad. Understanding motivations is crucial in order to undertake nuanced, customised and thus appropriate countermeasures to combat terrorism.

The current focus on motivations isn't simply a study of the individual. It also takes note of the interaction between the individual and the dynamic forces within society. In this regard, group dynamics are important because, although decisions to engage in violence might be made on an individual basis, group dynamics greatly affect how that decision is reached.

Also, beyond simply examining the immediate social environment, it's useful to bear in mind that a larger historical context matters when teasing out the finer-grained reasons why

some turn to violence. The acts of communal conflict across Indonesia over the past decade are in some ways a continuation of a historical movement among fringe groups of Indonesian Muslims to contest the notion of a secular, democratic state. Although the legitimising narrative of their fight has at times weaved in Osama bin Laden's notion of waging a global jihad against the 'far enemy', particularly since 9/11, the politics of secular-religious violence nevertheless retains deep roots in Indonesian society.

For the current generation of jihadists with historical ties to groups such as Darul Islam, this sense of collective grievance remains oriented towards the national rather than the global battlefield. Memories of repression often include clashes with the Partai Komunis Indonesia and the military during Indonesia's tumultuous nation-building years. The current crackdown on militants is just the latest episode in a long history of collective grievances and a sense of shared humiliation.

Conflict hotspots

Conflict zones continue to attract extremists. Sectarian violence in Ambon and Poso was critical to the development and growth of Islamist militancy in Indonesia during the late 1990s and early 2000s, a period of volatile political change following the fall of Soeharto's New Order regime. Religious differences between Muslim and Christian groups mightn't have been the initial cause of that violence, but that didn't stop the clashes from assuming a religious character over time and remaining in the popular imagination as a religious war.

Throughout the period of democratic transition and regional economic crisis, political infighting among political elites further contributed to insecurity in Java and the outer regions. The turmoil helped

pave the way for groups like Laskar Jihad, an organised Java-based paramilitary force, to systematically enter hotspots to train Muslim militants and to participate in the violence.

Veterans of the Afghanistan conflict, members of JI and individuals with no affiliation or loyalty to any particular grouping also descended upon these conflict zones. In addition to the jihadist groups, members from more legitimate Islamic organisations like Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council) were also drawn into the ranks of fighters because of the perceived lack of political will to stem the violence. Even serving Indonesian soldiers, for both political and personal reasons, have directly participated in clashes and helped arm the militants. Customs officials have wittingly and unwittingly allowed fighters to cross borders in defiance of presidential orders.

Many of the militants interviewed for this study travelled to conflict zones in Ambon or Poso, or both, with the objective of lending support when clashes broke out. Most claimed that the atrocities committed against Muslims during the Bosnian war a few years earlier couldn't be allowed to happen again, and that they were simply 'doing their part' to prevent it. The fact that Ambon and Poso were geographically close made travelling there to wage armed jihad all the more necessary because the conflicts were technically in their own backyards. Abdul Muis, a young man originally from Palu and closely aligned to JI, claimed to have involved himself in the fighting in nearby Poso after having met Muslim victims of violence who fled from the area.

For some of the militants, their involvement in violence was largely unplanned. Fatur Datu Armen and Asep Djaja, for example, initially travelled into Ambon to offer humanitarian

assistance to Muslim victims of violence in the conflict areas. But, over time, their aid activities gradually escalated into violence. Asep recalled knowing of two different groups of people who came into Ambon: the ones who went there to help and the ones who went there to fight.

He belonged to the former group but said his experience with the 'warlike situation' on the ground made him understand why the fighters came. He quickly became involved with militants and learned from them how to use guns and to construct bombs. Similarly, Fatur recounted that one of his initial tasks was to help patrol Muslim villages at night. He soon joined one of the ad hoc fighting brigades when clashes broke out and later participated in attacks and counterattacks against Christian villages. With no specialised militant training before arriving in Ambon, like Asep, Fatur picked up all the necessary fighting skills along the way.

Revenge

Revenge is also a key motivation for jihadist violence. Fatur, whose armed jihad in Ambon became more personal after he married a local woman, claimed that revenge was usually the overriding factor for him when operations were planned. Although that wasn't apparent in the attack on a karaoke bar for which he was ultimately arrested, he explained that tit-for-tat violence was common in conflict zones like Ambon. He recounted a story of being involved in a clash against a Christian group, targeting one man in particular because the man had killed a relative of his wife only days before.

Likewise, Suhaib, a JI member originally from Solo who initially travelled to Ambon under the orders of his JI elders, became involved in retaliation attacks against Christian villages after he married a local woman. After he set up his family in Ambon, his jihad there

became more personal. In fact, he chose to stay with his new family despite orders from his JI elders to return to Java years later. He said that he'd grown less interested in JI's policies and more dedicated to protecting locals, including his wife and child, should violence break out.

Adventurism

At times, an individual's decision to participate in armed jihad isn't a process of deliberate contemplation. For Nasir Abas, a former JI militant trainer in Mindanao, it was instead more a series of unintended decisions.

Nasir's childhood already hinted at an adventurist mindset searching for novel experiences. He had a tendency to act on the spur of the moment rather than as a committed Islamist militant in the making. As a youth, he felt stifled by his mainstream education in Malaysia and found himself easily bored in the classroom. He later managed to convince his father to enrol him in a Quranic school in Negri Sembilan after he saw how other youths his age attending the school weren't straightjacketed by a rigid curriculum or wearing uniforms. That was to be the start of a string of decisions largely based on the thrill of doing new things, including being active in Darul Islam and meeting people like Abdullah Sungkar, Imam Samudra and Ali Ghufron alias Mukhlas.

In 1988, Nasir, unaware of the internal frictions within Darul Islam that would eventually lead to Abdullah Sungkar leaving the organisation to form JI, took up the latter's offer of a fully funded trip to Afghanistan simply because he was thrilled by the idea of travelling overseas. The hype surrounding the *mujahidin* of Afghanistan only sweetened the proposal for the young Nasir. Choosing Afghanistan over staying home meant that Nasir would drift away from the larger Darul Islam structure and end up within the JI fold.

Although a sense of adventure may have led him to become a high-level JI member, he was committed to what he was doing. Nasir was arrested in 2003 for training a number of those involved in the Bali bombings, including Samudra and Mukhlas. He subsequently denounced the Bali attack because he considered indiscriminate bombings to be wrong and later published a book revealing the secret inner workings of JI. But he remained convinced that to physically prepare for armed jihad, as he had helped militants in the southern Philippines do, was still every Muslim's obligation. Nasir's case clearly draws attention to the importance of group dynamics in a person's decision to turn to political violence, and it underscores the fact that it's common for individuals to join first and then believe.

Extending favours to 'men of religion'

Not all terrorist convicts are direct participants in violence; a large number of them are just 'enablers', individuals who form a vital ring of support around the 'doers'.

Those who knowingly involve themselves in violent operations often view their supporting roles as their own way of serving their jihad obligations. At Noordin Top's request, in 2005 Abdul Aziz set up an internet website that featured, among other things, weaponry manuals and bombers' testimonies. For Aziz, using his expertise in computers and knowledge of cyberspace to support the activities of the militant community was his way of serving jihad.

Similarly, Abdul Rouf participated in an armed robbery of a jewellery store in 2002 in a bid to source funds on the instructions of Imam Samudra. Rouf had thought the spoils from the robbery would help facilitate the operations of the Muslim militants in Poso, a *medan* he'd always wanted to join. Although it didn't exactly turn out that way, Rouf was

confident that he was contributing to the betterment of Muslims in Poso.

Others have been unwittingly dragged into the militant ranks, like Harri Setya Rachmadi and Sonhadi. Harri was asked a favour by cleric Subur Sugiarto, the religious teacher of the *pengajian* he attended, to accommodate a visiting friend for a few nights. He'd obliged because he believed it was charitable to extend help to a fellow Muslim, especially one who was recommended by someone in a position of authority and who had appeared to be a rather religious man. Unknown to Harri, the man he was introduced to as Pak Ridwan turned out to be Noordin Top. Harri was later sentenced to five years in prison for harbouring a terrorist fugitive. Similarly, Sonhadi was arrested in 2004 for harbouring Noordin Top in his house for a few nights. Sonhadi claimed he wasn't aware of Top's identity at the time because he was introduced to the man by a different name. Still, for Sonhadi, knowing that the man was seeking shelter from the authorities gave him no reason to exercise caution.

'Freelance' jihadi

Several prisoners interviewed for this project described themselves as 'freelance' jihadists, claiming that they only serve the causes they deem legitimate, not specific organisations or individuals. Abu Gar and Soleh are examples of these increasingly independently minded militants. However, they're not averse to joining forces with any particular 'like-minded' organisation. The two men were both active in the violence in Ambon and they'd variously lent themselves to operations within the conflict areas that were led by different groups—JI, Laskar Jihad and KOMPAK.

Western counter-terrorism analysis has tended to focus heavily on the organisational structure of terrorist organisations, but the evidence here shows that organisational

affiliations may be less important than previously thought. Fajar Taslim claimed he had no knowledge of a terrorist group called JI until he and his colleagues read about it in the news. Others, such as Yusuf, hardly referred to the JI organisation during interviews; Yusuf preferred to speak of his militant role in Mindanao as an individual or, at most, of his close network of compatriots. What was real for Yusuf was less the name of the group he was following than the band of militants he had fought alongside in the southern Philippines. He also claimed that his loyalty to the cause and his comrades was only applicable when on the battlefield, highlighting a lack of consistent positive self-identification with a group beyond what he considered the legitimate space for armed jihad.

The tendency among the younger generation of militants to collaborate with one another regardless of group affiliation is a growing concern. Their ideologies, strategies and goals might be different, but there remains a particular congruence among them in the attitudes, beliefs and sense of duty that make them aid one another when the situation calls for it. As such, the JI organisation may be disbanded for now, but it won't be surprising if it reappears in the future. That sentiment was shared by many of those interviewed.

Accordingly, the younger generation of JI leaders, especially those whose fathers had been part of the group, has been placed under much scrutiny. Abu Jibril's son, for example, Muhammed Jibril Abdurahman, who is a publisher of extremist literature and a militant website, was convicted of concealing information on terrorist activities in the aftermath of the 2009 twin hotel bombings in Jakarta. Although people related to known terrorist convicts shouldn't be considered guilty by association, such individuals can provide useful points of reference even if the

future direction of the group remains difficult to forecast. JI will undoubtedly retain a degree of support among the *jihadi* faithful because, like the Darul Islam movement before it, JI has a network of younger militants to keep it relevant.

Pathways towards violence

Such motivations are the proximate causes of violence, but what makes the extremist narrative appealing? In other words, what are some of the underlying factors that can make an individual become more susceptible than others to an extremist message on religion? This section looks at the various pathways to violence taken by the prisoners.

Family and marriage ties

Families play a significant role in the religious radicalisation of many individuals. Of those interviewed, close to one-third had familial or marriage ties to other known extremists and militants. Solahuddin and his brothers, for example, were their family's third generation of militants. Their grandfather had fought the Dutch colonial authorities, and their father was a Darul Islam member who had played a part in the 1957 plot to assassinate then-president Soekarno.

Solahuddin's father, Ahmad Kandai, had a great influence over his sons. In charge of their religious education, he'd raised them to observe an Islam that wasn't only deeply political but anti-establishment as well. He enrolled them in schools largely run by his fellow Darul Islam members. In the home, Solahuddin and his brothers were constantly exposed to the militant Islamist ideology of their father and his peers, and they naturally accepted that using force was necessary to uphold the religion.

In 1988, encouraged by his father, Solahuddin's older brother Farihin travelled to

Afghanistan to fight alongside the *mujahidin* against the Soviets. When Farihin returned to Indonesia after a few years, he went to Poso with his brother Mohammed Islam. There, they fought against local Christians at a time when communal tensions were high in central Sulawesi. Later, in 2000, together with another brother, Abdul Jabar, they took part in the bomb attack against the Philippines ambassador in Jakarta. Solahuddin was also involved in the Atrium Mall bombing of 2001, as well as the violence in Ambon.

Solahuddin, like his brothers, had evidently followed a family ‘tradition’ in the footsteps of his *jihadi* forefathers. During his interview, Solahuddin said he’d like to pass on his version of Islam to his own children, as his brothers had done to theirs.

Such linkages are often reinforced by strategic marriage alliances among like-minded families. For example, the Nurhasyim family, which includes the executed Bali bombers Mukhlas and Amrozi, has Nasir Abas as a brother-in-law. These marriages helped to expand the network in a secure way. JI elders would often matchmake younger members with their own daughters, sisters or other relatives. And, once inside the circle, it’s difficult for any individual to leave the group without breaking up families or betraying those closest to them.

Discipleship

Extremist religious figures directly contribute to radicalisation. Many of the men interviewed acknowledged that they first became attracted to militant Islam after having met a cleric widely known for his extremist views. Yusuf, for example, said he was first introduced to the world of jihad by a teacher in school who passed him a videodisc on the Bosnian war. Yusuf would a few years later swear allegiance to JI elder Mustofa alias

Abu Tholut, his *ustadz* at a weekly *pengajian* he attended.

The influence of religious leadership has been underappreciated as a kind of kinship bond. Religious elders regard educating those in their charge as an *amanah* (trusteeship). With religion an all-encompassing force in everyday life, clerics have far-reaching influence over children as they grow up. In their roles as educators and leaders, it’s common for clerics to come to be regarded as an extension of the household. The centrality of extremist religious figures in various militant and terrorist operations in Indonesia highlights the lasting influence these charismatic individuals have over their followers.

The conundrum for the Indonesian authorities is that the extremist cleric, even in situations when he could be inciting violence, is rarely held directly responsible for any act of violence. Charismatic religious personalities like Abu Bakar Ba’asyir have been allowed to preach intolerance and support for jihad among their followers without official sanction. In addition, and not least because of his deliberately cultivated saintly appearance and advanced age, Ba’asyir continues to elicit sympathy from the wider Muslim community.

Economic deprivation, political marginalisation and corruption

Poverty isn’t a true motivation for jihadist violence, but economic disadvantage does exclude a large proportion of Indonesians from effective economic and political participation. Also, because wealth disparity weakens social resilience, it gives rise to perceived inequalities, leaving those marginalised to find some resonance with radical ideologies.

The now-standard sketch of the ‘home-grown’ terrorist based on the al-Qaeda–9/11 variety—educated, middle

class and well travelled—cannot be assumed in Indonesia. Socioeconomic conditions remain a relevant factor for analysis because, although a number of the terrorist convicts received a university education (such as Fatur, Soleh alias Arif and Abdul Aziz), there were many who attended *pesantrens* largely because the education was free and their families could afford little else.

Additionally, perceived inequality often serves as a justification for violent groups to fight for the marginalised. This is evident in places affected by sectarian violence, such as Ambon and Poso where the fight for local resources assumed a religious character. The militants often justified their actions by claiming that they were doing something to help Muslim victims of violence, unlike the government.

Corruption also causes anger when people see that the political system only benefits the rich. Systemic corruption among political elites—a growing problem in Indonesia—contributes to the negative impression that the government is immoral and *thogut* (evil). Many of the convicted terrorists justified their actions because they saw the Indonesian Government as an untrustworthy, illegitimate authority.

3. The prison experience

Between 2000 and 2010, nearly 600 individuals were arrested on terrorism charges in Indonesia. Around two-thirds of them were convicted for activities that ranged from bomb attacks to targeted assassinations, armed robbery and abetment. Many have already been released from prison. The Indonesian counter-terrorism police also managed to capture or kill many JI leaders. More recently, more than 80 individuals linked to the militant training camp in Aceh have been arrested—some have already been tried and sentenced, and many are still awaiting

trial. So the total number of terrorist convicts is likely to rise beyond the 150 currently serving time in prisons across the country.

Police efforts to combat terrorism can be undermined by poor prison management. A successful counter-terrorism strategy must go beyond arresting violent extremists. It must also include addressing important incarceration issues, such as where to hold terrorist convicts and how to deal with them in custody.

This section examines what goes on inside the Indonesian prison system. What are the activities of the terrorist convicts within the prison walls? What does time in prison do to them and to those around them? Is the prison environment conducive to the further radicalisation of terrorist convicts, or even the making of new violent extremists?

Life behind bars

Taufik bin Abdul Halim alias Dani, a JI member originally from Malaysia, and Edi Setiono alias Usman alias Abas, an Afghanistan veteran from Jakarta, were both involved in the August 2001 Atrium Mall bombing in Jakarta and were among Indonesia's first convicted terrorists. Both were sentenced to twenty years in prison for their roles in the bomb attack and sent to Cipinang Prison. At that time, the Jakarta prison lacked the necessary experience and resources to deal with terrorist convicts. The two men weren't differentiated from other criminals and were put in a cell with eight to ten others. Beyond the usual constraints of being behind bars, there were no particular restrictions on them or special monitoring of their interactions with fellow inmates and visitors, their day-to-day activities or their material possessions.

Over the next ten years, Cipinang Prison would house some of the most notorious

names in the JI circle, including the likes of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Abu Rusydan, Mustofa alias Abu Tholut, Bagus Budi Pranoto alias Urwah, Luthfi Haedaroh alias Ubeid and Abdullah Sunata. However, it's questionable whether the Indonesian Government's experience with such individuals has led to better handling of terrorist convicts in detention.

Recidivism remains a genuine concern. Mustofa alias Abu Tholut, Bagus Budi Pranoto alias Urwah and Abdullah Sunata have re-engaged in violent activities after their release from prison. Also worrying are reports of some individuals planning for their future re-engagement with terrorism while in prison—a possibility only because of the lack of effective regulation of assembly. Not only is the apparent further radicalisation of terrorist convicts in prison an issue, but the potential radicalisation of the inmate population *and* the prison officers is a problem as well. In 2005, Benni Irawan, a warden at the Keborokan Prison in Bali, helped smuggle a laptop into prison for the Bali bomber, Imam Samudra, who was then on death row. It was subsequently revealed that the laptop was used by Samudra to chat with other militants and help plan the second Bali bombing.

Relative freedom to mingle and congregate

Terrorist convicts are often housed in the same block of a prison, although not always. They remain relatively free to mingle and congregate with one another, and this has actually helped to expand their personal networks within the militant circle. The men interviewed said they had the opportunity to meet individuals whom they wouldn't have otherwise met because of the small cell structures and the high levels of secrecy surrounding their activities. These interactions allowed many of them to better understand

their specific roles in the organisation and the broader structure of terrorist operations. This has appeared to influence these individuals in either one of two ways. For Yusuf, he realised how he was taken advantage of by Mustofa alias Abu Tholut, the man he had sworn allegiance to. He became disillusioned with the group and today refuses to have any association with it. Sonhadi, on the other hand, said he's happy to know that he'd inadvertently helped Noordin Top evade the police by letting the man stay in his house for a few nights.

Ganging up

As prisons are harsh environments, inmates tend to group together for safety and support. Terrorist convicts naturally gravitate towards one another because of their common backgrounds, organising impromptu 'gangs' to counter other groupings, which are usually based on ethnicity.

During interviews, Sonhadi explained that in Cipinang terrorist convicts would band together and form something akin to a 'shadow government' in prison. They'd often pool their available resources to ask for better cells, better food and other small luxuries. They'd also run small businesses in prison, from selling top-up cards for mobile phones to setting up food stalls selling rice, cooking oil and sugar. These in-prison businesses help them to provide for their families on the outside. In fact, there have been instances in which convicts in Cipinang have sent money to other terrorist convicts held in Batu Prison in Nusakambangan.

The prestige of terrorist convicts also helps to boost their reputation and influence in prison. Those convicted on terrorism charges are usually regarded by everyone around them as pious men willing to lay down their lives for their religion and, as such, find themselves accorded great respect. Further enhancing

the standing of the terrorist convicts is their reputation of being dangerous; they're known to be fearless of death, and experts in handling weapons and making bombs.

That reputation extends beyond the prison walls. Not only do terrorist convicts have their families and friends visit them in prison, but their supporters and admirers as well. In fact, Farihin Ahmad met his second wife while he was serving time in prison. When terrorist convicts are released from prison, their street image is enhanced. A number of the men interviewed, including Sonhadi, felt that they hold an elevated status in society after serving time behind bars.

Istana uzlah

Many don't see being incarcerated as a harsh form of punishment. Rather, it's simply a consequence they have to face for their actions and one that they're well prepared to undergo if caught. They consider a life behind bars to be like being in an *istana uzlah*, which translates as 'a palace of isolation', where they can continue to dedicate their lives to religion. They usually pass the time studying and reciting the Quran, meditating and fasting.

Many also consider their prison time as a temporary respite from fighting. They use the time to reflect on their past activities in order to find ways to better perform their jihad duties. Many, especially those who've either already spent some years in prison or served out their prison sentences, said that they'd have executed their jihad operations differently. Sarjiwo, an Afghanistan veteran who played a peripheral role in the first Bali bombings, reappraised his jihad activities in prison, and said his religious duty would be served better by helping to alleviate the suffering of Palestinians instead of involving himself in bombing attacks. Ali Imron, on the other hand, said his jihad could have been better if there'd not been Muslim

deaths in the Bali bombings and if it didn't create as much controversy within the larger Muslim community.

Continued dakwah

These men understand that wider support for their activities is crucial to the longevity of the movement. That's why they continue their *dakwah* (religious outreach) in prison to ensure that they can recruit new members and that their own zeal for militant jihad isn't diminished.

The prison mosques are usually good places to achieve both aims. For example, Cipinang's in-house mosque is often used by the terrorist convicts detained there to hold *pesantren*-like study groups. They organise routine prayer classes and Quranic studies. Mustofa alias Abu Tholut was once the *mudir* (head of studies) of the informal *pesantren*, which was attended by around 300 inmates. Abdullah Sunata had also reportedly given weekly sermons that drew about 200 inmates at any one time, preaching mostly about piety, morality and Islamic knowledge, but given the opportunity he'd also speak about the importance of jihad.

Individuals such as Ali Ghufuron alias Mukhlas and Aman Abdurrahman had even managed to reach audiences beyond their prison cells. They were both known to have held 'teleconferences' by delivering sermons via mobile phones to their followers, including a congregation at a mosque in Solo, Central Java, and in other prisons where terrorist convicts were held.

Beyond the mass sermons, terrorist convicts often keep exclusively to themselves. They'll read and discuss books and watch videos on jihad. Such materials easily get through prison gates because of a lack of a vetting process and then get circulated in the prison mosques. *Kelas pengajian* (religious classes), specifically

among detained JI members, continue to take place where possible. Such classes ensure that members will remain steadfast in their ideology.

Prison wardens regard the mosques as a low security priority, assuming that those who frequent them are generally 'good' inmates involved in positive social activities. Being active in the mosque is one of the ways convicts can secure their release based on good behaviour. Regulating the activities of in-house mosques isn't an easy task, because some terrorist convicts refuse to attend when *imams* are brought in from the outside to lead prayers or deliver sermons.

Are prisons a breeding ground for terrorists?

Considering the activities that go on behind prison walls, are prisons a breeding ground for terrorists in Indonesia? A look at some of the post-detention networks provides a clue.

Prisons provide opportunities for terrorist convicts to establish new networks. Ramli alias Iqbal Husaini alias Rambo ran a small business with other inmates, renting and selling cell phones, top-up vouchers and cigarettes. Solahudin had made numerous friends because he was a *tukang bekam* (traditional massage cupping therapist) and his services were often sought out by the inmates. Many of these relationships continue today. Solahudin said he would at times even take up construction jobs with his fellow former inmates.

Relationships formed in prison can lead inmates to feel a greater sense of solidarity, or even responsibility, towards one another. A deep sense of empathy is why Yusuf, even though he no longer considers himself a member of JI, continues to visit his old network in prison after his release. Having been imprisoned before, he empathises with

those still on the inside, making it difficult for him to entirely abandon the old jihadist network. Such militants can never really 'retire', since they'll always have personal connections to the old network.

The prison experience bonds people together regardless of whether they were detained in the same prison at the same time. Sonhadi and Ariff were detained separately in Jakarta and Surabaya, but now work closely together as members of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's new organisation, Jamaah Anshorut Tauhid. They were both charged for aiding Noordin Top. Because they were unaware that they'd helped a terrorist fugitive, they felt wronged and are today only further convinced that the authorities were simply out to 'get' them. Sonhadi said he'd have offered Top more help if he'd known who Top was.

But prisons don't always radicalise. Although Sonhadi had grown to distrust the authorities and continued to be supportive of Top's violent activities, Harri Setya Rachmadi on the other hand said he was resigned to his fate. Similarly arrested for unknowingly abetting terrorism, he decided to see prison as a lesson to exercise more caution in the future. In part because of the punishment he faced, Harri felt that Top's violent ways were the wrong way to fulfil his jihad obligations.

4. Rehabilitation, disengagement and 'de-radicalisation' efforts

This section examines Indonesian counter-radicalisation efforts and asks: should terrorist convicts be isolated and kept separated from other inmates to prevent the spread of their violent extremist ideology in prison? Or is the bigger concern terrorist convicts regrouping and reorganising while in detention?

Isolating key JI operatives and ideologues

The Indonesian police prefer to keep terrorist convicts in detention centres rather than in prisons so that they can be monitored. This is to limit the risk of them radicalising others. It's also to stop individuals from being 're-radicalised', especially those who have exhibited a tendency to cooperate with the police in their investigations.

Ali Imron, jailed for life for his role in the Bali bombings, is one of the terrorist convicts currently held in police detention. Others include Hutomo Pamungkas alias Mubarok, also jailed for life in connection to the bombings in Bali, and Abu Dujana, the JI military commander serving a fifteen-year sentence after being found guilty of helping terrorists and possessing and storing firearms and ammunition. Another is senior JI member Zarkasih, who's charged with conspiracy to commit terrorist attacks, harbouring terrorist fugitives and stockpiling illegal arms. Islamist militants other than those from JI (such as Haris, a militant linked to the 2005 attack on three Christian schoolgirls in Poso) are also held in the same facility.

These men occupy part of the second floor of the narcotics detention centre. They're separated from the drug offenders but free to move around within their allocated corridors, where they often congregate and perform daily prayers. Unlike convicts in prisons, each detainee is given a private cell. The gates to the cells are almost always left open. The cells are all similar in size and each is usually partitioned into three living spaces: a raised section where guests can sit and talk; a personal toilet with an improvised cardboard door; and a sleeping area hidden behind curtains for some degree of privacy. None of the detainees is required to wear prison uniforms.

The men are afforded privileged treatment because they're not perceived as ordinary criminals. Their actions are ideologically motivated and they have the status of violent political detainees rather than simply murderers. Moreover, these men have owned up to their crimes, shown remorse and cooperated with the police in their investigations. Because the police wish to continue cultivating good relations with them, they're often given additional benefits, such as better imprisonment conditions, reduced sentences and financial assistance for their families. The fact that men like Ali Imron, Abu Dujana and Hasanuddin once held key positions within the militant network also makes them important sources of information.

'De-radicalising' inmates

The Indonesian police's approach to 'de-radicalising' terrorist convicts is focused heavily on the former JI leadership group. In addition to offering financial incentives to some individuals, they've included elements of a counter-ideology program to convince militants that violence isn't part of religion. Accordingly, the police have spearheaded an initiative using former militants who've revised their stances on violence to engage other militants in prisons. This is based on the assumption that former hardliners have a more lasting impact on supporters of violent jihad than appeals from moderate religious figures.

Ali Imron, for example, is often sent into Indonesian prisons to convince other violent extremists, especially the ones newly incarcerated, that attacking civilians is forbidden in Islam and that acts of violence only hurt the Muslim community. By getting close to the new inmates, he softens them up to cooperate with the police, helping the police to minimise the use of harsher

methods in the investigation process. Thus far, among others, men like Joko Tri Harmanto alias Jek Harun and Purnama Putra alias Tikus alias Usman, both previously imprisoned for helping Noordin Top, have revised their stances on violence after meeting with Ali Imron. Today, Jek Harun and Usman are out on probation and settling back into normal life.

Nasir Abas is another former militant helping the police with 'de-radicalisation' efforts. As the former JI head of Mantiqi III, Nasir gets close to militants, such as those arrested for violence in Poso, largely because many used to be under his charge. Among others, he's managed to get Hasanuddin, JI leader in the Poso district and the planner of the beheading of three Christian schoolgirls in 2005, and Hasanuddin's followers to open up to the police through the course of their investigations.

Yet, when asked, most of those interviewed said they hadn't been part of any 'de-radicalisation' programs while in prison. Since 2002, police efforts at countering extremist ideology have been largely ad hoc and unsystematic, and not every terrorist convict's been given equal treatment. Many militants had tended to look at these government-directed discussions about jihad as simply 'group talk'. The other factor inhibiting the 'de-radicalisation' initiative is that it's led entirely by the police. Neighbouring countries such as Singapore have adopted a different model, engaging credible religious leaders and professional counselling services to offer an alternative religious narrative to inmates.

Many terrorist convicts didn't consider financial assistance or prison 'perks' to be part of a 'de-radicalisation' process, anyway. They said such assistance in no way influenced their views on the need for armed struggle. According to Abdul Rouf, jihad was a matter of ideology, not economics.

Some terrorist convicts had rejected 'aid' from the police altogether. Adhi Suryana alias Qital, an Afghanistan veteran, said that accepting money from the police for whatever reason would only bring about *fitnah* (ill perceptions) towards him by others within the circle.

Others, such as Bagus Budi Pronoto alias Urwah, Luthfi Haedaroh alias Ubeid, Subur Sugiarto alias Abu Mujahid, Aman Abdurrahman and Ustadz Adung, were said to have refused money on the grounds that the police are part of a *thogut* (evil) state, often tagging those who are close to the authorities as the 'black' group. These men, on the other hand, regard themselves as belonging to the 'white' group for staying pure and steadfast to their cause.

The 'counter de-radicalisation' efforts of the 'white' group

There's been real resistance to 'de-radicalisation' programs from within the ranks of terrorist convicts, such as those in the 'white' group, who have instituted their own 'counter de-radicalisation' efforts.

They reject rehabilitation programs and oppose any attempts to 'tame' them and their movement. They do this by banding together and reinforcing one another's belief in the righteousness of armed struggle. They hold exclusive discussion sessions based on the books, magazines and videos on militant jihad that they receive from their visitors.

They're prepared to face whatever consequences come their way for refusing to cooperate with either the police or the prison wardens. Ustadz Adung, for example, had turned down early probational release in exchange for information; Aman Abdurrahman preferred being locked away in an isolation cell over stopping his proselytisation efforts and overt recruitment attempts among inmates; Subur Sugiarto

alias Abu Mujahid often got into heated debates with wardens about religion and frequently expressed disdain towards them for being part of a *thogut* system.

Expectedly, their unwillingness to abide by prison regulations only results in angry wardens. Their less than cordial relationships with the wardens lead to other harsh treatment that only reinforces the perception that the wardens—and by extension, the state—are the enemies of those who fight for Islam.

The ambivalent ‘grey’ group

Individuals in the black and white groups are easy to identify, but those in the ‘grey’ group are a little more difficult to gauge and analyse. They’ve accepted financial help from the police, even given information to help with investigations, but they continue to engage in dubious clandestine activities on the side. Clearly receiving the best of both worlds, they get benefits from the police but still receive respect from their peers for appearing to stay steadfast to their cause.

5. Conclusion and policy recommendations

At the heart of the current wave of global Islamist terrorism is a legitimising extremist narrative that resonates with individuals from Morocco to the Philippines. A central theme of this ideology—shared by many of the prisoners interviewed for this project—is that armed jihad and militancy are essential parts of a person’s religious obligation. The death of Osama bin Laden and the uncertain future direction of the al-Qaeda organisation won’t alter the power of that narrative, which will continue to thrive in jihadist communities throughout Southeast Asia.

Although JI was established as a military outfit, the differences between those inside

the group who decided to engage in violence and those who didn’t lie less in operational training matters and more in ideological leanings. It’s the individual’s interpretation of what constitutes a legitimate *medan jihad* (jihad battlefield) that has the most important influence on behaviour. Many in the group saw their jihad obligations in terms of a localised fight to protect and defend fellow Muslims in places of conflict. The global jihadist group—a smaller but more deadly subset of the JI organisation—continues to find legitimisation in al-Qaeda’s established narrative of a religious war against the West.

For counter-terrorism police and policymakers, understanding these different motivations and responding to them appropriately is the work of generations. Although Indonesia has been successful in disrupting and disbanding terrorist networks across the archipelago over the past decade, the research here shows that the ideology of violent extremism will continue to pose a serious challenge for Southeast Asia for the foreseeable future. It’s worth noting that several prisoners interviewed for this project said that they wouldn’t be surprised if a terrorist organisation like JI re-emerged in Southeast Asia in the near future.

Counter-radicalisation programs in Indonesia are having limited effect on the trajectory of terrorism and militancy. Recidivism rates are on the rise. To counter this problem, a more nuanced set of policies is required, and the Indonesian Government can’t be expected to do this work alone. Terrorism in Southeast Asia affects all countries in the region. All countries should contribute to a solution.

The following policy ideas are drawn directly from the evidence gathered during the prison interviews. They don’t constitute a comprehensive or complete program of activities, but they point to the need

for a more individualised approach to counter-radicalisation efforts and a more balanced investment between the police, the military and the prison system.

Rehabilitate prisoners based on their individual motivations for violence

Prison rehabilitation must be an integral part of any counter-terrorism strategy, so why these individuals become involved in terrorist operations in the first place and their experiences in the prison system are crucial matters for policymakers.

Differentiating between the locale-specific *jihadi* and the global *jihadi* is an important first step. The former group tends not to wage war on the ‘far enemy’ or operate beyond the physical boundaries of their adopted *medan*. Also, they believe their cause to be more about social justice issues than righting the global order in favour of Muslims. Focusing on education and religious training for these individuals may prove effective in addressing some of their grievances.

Global jihadists are more difficult to engage. The ubiquitous narrative of the West oppressing Muslims in places like the Middle East, Afghanistan and North Africa finds a willing audience around the world, including in Indonesia. Countering this narrative requires both a country-specific approach and a global campaign to highlight the simplistic and ill-informed judgments that feed off it. Interfaith dialogues can help, but the longer term challenge is to ensure that al-Qaeda’s ‘clash of religions’ narrative doesn’t poison the minds of the younger generation.

Promote ‘simple’ disengagement

Religious re-education and psychological counselling make up a substantial part of

counter-radicalisation programs in places such as Singapore and Saudi Arabia. They’re based on the notion that if one can be radicalised, then one can be ‘de-radicalised’. The ultimate goal of such efforts is the absolute renunciation of the use of violence in the name of religion.

But how can individuals like Solahudin be ‘de-radicalised’, when they were brought up in families whose very sense of Islam-ness was synonymous with soldiering for the religion? Turning him and his brothers away from jihad would essentially mean making them defy a lifetime of beliefs, and their family.

In this case, simple disengagement and distancing these individuals from violence seems to be a more realistic approach and an achievable objective. Many in JI are essentially ‘part-time’ *jihadis*. Although they occasionally participate in violent activities, they still need to make a living for themselves and their families. For these individuals, the aim would be to keep them engaged in productive economic activities through employment programs and skills retraining.

The militant with an adventurist streak needs to be similarly engaged. Results from a study on youths suggest that, while teenagers weigh up the pros and cons of their decisions, they take risks because they enjoy the thrill of a ‘lucky escape’ more than other age groups. Nasir Abas, for example, was introduced to the militant world of Darul Islam and JI as a youth and allowed himself to get carried away by the novelty of the fight. It’s therefore important to channel such an individual’s risk-taking tendencies to something more positive. Identifying youths at risk and providing alternative opportunities for adventure would be a positive outcome.

Simple disengagement strategies would be appropriate for militants who see their

activities as only the defence of their homes and families. Their decision to surrender arms and cooperate is, of course, contingent upon whether the government can prove that it can assist with existing conflict situations. Many of these individuals only wanted the Indonesian Government to do something for Muslims in Ambon. These men have demonstrated a willingness to cooperate with the police to help quell sectarian clashes in Ambon in return for government assistance.

Expand the program of financial assistance

The policy of encouraging non-violence by giving financial assistance to convicted terrorists and their families and other incentives for cooperation is too small to be effective and should be expanded. At the same time, the approach mustn't be seen to be rewarding terrorism. Although some of the men interviewed for this report have remained steadfast believers in the necessity of armed struggle, many have declared that they renounce the use of arbitrary violence on civilian noncombatants and soft targets.

Make efforts to prevent outbreaks of religious violence

The better management of sectarian violence across Indonesia is crucial. These interviews showed that the conflicts in Ambon and Poso contributed to the expansion of Islamist militancy and remain a powerful incentive for *jihadi* violence. Dedicated efforts are therefore needed to prevent such occurrences in the future and to remove any opportunity for extremist sentiments to flourish.

As part of that effort, it's important that the Indonesian authorities start making religious leaders who incite violence in places like Sulawesi and the Maluku islands accountable

for their actions. Revision of anti-terrorism laws to criminalise acts preparatory to violence, including militant training and incitement, are much needed. At the same time, the authorities must build greater public confidence in the judicial system. Australia and other foreign donors could assist with these steps through funding more training and education programs at the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation in Semarang.

Improve coordination between counter-terrorism agencies and prison services

The recent establishment of the Indonesian National Anti-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) addresses some of the longstanding concerns about the lack of effective coordination between the police and the military on counter-terrorism matters. Operational coordination for BNPT remains largely with the Indonesian police and, importantly, this maintains civilian control over anti-terrorism actions.

The police must also ensure that they're able to coordinate rehabilitation efforts with the prison service. To date, this has been the weakest leg of the Indonesian counter-terrorism system. Rehabilitating terrorists in detention, based on their individual motivations towards violence, is a complex task and one that deserves greater attention and more resources. As part of a comprehensive anti-terrorism assistance program, countries such as Australia, Singapore and the US should consider pooling resources to assist the Indonesian prison service with enhanced rehabilitation programs.

About the Author

Dr Carl Ungerer is the Director of the National Security Program at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Sulastri Bte Osman and Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna from the Centre of Excellence for National Security in RSIS and Taufik Susanto from the International Institute for Peacebuilding in Jakarta for their respective research expertise, helpful comments and assistance with this project.

About the Organisations

ASPI is a leading Australian think tank in the fields of strategic, defence and security affairs.

RSIS is a leading research and graduate teaching institution in strategic and international affairs in the Asia–Pacific region.

Important disclaimer

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in relation to the subject matter covered. It is provided with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering any form of professional or other advice or services. No person should rely on the contents of this publication without first obtaining advice from a qualified professional person.

About Special Reports

Generally written by ASPI experts, Special Reports are intended to deepen understanding on critical questions facing key strategic decision-makers and, where appropriate, provide policy recommendations. In some instances, material of a more technical nature may appear in this series, where it adds to the understanding of the issue at hand. Special Reports reflect the personal views of the author(s), and do not in any way express or reflect the views of the Australian Government or represent the formal position of ASPI on any particular issue.

ASPI

Tel +61 2 6270 5100

Fax + 61 2 6273 9566

Email enquiries@aspi.org.au

Web www.aspi.org.au

© The Australian Strategic Policy Institute Limited 2011

This publication is subject to copyright. Except as permitted under the *Copyright Act* 1968, no part of it may in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, microcopying, photocopying, recording or otherwise) be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted without prior written permission. Enquiries should be addressed to the publishers.