

FINDING PEACE

IN A CONFLICTING WORLD

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THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS AND BUILDING WORLD PEACE

Sholihan

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UNITY-BASED MEDIATION: A PRELIMINARY READING

Ahwan Fanani

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Preface:

CELEBRATING PEACEFUL SPIRIT IN A PLURAL SOCIETY

Peaceful issues are endless topics to be discussed among scholars, activists, and other people around the world. Peace is not a new entity in a religious tradition. It is an inherent teaching in every religion, especially Islam. In other words, without a peaceful spirit, a religion loses its essential principle. The attachment to peaceful teaching in Islam can be seen from the meaning of Islam itself; that is derived from the Arabic word *as-salam* means peace and safety.

Interestingly, peace has been playing major roles as a doctrine and a treasure at the same time. Wars and conflicts cannot be denied in every religion history, however, peace as a treasure cannot be also neglected from the human being history because it is impossible a good society to run well without peaceful spirit among them.

However, it is undeniable fact that peace has begun to disappear from human civilization. The most common case is that human beings tend to promote hatred rather than peace. A group tends to suspect other groups as threats. There is a fact that a group of people do not want to live in the middle of plural society. Conflicts occur not only among heterogeneous groups but also homogeneous groups which may experience different views among their members. For heterogeneous groups experiencing conflicts, an effort to know each other is a starting effort to mediate the conflicts. In addition, homogeneous groups facing the conflicts need deep and serious efforts to mediate the conflicts. Appreciation and acknowledgement of other groups can be one of the initial efforts.

Regardless of the factors above, positively, conflicts can be seen as evidence that two groups or more involved in conflicts have a close relationship. Conflicts will not occur between two distant groups. Our tongues are often bitten by teeth because they are close. Conversely, our nose and feet are never bitten by teeth because other parts of body separate them.

In a quantitative calculation, actually, conflict cases are less compared to peace, however, people will not easily forget how they suffered a lot of pain during conflict and how big their material and non-material loss during conflict. For such reasons, a bad memory of conflict lasts for a long time. In our life, we need peace and it is not enough to say that peace occurs more times compared to conflict. The relationship between conflict and peace will be cyclical in human beings' life. Conflict and peace as a social reality exist in a human beings'

life both as an individual and as a part of society. According to Ritzer, conflict cannot be separated from consensus because conflict can contribute to peace; moreover conflict can trigger communication to create integration (Ritzer, 2005: 153).

It is a common belief that peace is a human basic need which gives them a safety and tranquility. In a peaceful condition people can improve their self without disturbance from others. Johan Galtung states that peace can be understood as initiatives and creative efforts of human beings to mediate any type of violence, direct or indirect, and both cultural and personal in a society (Galtung, 1969: 5). Therefore, we finally agree with what Immanuel Kant describes about peace. He refers peace as a cyclical process or 'perpetual peace'. A desire for peace exists in every individual. In this case, a relationship among human beings will create a new awareness of the importance of universal friendship and solidarity.

It is clear that peace is the need of human beings in a society; even though not all human beings deserve the peace. To obtain the peace, continuous and serious efforts are needed; moreover, if the conflicts have just happened. We need to learn from the history in that there will be unstoppable violence if a group avenges other group with violence. Indeed, solutions to conflicts need to be sought to give all people not only to live their life in a harmony but also live their life in the best condition with the pride.

The papers on this book are part of efforts to improve awareness in regard to relational works among human beings in order to create cooperation among human being in this heterogeneous society. Many issues related to peace and conflict studies discussed in this book are the evidence of writers' attention to the actual problems happening in the society. Using a peace perspective, these papers present unique and harmony point of views to solve conflicts in this plural world.

Specifically, these papers are term-papers or final project of Walisongo Mediation Center (WMC) IAIN Walisongo Semarang members who participated in a Peace & Conflict Studies Program at European Peace University (EPU) Austria. The papers have been fully supervised by Professors at the university. In addition, the papers received satisfied grades from the Professors. At the university founded by Johan Galtung, a peace education activist and professor, the writers experienced peace atmosphere in the university which comprises of students with the different nations, ethnicity, languages, and religions. In a day-to-day activity in a little town, Stadtschlaining, the writers along with other students received valuable lessons about intercultural life in addition to enormous peace studies theories discussed in the classroom.

The writers of the papers in this book studied peace studies at one of the finest universities in the world. European Peace University (EPU) has been awarded UNESCO Prize for Peace Education in 1996. EPU is the only private university in Europe that offers Peace & Conflict Studies, European Peace & Security Studies and Peace Building. With the central activities in the main building, Haus International, a building with modern facilities supported by Kastil Burg Schlaining from 13 century, peace activists from 44 countries experienced equal, moderate, creative atmospheres as a lesson learned to initiate peaceful activities in their own countries in order to create a peaceful world.

Hopefully this book can contribute to our society in an effort to reduce and solve conflicts and tensions to create peaceful situation in our society. Finally, I would like to recognize and thank to the writers, Professors at European Peace University (EPU), and other individuals involved in the publication of this book.

Semarang, May 2015

The Director

Dr. H. Imam Taufiq, M.Ag

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MAINTAINING PEACE IN ACEH POST HELSINKI AGREEMENT

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A. Introduction

One of the conflict regions that attracted a lot of attention from international community is Aceh of Indonesia. This is so because conflict in Aceh has lasted for almost three decades and took a large number of victims. Casualties resulted from this conflict constituted not only people or personnel from directly-conflicting parties, namely the separatist Free Aceh Movement (Indonesian, *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, abbreviated as GAM) and the Indonesian military force (Indonesian, *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* or TNI) –which was used by the Government of Indonesia (GoI) to defeat any rebellion movement–, but also civilians. Women and children are two groups that suffered a lot because of the war in Aceh. During the war many civilians were killed, many houses got burnt, many gardens and rice fields were destroyed, and many public facilities were in damage. The war between GAM and TNI of GoI has created serious damage and gave bad impact not only on the two conflicting parties but also on the society in general. Many times have both parties come to an agreement to have a ceasefire, but many times they also broke it. The agreed ceasefire did not last for long and the two parties then came to fight against each other. This ritual was repeated many times until they finally came to a rational choice to end the conflict forever by signing a peace agreement in Helsinki on 15 August 2005.

In this paper I will study some aspects related to the history of conflict in Aceh, how it emerged, what the causes were, and who the main actors were. Then, I try to analyze on how the conflict finally can be transformed into peace. After that, it is useful to think about how the peace in Aceh should be maintained. The significance of this study is to enlarge our insight and to make better understanding concerning conflict transformation and maintaining peace in Aceh. Perhaps someone might take it as a model for a conflict

transformation in other conflicting areas, particularly in Indonesia or in other parts of the world in general.

There have been numerous studies on Aceh carried out by previous scholars. Giving analyses from different perspective those studies is indeed very informative for anyone interested in Aceh. For instance, to mention just some, a study carried out by Sherlock (2003) on "Conflict in Aceh: A Military Solution?", although quite out of date, because it was done before the signing of Helsinki agreement, is at least still useful to give us a background of the history of the conflict in Aceh. Moreover, it also analyses the actions and motivations of the key players in finding out some solutions to the conflict in Aceh. Besides, of course, Sherlock wants to see its impact on Australia's interest in stability in Indonesia. There is another good study on Aceh done by Sinitckina (2005), "Tsunami and Aceh Conflict Resolution" which provides us with other insights. This case study presents analysis of the effects of natural disaster on reconciliation of the conflict between the rebels of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and Indonesian government (GoI) that has been going on since 1976.

Other investigation on Aceh was done by Barron, Clark & Daud (2005) entitled "Conflict and Recovery in Aceh: An Assessment of Conflict Dynamics and Options for Supporting the Peace Process". In this study Barron, Clark and Daud evaluate the conflict dynamics on the ground of Aceh today, especially how the conflict is experienced by Acehnese villagers in the rural areas. This study combines a consideration of the broad dynamics of the conflict with an exploration of the views of different local actors.

An excellent study has also been done by Clark and Palmer (2008). In their work, "Peaceful *Pilkada*, Dubious Democracy: Aceh's Post-Conflict Elections and their Implications", they analyze Aceh's post-conflict direct local executive election (Indonesian, *pemilihan kepala daerah /pilkada*). The *pilkada* for the Governor and 19 heads of regency and city were held in December 2006 and early 2007, which is 16 months after the signing of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which stopped the conflict in Aceh. This study wants to examine to what degree Aceh's *pilkada* can fulfill its two-fold roles: managing political competition amongst Aceh's local elites, and providing the basis for good governance and effective development policy in Aceh.

Edward Aspinall (2008) has also carried out a good study, "Peace without Justice? The Helsinki Peace Process in Aceh". In this study Aspinall discusses many important issues, such as the centrality of human rights and justice in Aceh, justice issues in negotiations, compensation without justice and also debates about the missing justice mechanisms. Despite a large number of

studies, new study on Aceh is still needed and useful to give new insight and up-to-date analysis. My study is intended to contribute to the provision of literature on Aceh, which is useful for anybody who wants to study peace and conflict resolution. It is this driving force which made me confident to choose this topic for my term paper. This paper will study the conflict in Aceh from different angle and perspective from the studies done by previous researchers. This study is combining theories of conflict and peace in its analysis with the up-to-date findings gathered from the field in my recently field research in Bireuen, Aceh (August 2009). Thus, it is hoped that this study can provide up-to-date analysis and the latest development of the situation in Aceh post-Helsinki agreement. This will make it different between my study and the previous ones. However, data provided by previous researchers mentioned above and other related literature are very useful and will be utilized too for this study.

This study will be qualitative and descriptive undertaking. The data provided by previous researches in the form of book, articles in journal or from internet will be utilized. In addition to the data gained from these literatures, I will also employ data gathered from the field during my research course. In order to give better understanding on the aspects being studied, this paper has to limit its discussion only to several points formulated in some questions whose answers are hopefully found in the discussion of this paper. The questions are: (1) what is the geographical condition of Aceh? (2) What is the origin and history of the conflict in Aceh? (3) How is conflict transformation happened in Aceh? (4) How gender played its role in peace process in Aceh? (5) How to maintain peace in Aceh post Helsinki agreement?

B. Conflict Transformation un Aceh and How to Maintain Peace Post Helsinki Agreement

1. Aceh: Geography And Social Setting

Aceh is a province of Indonesia located on the northern tip of the island of Sumatra with 57,356.57 km² (22,149 sq mil) area. Based on the ethnicity, population of Aceh is consisted of 50% Acehnese and 16% Javanese and other ethnic groups constituting small percentage live in Aceh. In terms of religion, Islam is followed by 98.6% of the population, while Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism each is followed by less than 1% of the population. Aceh is rich of natural resources including oil and gas (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aceh>, accessed on 26 Oct. 2009).

Aceh province is given status as special territory (*daerah istimewa*) as appreciation of its culture and religion. After the signing of Helsinki MoU, Aceh

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is given broader autonomy by the central government in Jakarta. Today, law no. 11 of the republic of Indonesia on Aceh provincial government is being implemented in Aceh, which allows Aceh people to govern Aceh based on their culture. Since Aceh people are very religious, Shari'ah (Islamic law) is implemented as a guide for Aceh people to conduct in daily life in Aceh (see Law no.11 on Aceh government).



Aceh province (green colored) is located in the northern part of Sumatra Island. Picture taken from Wikipedia.org



The logo of Aceh province.
Picture taken from Wikipedia.org

The province of Aceh is administratively sub-divided into 5 cities (*kota*) and 18 regencies (*kabupaten*). The cities are (1) Banda Aceh, (2) Langsa, (3) Lhokseumawe, (4) Sabang, and (5) Subulussalam. The regencies are (1) Aceh Besar Regency with Jantho as its capital, (2) West Aceh Regency with Meulaboh as the capital, (3) Southwest Aceh Regency with the capital Bangpidie, (4) Aceh Jaya Regency with the capital Calang, (5) South Aceh Regency with the capital Tapaktuan, (6) Aceh Singkil Regency with the capital Singkil, (7) Aceh Tamiang Regency with the capital Karang Baru, (8) Central Aceh Regency with the capital Takengon, (9) Southeast Aceh Regency with the capital Kutacane, (10) East Aceh Regency with the capital Langsa, (11) North Aceh Regency with the

capital Lhokseumawe, (12) Bener Meriah Regency with the capital Simpang Tiga Redelong, (13) Bireuen Regency with the capital Bireuen, (14) Gayo Lues Regency with the capital Blangkejeren, (15) Nagan Raya Regency with the capital Suka Makmue, (16) Pidie Regency with the capital Sigli, (17) Pidie Jaya Regency with the capital Meureudu, (18) Simeulue Regency with the capital Sinabang. The largest city and the capital of Aceh province is Banda Aceh which is located on the coast near northern tip of Sumatra (<http://acehprov.go.id/10;23-KabupatenKota>, accessed on 29 Oct. 2009)

When Indian Ocean earthquake triggered a tsunami on 26 December 2004 Aceh was seriously affected and damaged by that natural disaster. Almost all casualties and damage took place in the province of Aceh. The number of casualties according to the country's National Disaster Relief Coordination Agency was 126,915 people dead and 37,063 were missing. The UN estimated that 655,000 people were homeless and living in refugee camps across the province. Ministry of health updated death total to 220,000. In 2009, the death toll was estimated at 225,000 died in the tsunami. In the province of Aceh, the most affected areas were Banda Aceh, Leupung a place in the Aceh Besar regency, Gleebruk a village in Aceh Besar regency, Teunom a town in West Aceh regency, Calang and Meulaboh (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Effect_of_the_2004_Indian_Ocean_earthquake_on_Indonesia, accessed on 29 Oct. 2009). Some districts in the province of Aceh had been badly damaged by the natural disaster, tsunami. However, many believe that tsunami had also brought some blessings. It had interfered and helped the conflicting parties to end the nearly 30 year conflict in Aceh.

2. Origins and Causes of the Conflict

The conflict between the separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Government of Indonesia (GoI) has lasted for almost three decades. The cause roots of the war can be traced back to the disappointment of Acehnese people toward GoI in Jakarta, in which President Soeharto when doing industrialization in Aceh in 1970s, exploited natural resources of Aceh without giving balanced profit to Acehnese people and left them poor. In addition to draining to finish natural resources of Aceh without giving proper revenue to Aceh people, President Soeharto was also considered abusing the dignity as well as tradition and religion of Acehnese people. Because of the industrialization in Aceh, immorality became common phenomenon, such as gambling, prostitution, alcoholic drinks, etc., which contradicted to Islam and tradition of Acehnese people. Disappointed with this situation a number of Aceh figures thought that such kind of treatment by the GoI in Jakarta could not be accepted

(<http://www.acehforum.or.id/sejarah-asal-mula-t10943.html>? accessed on 26 Oct. 2009).

It can be assumed that, from this historical point of view, Acehese rebellion to GoI was triggered by, among others, unequal sharing of revenues, generated from natural resources in Aceh. It must be noted that, even though natural resources (such as mineral, diamonds, oil, natural gas, forest and water) can be most important sources of national income, they can also be a major cause of conflict and instability, if not managed properly and shared unequally. Thus, it is important for the state to govern natural resources properly and justly, especially in the context of divided society. Failure in managing and controlling the benefit from local resources can trigger identity-based or ethnic conflicts (Haysom, 2009). It is very often that intra-state separatist conflicts are caused by inequalities in resource distribution and political authority between the center (central government) and periphery (provincial government). In the case of Aceh it is clear that demands from local elites for greater control of the natural resources (natural gas fields which was discovered in 1970s) have generated to the conflict which lasted almost 30 years and caused 15,000 dead (Barron, 2006). It was in this context that GAM was established and then rebelled against GoI with the purpose of establishing an independent Aceh state governed by Acehese to make people of Aceh more prosperous. Natural resources and human rights abuses are the main themes of the conflict between GAM and GoI. Seemingly, both economic and political incentives exacerbate the intensity of the conflict.

Some sources said that GAM was established on 24 May 1977 in Pidie by a number of Acehese figures, who were disappointed with the GoI for its policies which were humiliating to Acehese people. This meeting, on May 1977, decided to entrust Daud Beureueh as the supreme leader of GAM and Hasan Tiro, who was absent from the meeting because he was studying in the USA at that time, as the guardian of the state (<http://www.acehforum.or.id/sejarah-asal-mula-t10943.html>? accessed on 26 Oct. 2009). Hasan Tiro or Dr. Tengku Hasan DiTiro is a descendant of the last *sultan* (king) of Aceh and grandson of Tengku Cik Di Tiro, a famous hero of Aceh war for independence with Dutch colonial government (Sinitchkina 2005; Schulze, 2004). However, some said that GAM was established by Hasan Di Tiro even one year earlier, namely in 1976. GAM unilaterally declared independence for the territory on 4 December 1976 (Kingsbury, 2006). Its former name was the Aceh Sumatra National Liberation Front (ASNLF) which later popular as the *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM), with the ultimate goal to challenge the illegal incorporation of Aceh into the Republic of Indonesia in 1949. In addition, it also has a purpose of preserving the political, social, cultural and religious heritage of the Acehese people from Javanese neo-

colonialist both in the government and settled in the province of Aceh (Shie, 2005; Schulze, 2004). By looking at his genealogy, it is not surprising, then, that Hasan Tiro became a charismatic founder and leader of GAM.

It is interesting to note that GAM's membership increased significantly during the 30 year war. The number increased from 150 in its inception to between 15,000 and 27,000 regular and irregular combatants. However, they still lacked of weapons and shared the weapon in the battles (Sinitchkina 2005). GAM also has many divisions or units in its organization. Under the leadership of Muzakkir Manaf, GAM personnel consisted of combat troop, police officer, intelligent, female troop (*inong balee*), special troop (*karades*), Tjut Nyak Dien army (female unit). GAM Commander Deputy of Pase area Akhmad Kandang has once exaggeratedly claimed that GAM has 70,000 combatants, and 490,000 members including 6,169 victims of military operation zone (Indonesian, *Daerah Operasi Militer /DOM*). However, official source in Indonesian military head-quarters said that GAM has only 6,000 personnel (<http://www.Acehforum.or.id/sejarah-asal-mula-t10943.html>? accessed on 26 Oct. 2009).

In the mind of GAM's elites, the separation of Aceh province from the Republic of Indonesia would be the best choice. In fact, the creation of Aceh state has been voiced by Hasan Tiro for long time. However, GoI in Jakarta did not want to lose one of its provinces from the territory of Republic of Indonesia, as it can be bad model for other provinces to do the same thing, asking for secession. For that reason, GoI insisted to fight any separatist movement in Indonesia, including GAM. On the other hand, GAM would think that exploitation of natural resources of Aceh without giving proper revenues and insulting religion and culture of Acehnese people by GoI was unacceptable.

The situation was worsened by President Soeharto who, in 1989, gave the status of "Military Operation Zone" (DOM) to Aceh province and sent military forces there. Since then, armed conflict between GAM and GoI was unavoidable. GAM came into existence to liberate Aceh from Indonesia. The status of DOM for Aceh province was lifted at the beginning of the "reformation era" in 1998 when Soeharto left his presidency. The outbreak of GAM uprising in 1998 can be considered as the result of a complex set of root causes that had accumulated in Aceh province since the mid-1970s. Because these root causes were not properly addressed for years they became key sources of disappointment and distrust among Acehnese people. Generally speaking, the sources of the problem can be categorized into four basic facets: (1) economic exploitation, (2) centralism and uniformity, (3) military repression, and (4) the

politic of impunity (Sukma, 2004: 3). In terms of form, in my view, the conflict in Aceh can be categorized as asymmetric conflict between state military forces against combatants of rebels.

Consequences and impacts of the conflict to people is real misery. The conflict between GAM and GoI has caused many damages in both sides. TNI had lost many of its best soldiers who died in battlefields. GAM also lost many combatants. Apart from those two parties, many civilians in the region had been suffering a lot because of this conflict. Many civilians in Aceh were killed, because they were accused of being spy and helping GAM during the battles. People in the region where armed conflict happen also lost property; their houses were burnt and their gardens were damaged etc. The conflict has also created psychological misery for Acehnese.

It was not until 2005 that the war between the two parties ended. Conflict has then been transformed into peace with the signing of Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). In short, conflict transformation in Aceh can be depicted in four stages: (1) 1976–2000: Protracted Social Conflict, (2) 2000-2004: Pre-peace Negotiation, (3) January 2005–15 August 2005: Peace making and Peace Agreement Processes (Helsinki Peace Talks), (4) 16 August 2005–Present: Peace-keeping and Peace-building of Post-Conflict Reconstruction.

3. Transforming Conflict into Peace

a. Approaching the Conflict

In my view, conflict in Aceh is not merely caused by sentiment of ethnicity (Acehnese versus non-Acehnese, i.e. Javanese), but more than that it is a conflict that touched the very basic need of human being. Realist approach, therefore, may not be adequate to tackle such kind of conflict, since it does not adequately deal with the root causes and conditions that lead to the rise of the conflict. In the case of conflict in Aceh, the use of military power by GoI proved to be contra productive. To handle the conflict in Aceh, one might have to consider of relating it with human need theories, which state that conflict is driven by a group's need for maintaining collective identity, recognition, security, political participation, distributive justices, etc. Edward Azar and John Burton (1986) argue that intrastate and identity-type conflicts cannot be resolved by suppressing them through military and other forms of coercive state power. Instead, the conflict might be easy to tackle if the need of all individuals is met and justice is provided.

b. Conflict Transformation in Aceh

The word “transformation” can be described as “*descriptively* rich in regard to conflict dynamics and *prescriptively* embedded in a framework that underscores a more holistic view of conflict”. Descriptively, “transformation” implies that conflict can influence and change things in potentially negative or positive orders. Conflict transforms relationship, communication, perceptions, issues, and social organization. While, prescriptively, “transformation is concerned with broader social structures, change and moving toward a social space open for cooperation, for more just relationship and for nonviolent mechanisms for handling conflict” (Lederach, 1995: 201). It must be noted that “*basically conflict transformation is a never-ending process.*” Because of this character one may not surprise that old or new contradiction will open up (Galtung, 1996: 90).

Conflict transformation is a relatively new concept in the field of conflict resolution and peace studies. It can be thought of as “a redefinition of the dispute situation by the actors themselves, one that may lead to opening a space for cooperation and peace.” It must be added that the concept “is grounded in the processes and cultural contexts in which the conflict evolves and is potentially transformed” (Spencer, 1995: 162). It must be noted that as a continuous process conflict transformation can be enhanced by third parties having the capacity to create conditions to develop political will. The transformation process itself may involve many aspects such as “cultural, political, economic, psychological, regional, and international elements” which can be combined and focused for the purpose of empowering the conflicting parties to restructure their disparities (Spencer, 1995: 162).

To get a better understanding on conflict in Aceh, it is instructive to analyze it through many facets of dimension such as reciprocal, institutional as well as ritual. In terms of reciprocal dimension, on political level, it is widely known that GAM always demands the separation from Indonesia and insists to establish an independent state of Aceh. The common reasons for creating an independent state could be self-determination, so that Acehnese people can control and manage natural resources for the benefit of Acehnese people. However, public officials of the GoI always reject the demand of GAM to separate from the republic of Indonesia. In this kind of conflict (ethnic conflict), according to Gurr, public officials have interests to protect the state’s integrity and authority as well as to secure the support and revenues needed to keep their positions and to pursue their political objectives. Gurr says that “it cannot be assumed that officials in multi-party democracies will respond ‘democratically’ by attempting to accommodate minority demand”. If the

demands are deemed as highly threatening to existing state because they challenge the nationalist ideologies held by most dominant group and imply the break up of the state they are usually resisted by force (Gurr, 1995: 5). In responding to the demand of secession by minority groups, most state officials would choose to give regional autonomy because "it is less threatening" (Gurr, 1995: 10). This can explain to what happened in Aceh.

The reciprocity in battlefields is shown when GAM, which is the main actors in Aceh conflict, responded to the presence of TNI in Aceh province by fighting back the TNI when doing operation in Aceh. In every battle both parties had casualties although they are different in number. In many cases, in a suddenly strike or ambush GAM could kill a bigger number of TNI personnel than vice versa (<http://www.dephan.go.id/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4013>, accessed on 26 October 2009).

In terms of institutional dimension, the conflict in Aceh is a conflict between two institutions which are asymmetric: the GoI, which is formal and legitimate state with its military forces (TNI) against rebel organization (GAM). Both TNI and GAM are well-organized institutions. As a state institution TNI has regular troops and fighting units which are ready to serve the country, including fighting against separatist in Aceh. On the other hand, GAM also has strong, skillful and trained combatants.

In terms of ritual dimension, both GAM and TNI, driven by different point of view and belief, were convinced that their decision to fight against each other was the right choice. Example of this ritual aspect is that after fighting against each other they negotiated to have a ceasefire. After some time they broke their ceasefire and fought each other, then came to a ceasefire again. It was not until 2005 that both parties would finally come to rational choice, reaching agreement to end the conflict.

Seemingly, to end the conflict both parties needed to involve a third party as the mediator between them. In fact, negotiations have been made many times between the two conflicting parties but the dreamed peace was not materialized because both sides were not able to keep their agreements.

Given this fact, a qualified third party which has capacity to develop the situation is needed. The third party concerned must be careful in determining solutions offered to the conflicting parties. It is very often that a third party is not able to create solution that will be acceptable as solutions coming from the disputants. Those who "own" the conflict will know the best approaches to ending it. Moreover, there will be less resistance to solutions that come from the parties than from those seen as being imposed on them. What is needed in such

situation is asking participation of both parties to design their own solutions and empower them to solve their own problems. As a consequence, “the third party must be careful to give both sides credit, when progress is made during the negotiations, so that one side or another is not seen as taking all the credit, when, in fact, the continued progress depends on both” (Spencer, 1995:172).

It must be noted that sometimes the third party also has shortcomings. In many cases of operation of peace-building around the world, there are two common complaints. First, there is a lack of coordination and too much duplication amongst the agents of intervention (the third party). Second, the peace-building process is mainly owned by the third party who considers itself as a custodian of the new peace, rather than by its recipients. One of the problems causing this situation is that the complexity of process entailed by peace-building approach requires many resources and specialized knowledge. However, they are not found in local populations (Richmond, 2005:111).

In the context of conflict in Aceh, after fighting each other for almost three decades and so many failed ceasefires, finally GAM and GoI came to an agreement to end the conflict. The ending of conflict was materialized by signing peace agreement in Helsinki, which was called Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The role of Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and vice-president Jusuf Kalla was significant. At the same time, the GAM leadership was undergoing changes, and the Indonesian military had arguably inflicted so much damage on the rebel movement that GAM had no choice but to negotiate with GoI. The peace talks were facilitated by a third party, namely, a Finland-based NGO called the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) led by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari. The resulting peace was signed on 15 August 2005. Under this agreement Aceh would receive special autonomy and GoI's troops would be withdrawn from the province in exchange for GAM's disarmament. As part of the agreement, the European Union dispatched 300 monitors. The mission expired on 15 December 2006, following the local elections (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aceh#_The_peace_agreement_and_first_local_elections, accessed on 17 Nov. 2009).

This MoU was signed by Hamid Awaluddin as representative of GoI and Malik Mahmud as the representative of GAM, and Martti Ahtisaari as the facilitator of negotiation process (see the document of Helsinki MoU). It must be emphasized here that the natural disaster, called tsunami in 2004, has given a great contribution in some ways for GAM and GoI to reach a peace agreement. It is a “critical turning point in many chronologies of the negotiations that resulted in the 15 August 2005 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which

resolved contested issues and laid the basis for a peace settlement' (Drexler, 2008: 204). Seemingly, tsunami has made both GAM and GoI aware that there is no point to continue fighting amongst the ruin of Aceh.

4. Role of Gender in Conflict Transformation

a. The Role of Aceh Women during the War

It can be said that during the war period, Aceh women showed two different ways in participating finding solutions to the conflict, namely (1) using violence way and (2) by means of peace. *The First type* is those who used violence method. It is hard to say that Aceh women were not involved in the war, either their joining to the war is voluntarily or coerced by GAM to assist their husbands and brothers. Their involvement could be directly or indirectly. In direct way, some Aceh women have become GAM combatants fighting in the front line in many battles. In indirect way, some women have been acting as spies, logistic suppliers (food as well as guns). They could also give medical aids to the male combatants. By involving women in the war, GAM has gained advantages because although some women were suspected and interrogated by the military of GoI, some others could still escape from being target and could do their job well. During the conflict period, women have been functioning as back bone of the family, too. When men were scaring of going out because there was some risks to be suspected either by GAM or Indonesian military (TNI), women step forward to look for basic needs.

The second type is those who prefer to utilize peaceful manner. A number of Aceh women were engaged actively in promoting conflict resolution through peaceful way. Such kind of effort has been taken even before the Hendry Dunant Center (HDC) facilitated "humanitarian pause for Aceh". This was proved by the holding of Congress of Aceh women (*Duek Pakat Inong Aceh/DPIA*) in 20-22 February 2000, which gave 22 recommendations including to resolve the conflict in peaceful means and without violence. Despite being intimidated to choose either "militarily way" or "referendum", 500 Aceh women attending the conference made up their mind to propose "peace" solution to resolve the conflict (<http://kippas.wordpress.com/2007/07/27/pengalaman-dan-refleksi-reintegrasi-di-nanggroe-aceh-darussalam/>, accessed on 1 Nov. 2009).

b. The Fate of Aceh Women after the War

Generally speaking, armed conflict in Aceh has made women and children as the most misery and molested groups. Likewise, when the status of Aceh as

DOM is abolished and entered new era of peace with the signing of Helsinki agreement the fate of women in Aceh is still not better than before (<http://www.direktori-perdamaian.org/ina/resource.php?id=36>, accessed on 1 Nov. 2009).

In politics, Aceh women have very limited access to power. A report said that from 258 regent or mayor and vice-regent or vice-mayor candidates only 5 women were qualified for candidacy in the very recently election in Aceh, namely 2 candidates of vice-mayor of Banda Aceh, 2 candidates of vice-regents of Aceh Barat and 1 candidate of regent of Aceh Tanjung. While 2 female candidates, one for governor and one for vice-governor of Aceh both were eliminated (http://www.unisosdem.org/article_detail.php?aid=7024&coid=3&caid=31&gid=3, accessed on 2 Nov. 2009). It is the fact that today Aceh women are eliminated from political arena. The competitors in the election, who are male, mobilized people for not voting for women, and they also used religious authority to issue statement that women cannot be given responsibility to be a leader in society. Female candidate is not legitimized by religious authority which Aceh people listen much. The treatment seemed to be unfair because during the war women were demanded to participate in the war. On the contrary, after the war, women were given no access to participate in power.

This is contradictory to achievements of Aceh women in the past. Looking back to the history of Aceh, one will note that women's involving in political arena is not taboo. To mention some figures, there is Ratu Safiatuddinsyah, a queen who had led Aceh for years and making progress in the field of education, religion as well as Aceh tradition. Another one is Laksamana Malahayati, a female figure who led fighting ship against the colonial Portugal. Cut Nyak Dien, the commander in war against colonial Dutch and Indonesian national heroin, is just another female figure from Aceh who had actively involved in public affairs.

In education, Aceh women need more access and opportunity. In terms of education, GAM's ex-combatants have the background of elementary, junior high and senior high schools. Formal education is not the option of male ex-combatants. After reintegrating to the society many female ex-combatants want to continue their education to the higher level (<http://www.docstoc.com/docs/5535504/Kajian-Mengenai-Kebutuhan-Reintegrasi>, accessed on 27 Nov. 2009). In this reintegration era all people of Aceh must have better access and opportunity to education. In certain societies (mostly in villages) people are still doing discrimination by giving higher level of education to their sons then to their daughters (Gender Working Group, 2007). This way of thinking must be changed. Society must be taught that girls must be given the same

opportunity to education as boys. The more the number of educated women in society, the better quality of society will be, since women will give great contribution in coloring the future of Aceh. The government bears responsibility for providing education for them.

In economy, Aceh women need more access for economic activities and sources to support their family. A report said that 6 months after MoU of Helsinki was signed 75% of GAM ex-combatants are jobless. A number of widows of GAM fighters and female ex-combatants, as well as people who become victims of the war, are now still struggling for survival after the war and tsunami that damaged their property (<http://www.docstoc.com/docs/5535504/Kajian-Mengenai-Kebutuhan-Reintegrasi>, accessed on 27 Nov. 2009). Since many husbands have been killed in the conflict, women must replace their roles as the chief of family. In the post-conflict and tsunami, women must be independent and work to support their families. However, only 36% of women labor can work in the city, and 45% in the villages (Gender Working group, 2007; see also *Aceh Kita Newspaper*, 14 Januari 2007). I think the government must give facility, such as making new rice fields for the farmers, give more credit and financial aid for those who want to start business.

In the society, Aceh women, especially ex-combatants of GAM, are facing difficulties to reintegrate into society in this peace era. It must be noted that people in Aceh society still view that lifting weapons is a masculine's job. Thus, the society can be irritated by the return of this group of female ex-combatants and deem them only know about guns (<http://www.docstoc.com/docs/5535504/Kajian-Mengenai-Kebutuhan-Reintegrasi>, accessed on 27 Nov. 2009). In my view, Gol and the government of Aceh (which is now dominated by ex-GAM elites) must find out models for reintegration for female ex-combatants (*Inong Balee*) to be accepted in the society and family. Then, for women of Aceh in general, they must be given more opportunities to actively participate in public meeting at village, district, regency, and provincial level, especially when planning and deciding public affairs. Women must be involved in order that their interest accommodated.

c. Aceh Women's Participation in Keeping Peace

Quantitatively, the position of Aceh women is quite significant, because from the total number of population in Aceh (per July 2009) which constitute 4.695.566 people, 2.330.689 are women (<http://www.acehprov.go.id/images/stories/file/Penduduk/Ktp%20realisasi%20juli%202009.pdf>, accessed on 27 Nov. 2009). Thus, almost 50% of Aceh population is women. Therefore, to

maintain peace in Aceh now and in the future women must be involved. Bigger participation from women is needed to build and to make Aceh more secure and safe. It is hoped that women be able to carry peace message through their family and society. To improve their capacity to sustain peace, it is useful that women understand concepts of peace-building and peace-keeping. Some trainings and education on peace, therefore, must be given to women so they can function well and contribute more for the betterment of society (<http://kippas.wordpress.com/2007/07/27/pengalaman-dan-refleksi-reintegrasi-dinanggroroe-acehdarussalam/>, accessed on 30 Oct. 2009). After the war is over and now people in Aceh have peace, there is a hope from women that peace only is not enough to answer demands of society; they also need justice. Real justice on practical level is impossible to be materialized unless there is no more gender discrimination in society (http://www.acehinstitute.org/opini_allina_mana_suaraperempuan_aceh.htm, accessed on 29 Oct. 2009).

What is the way to reach that hope? As the holder of the same big votes as men's in society, women must be unified and make their up mind to choose only leaders, e.g. governor and regents as well as local leaders, who have vision and commitment to maintain peace, to improve women fate, and to open more space for women to actively participate in the process of democracy, as well as having real program for political education for women. Aceh women had done a lot during the war. They were also involved actively in solving the conflict through peaceful means. Unfortunately, after the war is over and Aceh gains peace and reintegrated in the Republic of Indonesia, women have very limited access to power, economy, education and social culture. Women access is neglected because their roles is considered little and also because discriminative gender-based way of view in formulating and implementing reintegration policy taken by both GoI and GAM.

d. Efforts to Maintain Peace in Aceh

Today, conflict in Aceh between GAM and GoI has ended. The next crucial question is how to maintain this peaceful situation in Aceh. Despite the end of the conflict, it cannot be said that the situation is totally secured. There are a lot of works that need to be carried out to stabilize Aceh after being trapped in war for many years. Law no. 11 on Aceh government is now being implemented. It guides how Aceh should be governed. Acehnese people welcomed this autonomy with great enthusiasm. The signing of Helsinki agreement by GAM and GoI meant that the conflict between the two parties had ended. The consequence of it is that, GAM should be abolished, and, in return, Aceh receives genuine autonomy.

One important point to be raised here is how to build peace in Aceh after Helsinki agreement. Building peace here does not mean only preventing conflict from happening between Acehnese and other ethnicities, but also among Acehnese itself. Being disappointed with the implementation of Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), a TNI commander of Bireuen regency predicted that some conflicts would happen in his area of authority. He said that as a chief commander of Indonesian military forces (TNI) in Bireuen regency he would accept the Helsinki MoU, but he could not predict that there would be no violence in the future. He viewed that TNI has cheated in the implementation of Helsinki MoU. "The Body of Aceh Reconciliation (BRA) was dominated by former pro-independent activists. In doing their job, they took side to former GAM combatants and neglecting TNI personnel, whereas many TNI members have died and left family" (my personal interview with chief commander of TNI of Bireuen regency during my field research in Bireuen, Aceh on 5 August 2009). Within the circle of former GAM combatants itself, there are some frictions. A member of parliament of Bireuen regency told me, that a day before the general election in July 2009 the headquarters of Aceh Party (PA), which is the only local political party legalized by the law in Indonesia, was attacked by a group of people using military armaments. The perpetrators were identified as the former GAM combatants who are disappointed and frustrated for not having position in government either in executive or in legislative body like their friends do (my interview with a member of parliament of Bireuen on 4 August 2009).

In fact, after the signing of Helsinki MoU, the security in Aceh is still vulnerable. This can be seen from the report made by the Conflict and Development Program within the World Bank Office Indonesia, who had made newspaper-conflict-mapping methodology to record all incidents of conflict in Aceh. Although no violent incidents between GAM and GoI occurred, pre-MoU tensions continue to result in post-MoU conflict incidents. For example, in 2006, after the *pilkada* event, tensions occurred over the using of GAM symbols. Governor Irwandi Yusuf (a former GAM activist who won the *pilkada*) stated that wearing GAM pin as souvenirs were not prohibited, arguing that it was military emblems that were forbidden under MoU of Helsinki. Likewise, flying GAM flag was also not prohibited. However, the TNI chief in Aceh responded that, although the MoU did not specifically forbid the use of GAM pins and flying the flag, GAM should avoid doing them to respect the spirit of MoU in order not to disturb the peace. In addition, there are still a number of pre-MoU splits which are believed to manifest in violent incidents and tensions, particularly tensions between the community and the security forces, as shown in, for

instance, demonstrations demanding investigation into past human rights abuse and so on. In general, during the period of 2005 (when Helsinki MoU was signed) until 2008 a number of violent tensions occurred, some of which even took lives of many people (See *Laporan Pemantauan Konflik di Aceh* [Aceh Conflict Monitoring Update] from 2005 until 2008). These are examples of some potential conflict causes which might be erupting in the future, if not tackled properly and justly.

To resolve protracted armed conflicts, like the one that happened in Aceh, most observers of the conflict share the belief that peace efforts can appear, if outsiders are involved, especially in terms of mediators and peace-makers. However, it must be noted that outside help is neither exclusive nor sustaining. After a peace can be achieved with the help of outsiders, then how the peace can be sustained is a crucial issue to be tackled.

In the context of Aceh, sustaining the peaceful situation can be done by building peace. For this purpose, resources from outside are really needed both in terms of human resources and in terms of models for conflict transformation. For the long-term comprehensive view, however, the transformation must be rooted in and built from the context, and the people involved in the conflict for it will have effect when promoting peace building among them. There are several principles providing guide structure on how to build a peace constituency, namely (1) the principles of indigenous empowerment, (2) the principles of cultural relevance for conflict transformation, and (3) the principles of a long-term commitment (Lederach, 1995: 212).

The principles of indigenous empowerment can be described as follows. According to Lederach (1995, 212-213), empowerment can be simply understood as “the movement from ‘I cannot’ to ‘I can’” or more concretely it is “the procedural element of *validating and providing space for proactive involvement in conflict transformation*”, while indigenous refers to “*validating, providing space and building from resources that are available in the setting*”. Thus, according to this principle conflict transformation must respect and promote the human and cultural resources from within a given setting. By doing so, people within the given setting are not seen as the ‘problem’ and the outside as the ‘answer’.

With regard to the principle of cultural relevance, it is based on the idea that all cultures and groups develop ways and approaches for handling conflict. This principle also suggests that “these cultural modalities and resources for handling conflict in a given setting are not only important to identify but should be seen as foundational for building a comprehensive transformative framework.” Accordingly this principle cuts in two directions. Firstly, it stresses on acknowledging and trying to build from the cultural modalities that exist in a

setting and, Secondly, it considers outside models (although accepted widely such as international diplomacy with its Western influences) as having cultural biases which cannot be automatically accepted and applied in a given setting (Lederach, 1995: 213).

Concerning the principle of long-term commitment, it suggests that “peace-making endeavor are not exclusively nor perhaps primarily a series of events or products, like achieving direct negotiations, ceasefires, and the signing of accords; rather, they are embedded in the development and transformation of relationships over time”. This principle has two points of reference. Firstly, it refers to the intensity of the immediate and disastrous consequences of the armed conflict on the population. Secondly, it refers to “the need for on-going relationship between peace-makers and the principles”. In short, these three principles “undergird the idea of building a peace constituency from within the setting that can promote and sustain the long-term transformative process” in the society (Lederach, 1995: 214).

In order to maintain peace in Aceh post Helsinki agreement, peace building is a must. For a successful peace building, it cannot be dependent of the outsiders’ help but, instead of that, it can be achieved by empowering the whole levels of indigenous population. Lederach argues that in armed conflicts, the affected population can be divided into three levels, which he has described as a “triangle”. Level 1 is top leadership which consists of military and political leaders, who hold key positions of decision making on behalf of the movements or government embroiled in the conflict. In overall situation, they represent a small number of people, but they have significant power and influence. Level 2 (in the middle) are national leaders, which are known as significant leaders. They can be religious leaders, or leaders in the sectors of education, labor, agriculture, health, the arts, as well as the military hierarchies. In some instances this people may be head of national institution, but in others may be not, like some individuals who are not known at national level but respected in a given region, community or ethnic group. Level 3, which is the most populous, is found at the “grass-root” level. This level consists of the vast majority of peasants, laborers, common people as well as the displaced and refugee populations. This category also includes local leaders, elders, priests as well as the foot soldiers and the guerrillas (Lederach, 1995: 209).

Following the categorization made by Lederach, on the top level, the population of Aceh can be represented by the elites of ex-GAM, many of which are now become the top leaders, such as the governor of the Aceh Province, head of parliament, and regents. Also, belong to this level are leaders or commanders of TNI who play significant role for the security in Aceh. In the

middle level, there are chiefs of professional organizations, such as teachers, judges, traders, etc. Finally, in the bottom level there are a huge number of labors in factories, farmers and fishermen. These three levels of society must be involved and work together to maintain peace, if we want to see peace in Aceh.

To maintain the peaceful situation in Aceh post Helsinki MoU, the inclusion of all segments of society in the process of peace-building is a must. A framework on how the peace-building process can be carried out is, therefore, needed. Recently, literature on post conflict peace-building has increased. Some of scholar-practitioners have revised their idea that, effective and sustainable peacemaking processes “must be based not merely on the manipulation of peace agreements made by elites, but more importantly on the empowerment of communities torn apart by war to build peace from below” (Ramsbotham, 2005: 215). This change of thinking alters the stress in conflict resolution work from an outsider neutral approach toward a partnership with local actors. This partnership becomes one of the key characteristics of peace-building from below (Ramsbotham, 2005: 216).

Using the peace-building from bottom-up approach, the way in which a conflict is viewed is transformed. Normally, people within the conflict are seen as the problem and the outsiders providing the solution to the conflict. However, in the perspective of peace-building from below, solutions are derived and built from local resources. This does not deny a role for outsider third parties, but it suggests a need for reorientation of their roles (Ramsbotham, 2005: 222). I think, for the context of Aceh, what is needed more is the empowerment of the local resources.

Effort to build peace must include the whole segment of society which includes military-security, political-constitutional, psycho-social, economic-social. In the sphere of military-security, it encompasses all levels from the top (generals) to the bottom (soldiers). In the political-constitutional sphere, it includes top leaders such as president, opposition parties, leader of parliament as well as gross-root leaders. In the psycho-social sphere, it covers religious authorities, teachers, media celebrities and social workers at local level. In the economic-social sphere, it includes central fiscal authorities, prominent business people as well as local entrepreneurs. Once again, it must be emphasized that in the context of Aceh, the involvement of these entire groups in peace-building effort is a necessity to see sustainable and lasting peace in Aceh.

C. Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, some conclusions can be drawn as following points:

Muslih

1. Aceh is a province of Indonesia located in the northern tip of Sumatra. It is rich of natural resources. Aceh was seriously affected and damaged by tsunami resulted from earthquake in Indian Ocean in December 2004.
2. Mismanagement of natural resources in Aceh by the central government in Jakarta, which did not share equally the revenues from the natural resources, which has helped to create tension between elites in Aceh with the central government. Insulting the local tradition and religion by the central government is another fuel to generate quarrel. Given this bad situation, the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) was then established to challenge the GoI. Problems of human right abuses by Indonesian military during Aceh's DOM status have added more fuel to elicit armed conflict between GAM and the GoI.
3. Conflict in Aceh cannot be resolved only with using military forces by the central government. The conflict might be easy to be dealt with if the state can meet the need of all individuals and provide justice to them. Peace can only be achieved if such a condition fulfilled.
4. Since women play significant role in coloring the future of society in Aceh, they must be involved in the process of transforming conflict into peace. After the peace has been achieved, their participation is needed to maintain the peace in society. Gender discrimination, therefore, must not take place in Aceh anymore.
5. Maintaining peace in Aceh post Helsinki MoU can be afforded by doing peace-building and peace-keeping activities. Successful peace-building in Aceh cannot be gained only from the outsiders' help, but it can be achieved by empowering the whole levels of indigenous population.[]

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