

Aceh Conflict Monitoring Update

1st December 2008 – 28th February 2009

World Bank



From last December to February, violent incidents rose back to high levels, with a peak of 36 reported cases in January, and 31 in December and 26 in February.¹ Sixteen people died, 47 were injured, and 17 buildings or vehicles were damaged over the three months. Most casualties resulted from personal disputes. However, the leap in the number of violent cases was caused largely by pre-electoral incidents, which accounted for a quarter to a third of all violent cases in January and February. There was a surge in grenade explosions, arsons and other attacks on political parties (13 cases), and three or four members of Partai Aceh (PA) and KPA² were assassinated in early February. This heightened tensions between these organizations and the security forces to alarming levels and raised fears of an escalation in violence in the run-up to the elections. The political violence led to renewed calls by the provincial government for the involvement of internationals in monitoring the elections. Arguments presented by opponents to international monitoring sometimes relied on anti-foreign sentiment. In early February, two aid workers were arrested by the military in Bireuen, accused of being spies. Finally, the Israeli military offensive in Gaza and a Governor's decree on praying houses for non-Muslims led to protests by Islamic organizations. The Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), a hardline group with a track-record of violent and criminal behavior, used this opportunity to raise its profile in Aceh and organize paramilitary training for volunteers to Jihad.

A surge in attacks against political parties and a series of assassinations bring pre-electoral tensions to alarming levels

In early February, at least three and possibly four KPA or Partai Aceh (PA) members were shot dead over the course of ten days (see Box 1).³ These assassinations occurred in the wake of a new series of arson and grenade explosions that targeted political parties, mostly PA, in January. These incidents brought tensions, in particular between PA/KPA and security forces, to unprecedented levels since the MoU, sparking fears of an escalation in violence as polling day on April 9th draws closer.

Violent attacks targeting political parties have been a common feature of the pre-

Box 1: Murders of PA/KPA members in February 2009

- *February 3rd, 23:30, Bireuen.* Dedi Noviandi alias Abu Karim, Secretary of KPA Batee Iliék (Bireuen), was shot dead at short range by two men on a motorbike.
- *February 4th, 11:30, Banda Aceh – Krueng Raya road.* Two KPA members, M. Nur and his driver Zakaria Daud, were shot in their car several times by armed men riding a motorbike. M. Nur was killed while Zakaria was critically injured.
- *February 11th, Simpang Peuet, Alue Bilie, Nagan Raya.* M. Yusuf, a PA member, was found dead on the side of the road. Relatives alleged the body showed a gunshot wound in the arm but did not authorize an autopsy to determine the exact cause of death.
- *February 12th, 03:00, Meulaboh, Aceh Barat.* Taufik, alias Benu, a Sagoe (sub-district)-level PA cadre and the husband of a PA legislative candidate, was found dead from several gunshot wounds at his house.

¹ As part of an analytical support program to the peace process, the Conflict and Development Program, within the World Bank Office Indonesia and with funding from the UK's DFID and the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands, is using a newspaper conflict mapping methodology to record and categorize incidents of conflict in Aceh as reported in two provincial newspapers (Serambi and Aceh Kita). The Program publishes updates available online at www.conflictanddevelopment.org. The dataset is available for those interested; contact Adrian Morel at amorell@worldbank.org. There are limitations to using newspapers to map conflict; see Barron and Sharpe (2005) available at www.conflictanddevelopment.org/page.php?id=412.

² The Aceh Transition Committee (*Komite Peralihan Aceh – KPA*) is the civil organization formed to represent former GAM combatants. Partai Aceh is a political party formed by GAM in mid-2007.

³ It has not been clearly established yet whether Muhammad Yusuf, a rank-and-file PA supporter, was actually shot or died from a road accident.

electoral period in Aceh.⁴ Eight new cases of arson, grenade attacks or shooting of party offices or vehicles were reported in January, with five more in February. Most attacks (11 out of 13, or 85%) targeted Partai Aceh/KPA.

Whether the assassinations of PA/KPA figures in early February were politically motivated remains unclear. Police quickly attributed the murder of M. Nur, a construction contractor, to business rivals within KPA.⁵ Abu Karim, the influential secretary of KPA Batee Iliiek, was also involved in housing projects and had many enemies both within and outside of the organization. Viewed in a broader context of repeated violent attacks against PA, the murders raised fears that they might signal a dangerous escalation in the methods of political intimidation just two months ahead of the elections.⁶

The violence brought tensions in the field to alarming levels, and PA supporters in particular are increasingly restive. Abu Karim, in an interview given a few hours before his death, expressed deep concerns: “We don’t want to take the bait of provocations, but we’re being pushed back and if we do not react, soon we will look over our shoulder and see the border of Sumatra Utara... We are committed to peace, but we won’t think twice about taking up arms again if we have no other choice”.⁷

KPA and PA hold their share of responsibility in stirring tensions. Despite repeated declarations by the GAM elite condemning intimidation, both organizations have systematically refused to acknowledge that infractions have been committed by their members, let alone agree to be held accountable for them. At the same time, threats and shows of force by PA supporters have reached such levels that other parties are afraid of campaigning in some areas along the east coast. Besides the grenade and arson attacks, at least five cases of physical violence against other parties’ cadres and candidates (from PRA, PAAS, PKS and Partai Demokrat) were reported from December to February. It is likely that PA supporters were responsible for at least some of them. Some PA campaigners have reportedly been circulating propaganda saying that PA is the only legitimate local party according to the MoU, and making promises that a victory in April would lead to a referendum on independence.

Of particular concern is the rapid deterioration of relations between PA/KPA and security forces, who seem to have been on a collision course since the beginning of the electoral period.⁸ KPA and PA have accused the police of being lenient in investigating attacks. They have also repeatedly hinted at the possible involvement of the military (TNI) in plotting violence or backing its perpetrators, playing off parties against each other and stirring up instability.⁹ On the other side, the military has been stepping up its presence in the field, and

⁴ See Annex A for a list of all incidents from September 2008 to February 2009.

⁵ The potential for intra-KPA business disputes to lead to violence was illustrated in December by the kidnapping of a KPA member from Nagan Raya by Muharram, the Head of KPA Aceh Rayeuk (Aceh Besar), in a dispute over a Rp 35 million business debt.

⁶ Two more grenade explosions on March 3rd and 11th in Lhokseumawe confirmed these fears. Before these attacks, perpetrators had avoided causing casualties, striking in the early hours when offices were empty. The March attacks were carried out in the evening when people were gathered at target locations. The second grenade, which exploded at a PA *warung*, resulted in five injuries (these incidents will be discussed further in the next Update).

⁷ World Bank interview, Bireuen, February 3rd.

⁸ The start of the “closed campaign” (*kampanye tertutup*) on July 12th, 2008, coincided with the replacement on July 14th of Major General Supiadin by Major General Soenarko as military commander of Aceh. Soenarko, a former Special Forces officer, has taken a more hardline stance towards PA/KPA.

⁹ The military adamantly denied such accusations, although sometimes in a rather awkward manner. The day following the explosion of a grenade at the PA head office in Banda Aceh on January 13th, a spokesman for TNI’s national headquarters, in a preemptive move to head off finger-pointing, issued a statement saying that the army “had never received any report that its personnel was involved”.

has been increasingly vocal in warning the population against the “disintegration threat” presented by the domination of a specific “local party” in the east coast through the use of violence and intimidation.¹⁰ With the support of a number of national parties, the TNI has also been aggressively advocating for a larger role for the army in monitoring the elections. In January, Lt Colonel Yusep Sudrajat, military commander for Aceh Utara, announced that troops would stand guard in front of polling stations (*Tempat Pemungutan Suara* - TPS), “at the demand of the community”, and suggested that TPS should be grouped in a limited number of locations so they are more easily monitored.¹¹ On February 3rd, the commander of the Lilawangsa Regiment (east coast and central highlands) announced that 5,000 troops would be detailed across the province to help police monitor elections.

Tensions between PA/KPA and the military have manifested both in clashes in the field¹² and in abrasive verbal exchanges at the highest level. On the evening of February 12th, as the news of the assassination of PA cadre Benu was starting to spread, Governor Irwandi Yusuf interrupted a meeting with a delegation of the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs (Menkopolhukam) to report that a crowd of militia members were carrying out sweepings and “arresting” PA supporters in Timang Gajah, Bener Meriah.¹³ PA also reported two cases of beatings by TNI in the same sub-district the day before. In one incident, a KPA member was allegedly molested with a weapon and pressured into confessing that a PA legislative candidate was in possession of a handgun. Allegations about militia activity and accusations against the TNI were met by angry reactions from the military elite at both the regional and national levels.¹⁴

The prospects of further incidents between GAM and militia elements are particularly worrying. On March 1st of last year, the massacre of five KPA members by a local crowd led by militia figures in Atu Lintang, Aceh Tengah (see January-February Update), put the resilience of the peace process to its most severe test thus far. The restraint and professionalism shown at the time by KPA and security forces prevented escalation. One year on, with tensions between both sides close to reaching a boiling point, spillovers would be much harder to contain if a similar incident were to happen again.

More opportunities for escalation in tensions and violence are likely to occur in the last few weeks before the polls, especially during the official campaign (*kampanye terbuka* – from March 16th to April 5th) when parties will be organizing massive rallies across the province. In order to prevent this, a drastic change in the behavior of both GAM and security forces is needed. KPA and PA must show readiness to improve discipline and accountability. The military must show more restraint and refrain from overstepping its mandate as defined by the Constitution and the MoU.¹⁵ Finally, the role of the police in enforcing law and order,

¹⁰ See, for example, statements by Lt Colonel Yusep Sudrajat, *Analisa*, February 12th.

¹¹ He added that if a particular party objects, then “this party’s intentions are questionable, and it might be that this party intends to cheat”. *Serambi*, January 12th. Regulations only allow the army to stand guard at Ring III (at a distance from the TPS), not at Ring I (in front of the TPS).

¹² A total of six incidents involving violence between PA/KPA and TNI were reported in January and February, including brawls over banner issues and beatings of PA/KPA members by the army. On January 22nd, PA spokesperson Adnan Beuransah complained that PA cadres had been summoned by the sub-district military command in Blangpidie, and asked questions about their political activities.

¹³ A KPA office had already been attacked in that sub-district on January 21st.

¹⁴ TNI have always rejected the use of the word “militia”, and argue that civilian groups who fought GAM during the conflict were formed spontaneously by communities to ensure their self-defense, without any army support. Indonesian Army Chief of Staff, General Agustadi Sasongko Purnama, suggested that Governor Irwandi “should read more books”, *Rakyat Aceh*, February 18th.

¹⁵ TNI is bound by the Indonesian Constitution to be politically neutral. Provision 4.11 of the MoU limits its role in Aceh to external defense. However, TNI has argued that its intervention was justified by the potential for local elections to jeopardize national integrity: “TNI’s main duty covers a lot of things, especially safeguarding every government process that has the potential to raise a threat to Indonesian integrity”, Lt Colonel Sudrajat, *Serambi*, January 25th.

undermined on one side by accusations of incompetence and leniency, and on the other by the army's bid for a greater role in securing the elections, needs to be reaffirmed. Providing results of the investigation of attacks against political parties and the murders, and efficient follow-up to intimidation reports submitted by the recently formed provincial Elections Supervisory Committee (Panwaslu), would help to build trust.

A number of positive developments have recently raised hopes that the situation will improve. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's reaffirmation during his visit to Aceh on February 23rd-24th, that "the peace agreement in Aceh is final" sent a strong message to all that no moves that might jeopardize peace, such as talk of a referendum on independence or calls for military intervention, would be tolerated. Muzzakir Manaf, the head of both KPA and PA, and Malik Mahmud, GAM's former prime minister, made public statements reasserting their commitment to the integrity of the Republic and rejecting any prospect of a referendum. The nomination of Irjen Adityawarman as the new Police Chief of Aceh on February 21st is also encouraging.¹⁶ Adityawarman has a strong record of maintaining stability in another troubled Indonesian province, Maluku. Finally, the military showed signs of its willingness to enforce principles of neutrality. On March 6th, the military commander of Simpang Keramat sub-district, Aceh Utara, was relieved of his command for having ordered his troops to remove PA banners.

With talks about possible international monitoring of the elections as a backdrop, anti-foreigner rhetoric spreads and international aid workers are arrested for "spying"

Increasing levels of violence and concerns over intimidation led to renewed calls by Governor Irwandi and Vice-Governor Nazar for the international community to monitor the elections. Several opponents to international monitoring played dangerously on xenophobic sentiment, questioning the intentions of foreigners in Aceh. In February, two aid workers were arrested in Bireuen, accused by military figures of being spies.

Provision 1.2.7 of the MoU stipulates that "outside monitors will be invited to monitor the elections in Aceh" and that "local elections may be undertaken with outside technical assistance".¹⁷ This provided the legal basis for the European Union to monitor the 2006 local executive elections. On February 7th, a few days after the assassination of Abu Karim and M. Nur, Irwandi reiterated his demand that the central government officially invite foreign monitors. KPA and a number of local parties, including PA and SIRA, support the idea.¹⁸ During his visit to Aceh in February, former Finnish President and Nobel Peace Laureate Martti Ahtisaari also advocated strongly in favor of the proposal. The European Union said it is ready to provide monitors, and has earmarked funds and selected three experts for this purpose. However, the arrival of the experts will be conditional upon receiving a formal invitation by Indonesian authorities. The US government also offered support through the Carter Center.

It is unclear at this point whether or not the central government will act upon Irwandi's demands. President Yudhoyono has implied that he is not opposed to inviting foreign monitors provided they are detailed nationwide and not solely in Aceh, in order to avoid encouraging the perception of the province as a troubled area. Foreign monitoring also has strong opponents. The military in particular is highly suspicious of any initiative that allows internationals to interfere in internal political matters.¹⁹ Officials and representatives of

¹⁶ Although he is likely to serve only temporarily, pending the nomination of a permanent police chief.

¹⁷ However, there is no mention of international elections monitoring in the Law on Governing Aceh.

¹⁸ Aceh's People Party (PRA) also supports it. The Safe and Prosperous Aceh Party (PAAS) opposes it. Chairman Ghazali Abbas Adan argued that the assessment by foreign monitors that the 2006 elections were successfully carried out in a democratic manner, and the failure of internationals to acknowledge the extent of intimidation, reflected a lack of objectivity. *Harian Aceh*, March 3rd.

¹⁹ Reacting to a Round Table Meeting between high-level GAM and GoI representatives held in Finland early January, Indonesian Army Chief of Staff Agustadi Sasongko Purnama declared, "we take

national parties have also voiced opposition, often on the assumption that the foreign community is biased in favor of local political parties, in particular PA and SIRA. In any case, it is likely that if international monitoring takes place, it will be of a small-scale and with a limited mandate.²⁰

A regrettable aspect of the debate is how several opponents to international monitoring have deliberately appealed to anti-foreign sentiment, casting a suspicious shadow over the intentions of the international community and questioning its interest in maintaining a presence in Aceh. On January 18th, the Chairman of the Aceh branch of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) declared that “Aceh is not Kosovo”, expressed his concern that foreigners were “playing” in Aceh “as they did in Palestine”, and called on authorities to carry out sweepings to check on the documentation of internationals.²¹ In February, the Head of the Banda Aceh parliament, Muntasir Hamid, claimed that foreigners had vested interests in monitoring the elections, and called for all stakeholders to help maintain peace by reporting on foreigners who “campaign” for a specific political party “through seminars and simulations”.²²

Of particular concern is the involvement of the military in fuelling such theories. In February, the Bireuen military arrested two aid workers on questionable charges (see Box 2). The local TNI commander went as far as alleging publicly that they were spies, and warned against the threat to stability and peace presented by the presence of foreigners in Aceh. A few days earlier, Lilawangsa Regiment Commander Colonel Eko Wiratmoko reacted to Governor Irwandi’s reports of militia activity by saying: “The only militia in Aceh is the foreign militia hiding behind the Governor’s office”. He added that the people of Aceh needed to be aware of foreigners “with separatist ideas that want to split the Veranda of Meccah from NKRI”.²³

Box 2: Arrests of “foreign spies”

On February 19th, a Philippines citizen working as a Community Mobilization Specialist for Save the Children was arrested by the military in Bireuen while she was running a socialization meeting on malnutrition issues. She was suspected of working in breach of the conditions stated in her visa. Lt Colonel Suharto, military commander of Bireuen, stated that an Italian citizen had previously been arrested on the same grounds on February 2nd, while she was collecting data on conflict victims. Suharto seized on the occasion to call for tighter monitoring of foreign activity in Aceh: “The presence of foreigners in Aceh should be regarded with suspicion... We think there are foreign spies spying on the situation in Aceh because their activities are not relevant to their visas” (*Rakyat Aceh*, February 20th). Suharto demanded that police and immigration deport the two foreigners “to prevent their presence from spoiling the peace process”: “Many of them [foreigners] are wandering around without reason in a way that threatens the integrity of the Indonesian Republic” (op. cit.). Police later released the Philippines citizen, whose documentation appeared to be in order, and dismissed allegations that she was a spy. The right of the military to arrest foreigners on suspicion of immigration breaches is highly questionable.

care of ourselves in our country, there is no need to involve foreign nations”. The Round Table Meetings, a series of regular informal consultations between GAM’s leadership and GoI representatives, are facilitated by Interpeace, a Geneva-based international organization.

²⁰ As this Update was finalized, the Carter Institute received clearance from the national Elections Commission (KPU) and the Foreign Affairs Department to deploy monitors to Aceh. There will be only six of them, sent to Banda Aceh and a number of districts.

²¹ He also referred to the assault of a French NGO worker by a lunatic early January in Pulo Aceh: “The French citizen who was killed recently [note: the victim was critically wounded, but not killed] did not have an entry permit for Indonesia ... Why was that man in Pulo Aceh?” *Waspada*, January 19th.

²² *Serambi*, February 10th and *Rakyat Aceh*, February 25th. M. Muntasir conveyed the same views at a meeting with a delegation of Menkopolhukam on February 12th in Banda Aceh, in the presence of Vice-Governor M. Nazar. Internationals who had been officially invited to the meeting were discreetly asked to leave under instructions from military intelligence. It appeared that the audience was dominated by elements of PETA and FORKAB, two organizations representing respectively former militias and GAM combatants who surrendered before the MoU. PETA and FORKAB advocated against international monitoring and for tighter military control over the elections process.

²³ *Waspada*, February 17th. By “foreign militia hiding behind the governor’s office”, it is assumed that Col. Wiratmoko was referring to the UNDP office and the team of advisors detached to the Governor through the GTZ-funded ALGAP program.

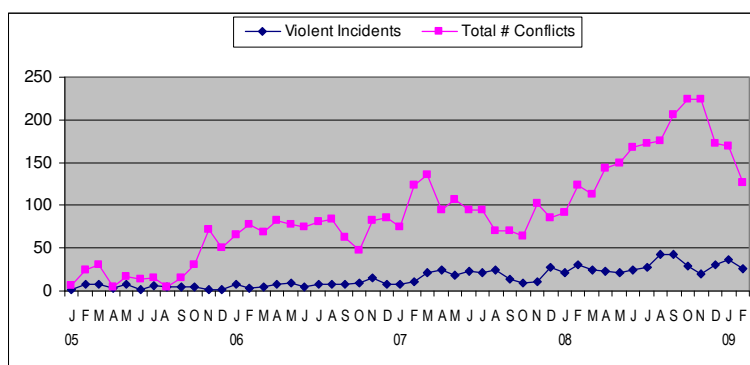
The local government wants continued assistance from the international community after the closure of the Aceh Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency (BRR) on April 16th, and some agencies have already committed to maintain a presence in the province for several more years. In order to contribute positively to the smooth continuation of programs, officials and security forces should refrain from making statements and taking actions that might foster popular hostility towards foreigners.

Overall trends: non-political conflicts drop, electoral tensions lead to a leap in violence

From December through February, the monthly number of conflicts fell sharply (see Figure 1), to a low of 127 in February. This is largely due to a drop in conflicts of an administrative nature and disputes over resources; political conflicts remained stable at the relatively high levels recorded since the beginning of the pre-electoral period. The drop in overall conflict can be seen as related to the run-up to the elections, as the attention of everyone, including the media, is focused on politics while other disputes are either not reported or put on hold until after the elections.

Violence levels stayed high. After a drop in November, the number of violent incidents grew again, with a peak of 36 cases in January (December: 31; February: 26). Political tensions were the main factor behind this flare-up in violence; elections-related incidents represented 25% of all violent cases in January and 30% in February.²⁴ Reported cases of violence led to three deaths and sixteen injuries in December, eight deaths and ten injuries in January, and five deaths and twenty-one injuries in February. Most casualties resulted from personal disputes. One particular case, the stabbing of the head of mission of a French NGO in Pulau Aceh on January 8th, raised concerns within the international community. The victim was critically wounded. The aggressor appeared to be mentally ill, and there is no evidence that the attack was motivated by any sort of personal or aid-related grievance. Elections-related violence led to comparatively little physical harm (one injury in December and seven in February) unless we assume that the February assassinations were politically motivated.

Figure 1: Conflicts vs violent incidents, per month



International and local issues boost Islamic militancy and give an opportunity to the Islamic Defenders Front to raise its profile in Aceh

In January, two different issues—the Israeli military offensive in Gaza, and a gubernatorial regulation on places of worship for non-Muslims²⁵—led to the mobilization of Islamic students associations, *santri* organizations, and political parties such as the Justice and Prosperity Party

²⁴ 42% if we assume that the February murders of KPA/PA members were politically motivated. For an analysis of most serious incidents, see the first section on political violence and Annex A.

²⁵ Pergub (Governor’s Regulation) 25/2007 stipulates that opening a prayer house requires the registration of 150 people with proper identification, the support of 120 representatives of neighboring communities, and the agreement of officials and relevant administrations from the village to district level. The regulation was criticized by Islamic organizations as opening the doors of Aceh to non-Muslim proselytism. It is actually more constraining than the national Presidential Regulation it derives from, which requires the registration of only 90 people and the support of 60 neighbors.

(PKS). A total of ten demonstrations and other forms of public protest (three against Pergub 25/2007, and seven protesting the Gaza offensive), were reported that month. This included rallies in front of businesses regarded as symbols of Israel and the US. None led to violence.

Of interest is the way that the Islamic Defenders Front (*Front Pembela Islam* - FPI), a nationwide radical organization with a long track-record of violent and thuggish behavior (see Box 3), took advantage of the protests to promote its agenda and mobilize support in a province where it had until then kept a low profile.

FPI supporters were not only present at the forefront of some of the public protests. On January 5th, as part of a nationwide call for volunteers, the Acehese branch of the organization announced the opening of registration for candidates willing to “wage Jihad” in Palestine. Of a couple of hundred initial candidates, half were selected to undergo a three-day paramilitary training in the hills of Sawang, Aceh Utara, in late January.²⁶ Seventy percent of this group were former GAM combatants. Tgk Yusuf Al Qasdhawi Al Asyi, alias Abu Jihad, the head of FPI Aceh, claimed that 80 made it successfully through the training, and that six of them, two snipers and four “suicide bombers”, would be sent to Gaza.²⁷

A number of facts surrounding this case are particularly worrying. First, local authorities did not seem concerned that a hardline Islamic group with a history of violence and fomenting inter-confessional tensions was carrying out military training in Sawang, one of the most unstable areas in post-conflict Aceh, and with the intention of sending suicide bombers to a foreign country.²⁸ Second, none of the 80 FPI recruits have been sent abroad so far, and Abu Jihad made clear in public statements that they might actually be detailed in “any area where Islam is under threat, including Aceh”. The Aceh Conflict Monitoring Program received information that members of Pasukan Peudeung (see September 2008 Update) were among the trainees. It is likely that FPI recruited mostly from such disgruntled ex-combatants. It should also be remembered that FPI has a history of defending a strong nationalist and anti-separatist agenda through thuggery and violence. In a context of heightened tensions ahead of the elections, FPI’s agenda in conducting paramilitary activity in the province needs to be examined. Such activities are destabilizing, hinder investment and development and therefore require the attention and intervention of provincial and local authorities and law enforcement agencies.

Box 3: Front Pembela Islam

FPI is a Jakarta-based hardline Islamic group that emerged soon after the fall of former strongman Suharto. It became famous for its vigilante raids against bars, gambling dens and discotheques. Its paramilitary branch was involved in a major incident on June 1st of last year, when it attacked a rally of the National Alliance for Freedom of Faith and Religion in Jakarta, injuring 70. Habib Rizieq and Munarman, two FPI leaders, were sentenced to 18 months in jail. Despite calls to ban the organization, authorities have by and large been reluctant to take actions against FPI, which has long been suspected of being sponsored by powerful army figures.

Attempts by FPI to establish a presence in Aceh were rather unsuccessful, largely because it was perceived as a Java-based organization with ties to the military. Besides its radical Islamic views, FPI also promotes a strong nationalist agenda. However, the organization took advantage of the tsunami to send volunteers to do humanitarian work in Aceh. They maintained a low profile until November 27th of last year, when FPI held a meeting in Jeunieb, Bireuen, where the formation of an Acehese branch of the organization was announced. FPI Aceh is mainly based in Aceh Utara.

²⁶ The training was supervised by Abu Alyas, a veteran of the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan who also fought with the Abu Sayyaf guerilla in Mindanao, Philippines, and is a member of Hamas.

²⁷ *Tabloid Modus Aceh*, 1st week of February, 2009.

²⁸ The Aceh Utara police and military visited the location of the training, following reports that an US citizen was present as an instructor. They left after verifying that this was not the case. The potential security threat presented by the training itself was never a concern.

Annex A: Attacks against political parties, September 08–February 09

22 grenade and arson attacks and one shooting targeting offices and vehicles of political parties have been reported since the beginning of the electoral period on July 12th.²⁹ Most attacks (19; 85%) targeted Partai Aceh or KPA,³⁰ although other parties (SIRA, PAAS, Golkar) were also hit. Incidents occurred mostly along the east coast (Bireuen, Aceh Utara, and Langsa), in the central highlands (Aceh Tengah, Bener Meriah, and Aceh Tenggara) and in Banda Aceh. As of the end of February, these attacks had resulted in material damage to 19 buildings, five cars, and one injury, but had led to no deaths. Perpetrators typically strike in the early morning, when offices are empty. However, two incidents on March 3rd and 11th in Lhokseumawe indicated an alarming change in *modus operandi*: grenades were thrown in the evening when people were gathered at target locations. The second grenade resulted in five injuries, including three KPA members.

Figure 2: Attacks against political parties (arson, grenade, weapons), per month, Sept 08 – Feb 09

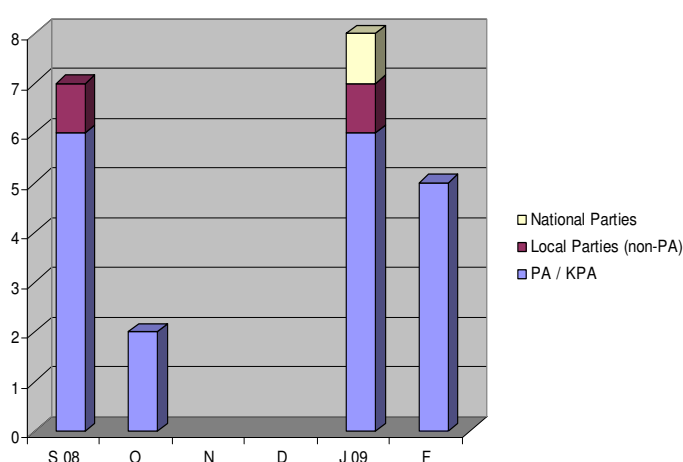
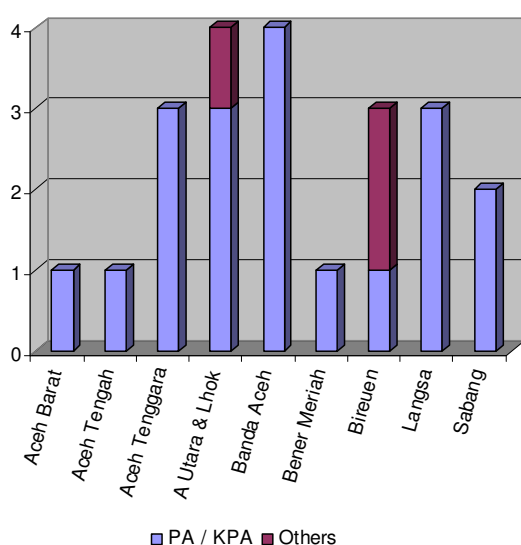


Figure 3 : Geographic distribution of attacks



Box 4: Chronology of attacks against political parties (arson, grenade, weapons), September 08 – February 09

- Sept 9th, Lamreung, outskirts of Banda Aceh. A grenade exploded in front of the house of Muzzakir Manaf, Head of KPA and Partai Aceh (PA).
- Sept 15th, Lhokseumawe. Arson of a PA office.
- Sept 16th, Langsa. Arson of a PA office.
- Sept 17th, Bireuen. A grenade was lobbed inside a PA office.
- Sept 19th, Aceh Utara. A grenade equipped with a time detonator was discovered in front of a PA office.
- Sept 20th, Aceh Tenggara. Arson of a PA office.
- Sept 21st, Bireuen. Arson of a Partai SIRA office.
- October 11th, Langsa. Arson of a PA office.
- October 23rd, Banda Aceh. Explosion of a grenade at the KPA provincial headquarters.
- January 5th, Aceh Tenggara. Arson of two PA *sagoe*-level district offices in Lawe Sumur and Badar.
- January 13th, Banda Aceh. A grenade exploded at the Partai Aceh provincial headquarters.
- January 16th, Banda Aceh. A grenade exploded under a car bearing PA colors in front of the UKM hotel in Peunayong (the car belonged to Ayah Banta, a PA cadre from Aceh Utara).
- January 21st, Bukit, Bener Meriah. Arson of a KPA operational car parked next to a KPA office.
- January 22nd, Bireuen. A grenade exploded at the Golkar district office.
- January 26th, Aceh Utara. Unknown attackers armed with a long barrel weapon shot rounds at the PA district office.
- January 26th, Lhokseumawe. Arson of a Safe and Prosperous Aceh Party (PAAS) office.
- February 1st, Sabang. An explosive device was discovered under the car of the Mayor of Sabang, a KPA official.
- February 4th, Langsa. Explosion of a grenade at the PA district office.
- February 20th, Aceh Tengah. Explosion of a grenade at a PA campaign post.
- February 25th, Sabang. Arson of the office of a KPA-managed cooperative.
- February 27th, Aceh Barat. Arson of a PA office.

²⁹ The data presented focuses on the most serious attacks against political parties (arson, grenade, shooting). It does not take into account lower-level vandalism and physical intimidation.

³⁰ Although KPA is not a political party, the organization is largely used as a campaign vehicle for PA.