

THE EVOLUTION OF ISIS IN INDONESIA

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I. OVERVIEW

Support for the Islamic State (IS, formerly known as ISIS) in Indonesia raises the risk of violence there even though the capacity of violent extremist groups remains low. This could change with the eventual return home of Indonesians now fighting in Syria and Iraq who will have the training, combat experience, and leadership potential now lacking in Indonesia's extremist community.

The 22 September 2014 exhortation by IS spokesman Al-Adnani to kill foreigners linked to the U.S.-led coalition could also provide an incentive to Indonesian ISIS supporters to target Westerners as a way of earning approval from leaders of the self-declared caliphate. The Indonesian translation of that exhortation includes this passage:

If you do not have bombs or bullets, and a *kafir* (infidel) from America or France or one of their allies comes out, hit him in the head with a rock, carve him up with a knife, hit him with your car, throw him off a high building or poison him!¹

Would-be terrorists in Indonesia for the last four years have focused exclusively on domestic targets, mostly the police, and they continued to do so even after the caliphate was announced. The instruction from Al-Adnani, however, could be taken seriously by those who have both pledged allegiance to IS and have already used or attempted to use violence.

This report examines the ISIS support network in Indonesia, how it emerged, who joined it and how it has evolved. It also looks at the Indonesian government's response. While that response has been forceful, the government still needs to translate decrees into action. It has instructed prison officials to step up monitoring of convicted terrorists, for example, yet Al-Adnani's grim message was translated by one of those prisoners and posted on radical websites within 24 hours of its issuance.

President Yudhoyono's government announced a ban on ISIS on 4 August after the appearance on YouTube of a video called "Joining the Ranks", in which an Indonesian calling himself "Abu Muhammad al Indunisi" urges others to follow his example and join the jihad in Syria.

Abu Muhammad turned out to be an activist named Bahrum Syah with links to an extremist organisation once known as Al Muhajiroun. Al Muhajiroun's founders, Omar Bakri Muhammad and Anjem Choudary, have gone on to establish a global network of advocacy groups supporting the establishment of Islamic law, if necessary by violent means. The first branch, in the UK where Choudary is based, was called Islam4UK, later Sharia4UK. Each national branch had "Sharia4" in its title; Sharia4Indonesia was established in 2010.

A small group of Indonesians inspired by Bakri and Choudary became the engine of the pro-ISIS network in Indonesia. The group runs the website www.al-mustaqbal.net, hereafter referred to as Al-Mustaqbal. It has links to most of the terrorist groups still operating in Indonesia, including the Mujahidin of Eastern Indonesia (Mujahidin Indonesia Timur, MIT) and the Mujahidin of Western Indonesia (Mujahidin Indonesian Barat, MIB). It sponsored most of the ceremonies across Indonesia pledging loyalty to IS after the latter on 29 June 2014 announced the establishment of a caliphate. And its fighters in Syria, including Bahrum Syah, have formed an Indonesian-Malaysian unit of ISIS in Syria that reportedly aims at eventually establishing an archipelagic Islamic State in Southeast Asia, to be called Daulah Islamiyah Nusantara.

The report also examines how the announcement of the caliphate has split the Indonesian jihadi community, leading to deep divisions among convicted terrorist prisoners and the splintering of a leading jihadi organisation, Jamaah Anshorul Tauhid (JAT). The individual who has emerged as the most important ideological promoter of ISIS is Aman Abdurrahman, a cleric

1 "Statement Resmi Syekh Al-Adnaniy : Sesungguhnya Rabb-mu Benar-Benar Mengintai", Al-Mustaqbal.net, 23 September 2014.

imprisoned in the maximum security complex on the island of Nusakambangan, off the south coast of Java. It is he who became the mentor of the Sharia4Indonesia group and whose followers constitute the glue that binds disparate elements of the Indonesian ISIS network together.

The appearance of ISIS may be a rare example of international developments becoming a direct driver of jihadi recruitment in Indonesia. In the past, the drivers have been overwhelmingly local. When Indonesians went to Afghanistan to train in the mid-1980s and early 1990s, they were spurred by repression at home and the desire to develop the capacity to fight Soeharto. The bombing campaign of Jemaah Islamiyah between 1999 and 2002 was sparked by communal conflict at home, in Ambon and Poso. Despite all the rhetoric about support for Palestine, very few Indonesians have ever gone to fight there. The appeal of ISIS is different, a combination of religious prophecies involving Sham (greater Syria); the string of victories in Iraq in June that gave a sense of backing a winner; the resonance of the concept of the caliphate; and sophisticated use by ISIS of social media.

At the same time, ISIS has triggered a bigger backlash than ever seen before in the Indonesian Muslim community, suggesting that support will stay limited to a fringe of the radical fringe. The individuals involved are nonetheless dangerous, and it is cause for concern that inmates of high security prisons continue to be among the most active propagators of ISIS views and teachings. Indonesian prison management has improved in recent years, but there is a long way to go.

The incoming Jokowi government will have to decide whether to continue the counter-terrorism policies of the Yudhoyono government or ramp them up, including by pressing for strengthened legal tools. Either way, it is critical that leadership of the counter-terrorism effort be left in the hands of the police, who over the last decade have accumulated all the institutional knowledge of radical networks.

II. THE ORIGINS OF AL-MUHAJIRUN IN INDONESIA

Support for ISIS in Indonesia goes back to the links of one young Indonesian activist, Tuah Febriwansyah alias Muhammad Fachry, to the organisation Al-Muhajiroun. Founded by a militant Syrian cleric named Omar Bakri Muhammad, Al-Muhajiroun started out in 1983 as a salafi jihadi wing of the organisation Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) the radical international organisation campaigning for a caliphate and the application of Islamic law. In 1986, Omar Bakri was expelled from Saudi Arabia for creating a clandestine network of HT cells. He moved to the UK where he became simultaneously head of Al-Muhajiroun and leader of the British branch of HT. He broke completely with the latter in 1996 and together with a cleric named Anjem Choudary set up Al-Muhajiroun as a separate organisation. While it was officially disbanded in 2004, it has lived on under different names. Omar Bakri was expelled from Britain in 2005 and moved to Lebanon, where he was arrested in May 2014. Anjem Choudary stayed in Britain.

If Hizb ut-Tahrir focused on creating a mass base to support the restoration of the caliphate, Al-Muhajiroun (and its later incarnations) see jihad as a critical means of getting there. It thus supports violence in a way that its parent organisation never did. Its proponents see the formal application of Islamic law as the primary duty of every Muslim; anyone who thinks otherwise is considered a non-believer (*kafir*). Indeed, anyone who does not share its very particular understanding of how the law should be applied is considered idolatrous. As a result, many Muslims in the salafi and salafi jihadi communities see Al-Muhajiroun as *takfiri*, or too quick to brand others as *kafir*.

Although it was a jihadi organisation, Al-Muhajiroun from the outset differed from Al-Qaeda in that it stressed the need to carve out a territory in which Islam could be applied. It was not

just about attacking the enemy.² This was later to make it the perfect vehicle for promoting ISIS and the Islamic state.

Al-Muhajiroun came to Indonesia through the Internet. In 2005, Muhammad Fachry, usually seen as just M. Fachry, found Al-Muhajiroun through a video chat forum called Paltalk (www.paltalk.com) and began to take part in online religious discussions led by Omar Bakri.³ Bakri reportedly gave him the green light to set up an Al-Muhajirun group in Indonesia—he dropped the “o” in the spelling—as the organisation considered Indonesia a key country. In one of its documents it states:

Al-Muhajiroun believes that countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Indonesia and Malaysia must be our targets to establish the caliphate. These countries do not only contain three-quarters of the world’s Muslims but they also have armies stronger than the Middle East which have not been infiltrated by foreign forces (unlike the militaries of the Middle East), and the Muslims there have a strong desire [to uphold] Islam.⁴

Fachry built up two mailing lists that he called “Al Ghuraba” and “Ahlus Sunnah Waljamaah”, for sending out Al-Muhajiroun material.⁵ In 2006 he began using the free Geocities web hosting service to promote the organisation, using the site www.geocities.com/abuya_2005/almuhajirun. He then bought the domain www.almuhajirun.com, which exists to this day. Fachry and his wife, Ummu Fauzi, translated Bakri’s writings from English and uploaded them on the site.

Around the same time, Fachry began taking part in an online religious discussion run by a jihadi who used the nickname Qital (the Arabic word for “battle”), to which another person, using the name Al Irhab, or “terror”, was a frequent contributor. Qital turned out to be Abdul Aziz, a junior high school teacher from Pekalongan, arrested in 2005 for assisting the terrorist mastermind Noordin Top set up a website called www.anshar.net, long since shut down by the Indonesian government. Al Irhab was the Bali bomber then on death row and since executed, Imam Samudra. From others in the discussion group, Fachry obtained translations from Arabic into Indonesian of writings by two other radical clerics, Abdul Qadir bin Abdul Aziz, better known in the West as Dr. Fadl, and Abu Muhammad al Maqdisi, and uploaded these as well.

With the knowledge he gleaned from these discussions, Fachry in 2006 set up his own study circle via Yahoo messenger and MSN messenger, and invited those on his lists to take part in Omar Bakri’s lectures via Paltalk. He also began moving beyond cyberspace to promote Bakri’s teachings in person through lectures and sermons.

A. Fachry Starts a Magazine

In addition to his online activities, Fachry wanted to start a magazine, because like many other jihadis, he believed that Islam’s enemies, especially America and its allies, controlled the mainstream global media and therefore it was important to develop the tools to fight back in the

2 In ideological terms, this was the difference between *qital tamkin*, the more strategic use of jihadi in service of long-term strategic goals as promoted by Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi as opposed to *qital nikayah*, the tactic of weakening the enemy through repeated attacks, associated with Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, leader of the Al-Qaeda-linked insurgency in Iraq who was killed in 2006.

3 Omar Bakri was banned from Britain the same year. He had publicly supported the London underground bombers for their 7 July 2005 attack and left for Lebanon a month later, where he was subsequently detained with Anjem Choudary. Choudary was eventually deported back to Britain, but Bakri stayed in Lebanon. On 25 May 2014 he was arrested by the Lebanese authorities and later charged with masterminding a terrorist cell in northern Lebanon.

4 See linkwebislam.blogspot.com.au/2013/01/al-muhajirunnet.html.

5 These were both alternative names for Al-Muhajiroun. Anjem Choudary launched Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah in late 2005, while Bakri was still in a Beirut prison, and set up al Guraba in 2006.

information war.⁶ In 2007, the first edition of the magazine *Al-Muhajirun* was published, with the lead article entitled “Staying on the Road to Jihad”. It included translations of works by radical ulama and an interview with Osama bin Laden. The second edition, in mid-2007, featured a profile of the Islamic State in Iraq, the precursor of ISIS. In it, the authors explained how the establishment of a caliphate would take place via the building of smaller Islamic polities (*imarah Islam*) that would eventually be joined together.

The magazine’s appearance drew Fachry into wider interaction with the jihadi community. He became close to Muhammad Jibriel, the owner and editor of www.arahmah.com, which by 2007 was the biggest jihadi website in Indonesia.⁷ Jibriel asked Fachry to join, and he agreed, seeing Jibriel’s site as a way of reaching more potential followers of Al-Muhajiroun’s teachings.⁸ Both had a vision of expanding the website into a publishing empire that would include divisions for books, magazines and DVDs.

The Arrahmah Media Network came into being in 2008, with the publishing division releasing the writings of the three Bali bombers in January 2009, just months after they were executed. They also published a book by Al-Maqdisi, translated by Aman Abdurrahman, with the title “Is Democracy Compatible with Islam?” They also released jihadi videos, downloaded from the Internet, and published a short-lived glossy magazine called *Jihadmagz*.

Fachry, meanwhile, kept the *Al-Muhajirun* magazine going, with a lead article as Indonesia’s 2009 legislative and presidential elections approached, entitled, “Don’t Vote, Stay Muslim”. The slogan had been adopted by Omar Bakri during British elections in June 2004; it subsequently was used more globally to drive home the point that elections symbolised governments underpinned by man-made rather than God-given law.

In addition to his work at Arrahmah, Fachry began attending regular discussions on jihad that were held at the Al-Munawaroh Mosque in Pamulang, Bekasi outside Jakarta, led by Muhammed Jibriel’s father, Abu Jibril. By early 2009 another preacher began leading discussions there regularly – Aman Abdurrahman, who had just been released from prison in mid-2008. Fachry had long followed Aman’s writings and translations and believed that his religious precepts, and his commitment to jihad in the service of applying Islamic law and building an Islamic state, were exactly the same as Al-Muhajiroun’s. At these discussions, Fachry became close friends with a man named Bahrum Syah, who was the coordinator for Aman’s religious lectures and teachings in the Pamulang area.

In August 2009, one month after the bombings of the Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels in Jakarta, the study sessions at Al-Munawaroh were disrupted, when another local cleric threatened to attack the mosque, accusing it of teaching terrorism.⁹ One of the hotel bombers, a teenager named Dani Dwi Permana, had been recruited in a mosque not far from Pamulang and this

6 IPAC interview with former member of radical discussion group, Jakarta, August 2014. Fachry was very influenced in his thinking on these matters by the book “Practical Guide to Becoming a Mujahid” (*Idhoat Ala Darbil Jihad*) by Yusuf bin Sholih Al-‘Uyairy Al-Battar, an Al-Qaeda ideologue. Al-‘Uyairy wrote that jihad could be waged not just on the battlefield with AK47s and RPGs but also via the media. This included disseminating material in any form that could encourage jihad. “For those who lack the capacity to write tracts themselves, they can distribute material by hand, fax or email. Jihad can be writing articles in magazines, bulletins, newspapers, on the Internet, sending emails to thousands, defending Islam at every opportunity.” See *Petunjuk Praktis Menjadi Mujahid* (translation by Syahida Man of *Idhoat Ala Darbil Jihad*, no pagination or date).

7 Arrahmah has substantially declined in popularity in the last year but only because of factors related to Indonesia’s 2014 presidential election. It was the leading jihadi website in 2013, but was overtaken in 2014 by voa-islam.com because of the latter’s anti-Jokowi coverage. According to the site Alexa.com that ranks websites based on hits and homepage views, in 2014 voa-islam.com ranked 267 among Indonesian sites; eramuslim.com 462; arahmah.com 498; shoutussalam.com, 818; al-mustaqbal.net 1,367 and muslimdaily.net, 5,260. See www.alex.com

8 IPAC interview with former member of radical discussion group, Jakarta, August 2014.

9 This was Abdullah Assegaf, a moderate cleric who had long been angry with the activists at Al-Munawaroh mosque for denigrating their traditional Muslim practices as idolatrous. These included celebration of the Prophet’s birthday, Maulid, and recitation of the *tahlilan* prayers following a death.

raised fears that terrorist groups would find other potential “bridegrooms”, as suicide bombers were called, from other mosques in the area. Then, on 25 August 2009, Muhammad Jibriel was arrested for meeting and trying to help the mastermind of the hotel bombings, Noordin Top, who had once been his teacher. Jibriel’s arrest hit the Arrahmah enterprise hard, with donors deserting it and Fachry forced to do much of the work on his own. Jibriel was sentenced to five years in prison in late June 2010.

B. *Sharia4Indonesia*

By 2010 Fachry, in addition to his work on Arrahmah, started another initiative, inspired by the Al-Muhajiroun founders. He began a grassroots campaign called Sharia4Indonesia, modelled on Islam4UK or Sharia4UK that Anjem Choudary started in November 2008.¹⁰ This was a project to set up territorial zones applying Islamic law, the so-called *imarah Islam* that Bakri and Choudary saw as the building blocks of a caliphate. Fachry’s friend, a man named Abu Shofiy, became Sharia4Indonesia’s head.

Fachry and his friends also planned to bring Omar Bakri to Indonesia in March 2010 to help launch the Indonesian translation of Bakri’s book, *The Islamic Standard*. The Lebanese government refused to give him a visa, however, and Fachry invited Anjem Choudary instead. The visit took place in March 2010, and Choudary made an appearance promoting Sharia4Indonesia at the 9th Islamic Book Fair in Senayan, Jakarta. The new organisation was formally launched with a demonstration at the Hotel Indonesia traffic circle in Jakarta in August 2010, around the same time as similar efforts around the globe: Sharia4France, Sharia4Belgium, Sharia4Holland, Sharia4Pakistan, Sharia4Hind, and so on. About two dozen people showed up, not enough to be taken seriously. The Jakarta campaign was followed by Sharia4Jatim in East Java, Sharia4Bandung and in North Sumatra, Sharia4Tanjung Balai. The objective of the project was to establish a “sharia zone” in Indonesia that would be free from gambling, alcoholic drinks, prostitution and other vices. It aimed to get community support by allying with organisations such as Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI), since its own numbers were far too small to attract much attention.

In September 2010, its members took an active role to campaign for the release of Murchali Barda, an FPI leader whom police had arrested for inciting violence during a protest he had helped organise against a Batak Protestant church in Ciketing, Bekasi. Two months later, in November 2010, they joined another hardline organisation, the Islamic Reform Movement (Gerakan Reformis Islam, GARIS) and several other groups to demand the closing of a church in Karasak, Bandung.

They also tried to win public support by organising social activities and emergency health care in disaster areas, including in central Java after the eruption of the Merapi volcano in October 2010. They tried to exploit the situation by campaigning on the theme of “Indonesia Atones”, saying that the rash of disasters to strike Indonesia, from the 2004 tsunami to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, had happened because both the Muslim community and the government of Indonesia had failed to apply Islamic law.¹¹

III. CONFLICT OVER THE CALIPHATE AND KAFIRS

As the Arab Spring upheavals rocked the Middle East and North Africa in 2011, M. Fachry and his friends saw the fall of dictators as the first step toward the establishment of the caliphate.

¹⁰ In January 2010, Choudary’s new initiative was banned under the UK’s Terrorism Act.

¹¹ See sharia4jatim.wordpress.com/2010/10/30/indonesia-bertobat.

They cited a *hadith* that foretold the political cycle of the Islamic community.¹² It began with the rule of the Prophet himself, followed by the caliphate of his followers (*khilafah alaa minhajin nubuwwah*), then by inherited kingdoms that followed Islamic law, then by brutal dictators and finally by a return to the caliphate.¹³ Fachry believed the reference to inherited kingdoms denoted the period that ended with the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1924. The Arab Spring upheavals were a sign that the subsequent period of authoritarian rule was ending and the caliphate was in sight.

The tiny Sharia4Indonesia group campaigned for Islamic law with more enthusiasm than ever, but later in 2011, the jihadi community split over the doctrinal issue of whether security forces of an idolatrous state (*ansharut thaghut*) could be condemned as *kafir* institutionally, or whether they should be judged as individuals. According to a 1993 tract by Abdul Qadir bin Abdul Aziz (Dr. Fadl) that reached Indonesia in translation in 2004, the generation of the Prophet's companions had agreed on the first, meaning that all should be considered non-believers (*takfir mu'ayyan*). Not only did this mean that subsequent generations were bound by this interpretation, but also that anyone who took a different view was also a *kafir* whose property could be seized or his blood shed.¹⁴ Fachry's mentors, Omar Bakri and Anjem Choudary, subscribed to this position; its primary proponent in Indonesia was Aman Abdurrahman.

In Indonesia, jihadi support for *takfir mu'ayyan* underwent a revision in 2011 with the appearance of a book by an Al-Qaeda leader, Abu Yahya Al-Libi.¹⁵ Abu Yahya criticised the way Abdul Qadir had used one case in the past to extrapolate to the present and wrote that it was not necessarily the case that every individual in the service of an idolatrous ruler was a *kafir*. It might be that someone joined out of ignorance or misinterpretation of the Qur'an; that person should not be condemned out of hand. This argument made sense to one faction of jihadis, led by imprisoned Jemaah Islamiyah leaders Abu Dujana and Zarkasih alias Mbah, that became known as the *takfir am* group.¹⁶ They influenced many of their fellow inmates in Jakarta's Cipinang Prison—including Muhammad Jibriel of Arrahmah.

Fachry found Jibriel's association with the *takfir am* group unacceptable, and in March 2012, he decided to leave Arrahmah. The differences became public in May 2012 when Arrahmah published a piece called "The Phenomenon of the Debate Over Branding Thaghut Security Forces as Kafir, Quo Vadis?" It aimed to lay out both sides of the debate, but it drew a sharp response from Aman Abdurrahman from his prison cell, who wrote, "This writing aims to reinforce the Muslim-ness of idolators and their partisans [...] without any valid proof."¹⁷

Arrahmah shot back with a piece castigating Aman for branding civil servants as *kafir* because they took an oath of loyalty to the Indonesian republic. This was hypocritical, they suggested, because Aman himself still had an Indonesian identity card that was proof of citizenship, so maybe it was he who was the *kafir*.

Look at the rebels in Aceh. They did not recognise the unitary republic of Indonesia and

12 A *hadith* is a saying or deed attributed to the Prophet and is an important source of Islamic law.

13 M Fachry, "Revolusi Tunisia, Jihad Global & Saatnya Khilafah Memimpin Dunia", Arrahmah.com, 30 January 2011.

14 Abdul Qadir bin Abdul Aziz, "Status Aparat Ansharut Thogut, Dari Kalangan Tentara, Polisi, Inteligen dan Ulama Su'u", translation of chapter 10 of the original Arabic book, *Al Jami fi thalabil Ilmi Asy-Syarif*, Aman Abdurrahman, translator, 2004.

15 The book's Arabic title was *Nazharat fi al-Ijma' Al-Qath'l*.

16 The intellectual leaders of this group were Parmin alias Aslam and Lutfi Hudaeroh alias Ubeid. Parmin was a JI translator arrested in 2008 for working with Noordin Top on the book *Sowing Jihad, Reaping Terror (Menabur Jihad Menuai Teror)* who has become one of the JI intellectuals and strong anti-ISIS advocates in Cipinang prison. Lutfi Hudaeroh alias Ubeid, was a former JI member who became a close associate of Noordin Top and a leader of the terrorist training camp established in Aceh in 2010. He worked with Parmin on the above-mentioned book.

17 See the debate at "Fenomena perdebatan seputar takfir ta'yin terhadap anshar thaghut, quo vadis?", Arrahmah.com, 10 May 2012 and "Tanggapan ustadz Aman Abdurrahman hafizhahullah atas artikel 'Fenomena perdebatan seputar takfir ta'yin terhadap anshar thaghut, quo vadis?', Arrahmah.com, 14 May 2012.

refused to hold Indonesian identity cards. Their understanding of religion was not as correct as Ustad Aman's, but why is that they took such a [principled] position whereas Ustad Aman does not?¹⁸

As the debate grew hotter, each side declared members of the rival side *kafir*. In Kembang Kuning prison in the maximum security penal complex on Nusakambangan island, Aman Abdurrahman and Iman Dharmawan alias Rois declared three jihadi inmates belonging to the *takfir am* group *kafir* because they refused to brand all prison guards as unbelievers.¹⁹

IV. THE EMERGENCE OF FAKSI

After Fachry parted company with Arrahmah, he set up a new jihadi website called Al-Mustaqbal (www.al-mustaqbal.net). The new site was used to reinforce the Sharia4Indonesia campaign as well as to promote the views of the *takfir mu'ayyan* group, led by Aman Abdurrahman.

Meanwhile, the doctrinal conflict also reached the discussion group at the Al-Munawaroh mosque in Pamulang, where Abu Jibril sided with his son and the *takfir am* group. As a result, Aman Abdurrahman's followers left the mosque and set up their own discussion group at the Al-Islam mosque in Babakan, Serpong, in Banten, just outside Jakarta. Three of the key figures in the new group were Fachry, Abu Shofiy and Bahrum Syah.

Bahrum Syah had been a communications student at the State Islamic University (Universitas Islam Negeri, UIN) in Ciputat in southern Jakarta but left before he graduated and transferred to Pamulang University, where he became an activist with a religious propagation organisation, Lembaga Dakwah Kampus, LDK. He joined Abu Jibril's discussion group because the Al-Munawaroh mosque was not far from his house and became a particularly devoted follower of Aman Abdurrahman, arranging his lectures and appearances in the Pamulang area. Through these meetings, he came to know members of other jihadi groups, including former members of the Darul Islam faction led until his July 2011 arrest by Abdullah Umar. These included a man named Kodrat.²⁰

In July 2012, Kodrat invited Bahrum Syah to attend a meeting in Situgitung that resulted in Kodrat's selection as the amir of a new group. The members included most of Abdullah Umar's old network, together with members of JAT from West Java and some others. Bahrum joined, but within a few months, the group had split with one faction breaking away to establish the Mujahidin of Western Indonesia and the rest, including Bahrum, staying with Kodrat.

Bahrum Syah himself was not a very active member. He was more focused on a publishing company he had set up called P-TA, short for Penegak Tauhid Press, which among other things published Aman Abdurrahman's writings and translations. He also continued to be active coordinating lectures on the oneness of God (*tauhid*) in the Pamulang area and running the discussion group at the Al-Islam mosque. Three men were regular lecturers there: the extremist preacher Halawi Makmun on religious issues, Fachry on developments in the Muslim world, especially in the Middle East, and Abu Shofiy on the progress of establishing the caliphate.²¹

As with many other jihadis, Fachry and Bahrum Syah believed that the conflict in Syria was

18 "Diskusi Seputar Takfir Mu'ayyan dengan Ustadz Aman Abdurrahman", at anshoruttauhidwassunnahwaljihad.blogspot.com, 18 May 2012.

19 The three declared *kafir* were Toni Togar, Achmad Hasan and Subur Sugiarto, Toni Togar is a former JI member, arrested for a bank robbery in Medan 2003 and for involvement in organising the August 2010 robbery of the CIMB-Niaga bank in Medan from his prison cell. Achmad Hasan was sentenced to death for his role in the 2004 Australian embassy bombing. Subur Sugiarto was sentenced to life imprisonment for his role in the 2005 Bali bombing.

20 For background on the Abdullah Umar network, see IPAC Report No. 5, *Weak, Therefore Violent: The Mujahidin of Western Indonesia*, 2 December 2013.

21 IPAC interview with former member of radical discussion group, Jakarta, August 2014.

the fulfilment of a prediction in some Islamic texts that the battle for the end of the world between the Imam Mahdi, the Islamic messiah, and the Dajjal, the Islamic equivalent of the Antichrist, would begin there, that Islam would emerge victorious and that a new caliphate would be established.²² They became even more convinced of this in late 2012 and decided that they needed to step up efforts to prepare the ground for an imarah Islam in Indonesia, so when the caliphate was announced, Indonesia could join.

A. *The Major Players*

In early 2013, therefore Fachry and his friends set up the Forum of Islamic Law Activists (Forum Aktivist Syariat Islam, FAKSI), with Fachry as head and Bahrum in the dual role of deputy head and secretary-general. Members came from Sharia4Indonesia as well as Aman Abdurrahman's followers. Among those who joined were Siswanto, from Lamongan, a brother-in-law of the then imprisoned jihadi Sibghotullah; Iskandar alias Abu Qutaibah from Bima, once a JAT activist; and Salim Mubarak from Malang.²³ It is instructive to look at their backgrounds.

- Siswanto attended the Al-Mukmin pesantren in Ngruki, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's school and then taught at the Al-Islam pesantren in Lamongan. Al-Islam was once a radical school under the aegis of Bali bombers Muchlas and Amrozi but has become a force for moderation under the influence of their brother, Ali Imron, still in prison but active in counter-radicalisation activities, and their half-brother, Ali Fauzi. In 2007, Siswanto left the school because he believed it had abandoned jihad, and joined the Lamongan branch of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI). He became attracted to the teachings and writings of Aman Abdurrahman, and after Aman was released from prison in 2008, became one of his most devoted followers. FPI-Lamongan became radical as a result, to the point of condemning their own national leader, Habib Rizieq, as an idolator. FPI headquarters then ended its relations with the branch. In 2012, when the debate between *takfir mu'ayyan* and *takfir am* factions was at its height, Siswanto was at the forefront of the former.²⁴
- Iskandar alias Abu Qutaibah from Bima was the son of Natsir Kecil ("Little Natsir"), a man from Dompu, Bima who had joined Abu Bakar Ba'asyir when he first fled to Malaysia in 1985. Iskandar had his first education in the JI school Lukmanul Hakiem, then moved briefly to Gontor, the well-known Islamic school in East Java, before finally graduating from a pesantren in Sukabumi. He then became a student in the Arabic language division of the State Islamic University, living in Tanah Abang with his parents. Beginning in 2002, he began attending Aman Abdurrahman's lectures in the At-Taqwa mosque in Tanah Abang, stopping only after Aman was arrested in March 2004 for involvement in a bomb-making class in Cimanggis, outside Jakarta. In 2004, Iskandar returned to the home of his father's family in Bima and began propagating Aman Abdurrahman's ideas, particularly in the Istiqomah Mosque in Bima. While Aman was still in prison, in early 2008, Iskandar was arranging for him to give lectures by speaker phone. After he was released, Iskandar invited Aman to Bima. He accepted, and in February 2009, he came to Bima for almost a month and gave lectures at several mosques including Istiqomah. He also

22 See IPAC Report No. 6, *Indonesians and the Syrian Conflict*, 30 January 2014.

23 This Siswanto is not the same as the Siswanto arrested in December 2013. See www.shoutussalam.com/2013/12/siswanto-aktivis-masjid-diculik-densus-88-selepas-shalat-isya-berjamaah.

24 Siswanto took part in one debate where he took on a group of alumni of the JI school Darusyahada, all of whom defended *takfir am*. The debate ended with his branding as *kafir* a leading Lamongan scholar who supported *takfir am*. This was Azhari Dipo Kusuma, head of the JI school Al-Ikhlas in Lamongan. Dipo himself had traveled to Syria with the humanitarian organization Hilal Ahmar Society Indonesia (HASI). He made a point of trying to understand the conflict between Al-Nusra and ISIS and decided to support Al-Nusra.

lectured at the Umar bin Khattab pesantren that in 2008 had allied itself with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's new organisation, Jamaah Anshorul Tauhid or JAT. The *takfiri* stance of Aman and Iskandar troubled the Bima Islamist community, especially JAT members, and eventually divided it, with the more militant leaving JAT because they were no longer welcome. Iskandar urged his followers to take part in military preparation (*i'dad*) and sent some to Poso to train with Santoso. A few ended up joining Santoso's organisation, Mujahidin of Eastern Indonesia (Mujahidin Indonesia Timur, MIT).

- Salim Mubarak at-Tamimi was from Pasuruan, of Yemeni Arab descent, who had been a student of the salafi leader Jafar Umar Thalib. When the Maluku conflict had erupted in 1999, he joined Laskar Jihad. He then studied in Dammaj, Yemen, at the well-known school, Darul Hadits, where he became a student of the salafi scholars, Muqbil bin Hadi al Wadi and Yahua bin Ali Hajuri. He returned to Malang to teach salafi doctrine. Initially he was very opposed to the teachings of Aman Abdurrahman, whom he characterised as a *khawarij* (deviant). But he was challenged to a debate in 2010 by Aman, who by then had been rearrested for his role in the Aceh training camp. Salim readily admitted that he lost to Aman in terms of references cited and became Aman's disciple from that moment. In Malang, he propagated Aman's teachings together with Mashudi, a JAT activist there who had been a teacher at Al-Islam in Lamongan and who like himself had studied in Yemen. The two became the most prominent promoters of ISIS in the Malang area.

B. FAKSI, Omar Bakri and ISIS

FAKSI's aim was to get the public to realise the importance of setting up an *imarah Islam* and a caliphate. Its tools for doing so were Al-Mustaqbal, social media, and open discussion forums called Multaqad Da'wiy. FAKSI never tried to hide its goals. There was little danger in democratic Indonesia that anyone would try to ban discussions about the desirability of a different form of government and it could use them to recruit cadres for the *imarah* as well as prepare the public to welcome the caliphate when it was eventually restored.

The organisers made a point of inviting speakers from Al-Muhajiroun headquarters. In April 2013, for example, they held a discussion on the theme "Imarah Islam Leads to the Caliphate" with Omar Bakri Muhammad leading the discussion via an Internet connection. Syria was one of the major topics, and Omar Bakri said he was convinced that it would not be long before an Islamic government was established there. He was not particularly concerned about divisions that had recently emerged among jihadi groups and said he was optimistic that they would soon be smoothed over.

In fact, almost as he was speaking, the rift between Jabhat an-Nusra and ISIS was reaching a peak. The leader of the Islamic State of Iraq, Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi, had declared the union of his organisation and an-Nusra, which would henceforth be known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (Greater Syria), abbreviated either as ISIL or ISIS.²⁵ An-Nusra's commander, however, rejected Al-Baghdadi's claim, said he and his forces had never been consulted about a union and declared his loyalty to Ayman Al-Zawahiri as the head of Al-Qaeda. In November 2013, a reconciliation effort failed, and the two organisations became bitter rivals.

Initially Fachry and his friends in FAKSI decided to be neutral (*tawaquf*) in the dispute. But on 1 October 2013, Omar Bakri declared his support for ISIS. He said that ISIS of all the jihadi groups was most active in working to build a caliphate in Sham and that Al-Baghdadi had all the qualities of a leader: he was descended from the Quraishi, the tribe of the Prophet, had deep

25 The confusion in the abbreviation stems from whether the word in English used for Greater Syria is "Sham" or "the Levant". The terms are interchangeable; the territory covered is the same.

religious knowledge, was known for his piety and was a proven military commander. He aimed not just to overthrow the Assad regime in Syria but to fulfill the hopes of all Muslims by establishing the *khilafah islamiyah ala minhajin nubuawah*.²⁶

A month later, FAKSI members and their mentor Aman Abdurrahman became more convinced that ISIS was not just a jihadi organisation (*tanzim*) but had the qualities of a state, since it controlled territory such as Raqqa province in northern Syria and applied Islamic law there. It was also now demanding that other groups acknowledge Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi as Commander of the Faithful and take an oath of loyalty to him and attacked those who refused.

The brutality shown by ISIS towards its rivals did not diminish the enthusiasm of FAKSI or Aman Abdurrahman, who saw the strict enforcement of *takfir mu'ayyan* as praiseworthy. ISIS was declaring most of the other opposition groups in Syria as *kafir* either because they refused to pledge loyalty to the self-declared commander, or because they were working for a democratic state, or because they were supported by Arab governments that were themselves idolatrous.²⁷

C. Al-Baghdadi vs Al-Zawahiri in Indonesia

Aman Abdurrahman, M. Fachry and other FAKSI members began translating and disseminating tracts that defended ISIS and slammed its critics, including men that they had once admired such as Abu Qatadah, Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi and Ayman Al-Zawahiri.

Al Maqdisi, for example, wrote a harsh critique of ISIS that appeared in Indonesian in January 2014 entitled: "Ya Allah, I Remove Myself From What They Have Done" (*Ya Allah, Sesungguhnya Aku Berlepas Diri kepada-Mu dari Apa Yang Mereka Perbuat*). He wrote:

They think they can murder their own brothers because they have connections with certain groups. This attitude cannot be endorsed. Even if these groups were hypocrites, [the ISIS] stance would still not be justified. Our Prophet himself had communications with hypocrites but treated them well and forgave them. He also forgave idolators, Jews and others. [...] So what is the basis for shedding their blood?!"²⁸

In a matter of days, FAKSI and websites supporting ISIS such as Aman Abdurrahman's www.millahibrahim.wordpress.com and Al-Mustaqbal published ISIS's response to Al-Maqdisi, translated by Aman.²⁹ At the same time, anti-ISIS tracts were translated and published on arramah.com, including Al-Zawahiri's denial that ISIS had any connection to Al-Qaeda.³⁰ The ISIS response appeared a few days later on Al-Mustaqbal.³¹ The debate between the two sides became increasingly heated, with Aman treating all ISIS critics as enemies and giving his translations provocative titles. For example, he headlined one translation, "Study and Analysis of the Nonsensical and Contradictory Position of Al-Zawahiri" when the original had just been "Study and Analysis of the Statement by Al-Zawahiri".³²

Aman went further in his dismissal of ISIS critics than some ISIS ulama themselves, some of whom still respected Al-Zawahiri and bemoaned the dispute that had arisen between them.³³

26 "Syekh OBM : Daulah Islam Di Iraq Dan Syam, Berjuang Untuk Khilafah!", Al-mustaqbal.net, 4 October 2013.

27 See millahibrahim.wordpress.com/2014/01/22/membantah-fitnah-abu-khalid-as-suri. This view also caused ISIS to reject the formation of an Islamic law council in which various factions would be represented. Its leaders argued that they could not place themselves in a subordinate position to a council that might contain infidels and idolators.

28 See "Surat Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi untuk Seluruh Kelompok Jihad Suriah", voa-islam.com, 3 February 2014.

29 Aman gave it the title "Maha Suci Engkau, Ini Adalah Kebohongan Besar, Bantahan Terhadap Pernyataan Syaikh Abu Muhammad Al Maqdisiy -Semoga Allah Membebaskannya- Yang Berjudul Ya Allah Sesungguhnya Aku Berlepas Diri Dari Apa Yang Dilakukan Oleh Mereka Itu."

30 "Al-Qaeda merilis sikap resmi tentang status hubungan organisasi Al-Qaeda dengan ISIS", Arramah.com, 4 February 2014.

31 "Al Qaeda dan Ketergelinciran Yang Berbahaya", Al-mustaqbal.net, 13 February 2014.

32 The article was by Abu Mu'adz Al-Anshori. The title was later changed back to the original on Aman's website.

33 See, for example, www.kiblat.net/files/2014/01/Abu-Ubaidah-ISIS1.pdf.

These writings, which were translated and posted on other Indonesian websites, were never circulated by FAKSI. Instead Fachry and Aman became increasingly associated with the most extreme pro-ISIS positions in a way that alienated many other jihadis.

In April 2014, for example, an article appeared on Arrahmah.com with the headline “Shaikh Ayman Al-Zawahiri in the view of Shaikh Abu ‘Ashim Al-Maqdisi and Brother Aman Abdurrahman”. It mocked Aman as someone who had only relatively recently discovered the concept of *tauhid* and jihad, hid behind a laptop and yet still dared to criticise someone like Al-Zawahiri who had spent half his life for the cause. The author suggested that Aman did not understand conditions in Syria because he had never been there and indeed had no jihad experience anywhere.³⁴

From the beginning, Arrahmah had positioned itself as head of the anti-ISIS camp, translating and publishing many of the critiques that emerged in the Middle East. Its main objection to ISIS was the latter’s summary killing of other Muslims, including other *mujahidin*. Arrahmah editors believed this was a direct result of the concept of *takfir mu’ayyan* which led so easily to dissidents and critics being branded as non-believers and thus deserving of death.

Arrahmah’s position infuriated the FAKSI group, and in Januari 2014, M. Fachry published a piece on Al-Mustaqbal entitled “Advice from Ustadz Rois to Arrahmah Regarding ISIS.” Rois, who as noted above, was on death row in Kembang Kuning Prison, Nusakambangan, had the gall to suggest that Arrahmah was not being fair by failing to cover both sides and only presenting anti-ISIS views.³⁵

It was clear that Indonesians were following every detail of the jihadi rift in the Middle East, and that this was made possible in part by the translations produced by inmates of Indonesia’s maximum security prison.

D. Loyalty Oaths (Bai’at) to the New Caliph

As part of its campaign to win public support, FAKSI began organising public declarations of support for ISIS. In February 2014, it organised programs in Tangerang and Bekasi, outside Jakarta. At the beginning of March, it held one in Bima, Sumbawa. On 16 March, FAKSI held a pro-ISIS demonstration at the Hotel Indonesia traffic circle in the centre of Jakarta, with Bahrum Syah as coordinator. He explained the objectives:

We want everyone to understand that there is a far better option for the prosperity of all Muslims. This is not an empty offer but a genuine one that Allah is offering, a Muslim State. We have come to promote this state so that people will understand that the State already exists. At the same time, we want to tell the State that we, the Muslims of Indonesia, are with you, and that if you ask us to pledge allegiance, we are ready to do so.³⁶

Hundreds of people came to the demonstration, most of them members of GARIS. GARIS, the group that joined Fachry in the early days of Sharia4Indonesia, was a radical anti-vice and anti-apostasy group similar to FPI (Front Pembela Islam) but it differed from the latter in that it had no religious scholars among its leaders. Its founder, Chep Hernawan, was a businessman, not a cleric, who in the past had been active in the Crescent Star political party (Partai Bulan Bintang). Up until 2007, GARIS had relied on a JI leader Ustadz Abdul Rahim alias Abu Husna, to instruct its members, but Abu Husna was arrested on terrorism charges in early 2008 and for a few years, no one took his place. Only recently Bahrum Syah had taken on the role, leading

34 “Syaikh Aiman Az-Zhawahiri dalam pandangan Syaikh Abu ‘Ashim Al-Maqdisi dan Akhi Aman Abdurrahman”, Arrahmah.com, 8 May 2014.

35 “Nasehat Ustadz Rois Kepada Arrahmah.com Terkait ISIS”, Arrahmah.com, 27 January 2014..

36 See kdiofficial.blogspot.com/2014/03/bayan-kepada-ikhwan-para-pendukung-dan.html.

religious discussions and propagating Aman Abdurrahman's teachings to GARIS followers. It was Bahrum who persuaded Chep Hernawan and his members to support ISIS.³⁷

Photos of the March demonstration were posted on pro-ISIS websites and Twitter accounts in the Arab world, which were then proudly quoted and retweeted by Al-Mustaqbal. One tweet said, "The Islamic State will soon come to Indonesia, *insya'allah*, and change the name of Indonesia to 'Islamic State of Southeast Asia!'"³⁸

Before April 2014, these initial pro-ISIS programs did not involve formal loyalty oaths. On 16 April 2014, however, Aman Abdurrahman made an online pledge, including the following passage:

[...] This is from your brothers and devoted followers, announcing our loyalty and pledge to our Amir, Commander of the Faithful Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi, may Allah make him victorious, upon the law of Allah and the traditions of his Prophet, peace be upon him, in accordance with our capabilities, because we are far away from you and some of us are oppressed, incarcerated in the prison of the Indonesian idolators (*thaghut*).

And as we announce this *bai'at* of ours, we invite all those committed to the purity of the faith in Indonesia and all over the world to defend this State in any manner possible, whether by sending personnel, contributing wealth, spreading true news about the State, its religious precepts and its achievements, as well as exposing the conspiracies to undermine it through denials and lies. We must also take care of the families of the people who are going to fight for the State and teach their children so they will grow up to be mujahidin like their fathers.³⁹

Other FAKSI activists quickly followed suit.

V. FAKSI ACTIVISTS IN SYRIA

A few FAKSI activists followed Aman Abdurrahman's exhortation and left for Syria to fight. One of these was Bahrum Syah, who left on 26 May 2014 together with Rosikien Noer. Rosikien was an activist of Ring Banten, trained in Mindanao, who was also a close friend of Iwan Dharmawan alias Rois. It was under Rois's influence that he became an ISIS supporter.

Rosikien was not the first Ring Banten member to go to Syria. In early 2014, Muhammad Abdul Rauf, one of the men imprisoned for his role in abetting the 2002 Bali bombing, who had been released in 2011, left for Syria. Abdul Rauf had been a model prisoner and on his release had no interest in violence in Indonesia. But he reportedly wanted to help fellow Muslims and his first choice was to help the Rohingya in Myanmar. On a visit to Nusakambangan to see Rois, he mentioned his intention and Rois reportedly urged him to go to Syria, helping him connect with the people who knew the travel routes and contacts. He died in Ramadi, Iraq a few months after he arrived.⁴⁰

Salim Mubarok, the FAKSI member from Malang, had also reached Syria before Bahrum Syah. He took his wife and child and on arrival took the name of Abu Jandal Al-Yemeni. With excellent Arabic, he quickly developed a wide network within ISIS and helped facilitate arrangements for other Indonesians coming to join ISIS, including five of his former students in Malang. He asked his students who were unable to travel to form a group in support of the caliphate in Malang. One of these was Muhammad Romly, who announced the establishment of a new

37 IPAC interview with former member of radical discussion group, Jakarta, August 2014.

38 "Aksi Dukungan dan Pembelaan terhadap Daulah Menjadi Perbincangan Ramai di Jejaring Sosial", al-mustaqbal.net, 17 March 2014.

39 Reproduced at prisonerofjoy.blogspot.com/2014_04_01_archive.html.

40 IPAC interview with former member of radical discussion group, Jakarta, August 2014.

group, East Java Partisans of the Caliphate (Ansharul Khilafah Jawa Timur) on 20 July in which those present pledged allegiance to Al-Baghdadi.⁴¹

Siswanto, the former FPI member from Lamongan, East Java, had been helping facilitate travel to Syria since mid-2013, especially for alumni of MIT training courses in Poso. One of those he helped was Bagus Maskuron, a former prisoner who had been arrested, convicted and briefly detained for a peripheral role in the robbery of the CIMB-Niaga Bank in Medan in August 2010.⁴² Bagus left for Syria in November 2013.

Siswanto himself had Poso connections. He knew Santoso from the time they had both fought in Poso with JI at the height of the communal conflict there. They reconnected through Muhammad Hidayat alias Dayat, a young Medan jihadi who had trained with Santoso, then fled to Java to avoid arrest in 2012.⁴³ Siswanto had helped him hide in Lamongan where he became an active recruiter for Santoso. One man recruited by Dayat was Zainul Arifin, a student of Siswanto who died in June 2013 in a failed suicide bombing of the Poso police command (no one else was killed). After the bombing, police tracked Dayat to East Java and killed him in an operation in Tulungagung in July 2013. Siswanto left Lamongan as a result and has reportedly been living in Bogor ever since.

We have a detailed account of recruitment from one FAKSI activist from West Java who joined ISIS in Syria together with his wife. Part of the story comes from interviews with his friends, part from Facebook messages he sent home. IPAC had no direct contact with the activist himself.⁴⁴

41 See "Lima Warga Malang Angkat Senjata Bergabung ISIS", Tempo.co, 9 August 2014 and "Siapa Salim di Video Ajakan Berjihad di ISIS 2", Tempo.co, 12 August 2014.

42 Born in Surabaya on 17 March 1984, Bagus had been active in Jemaah Tabligh before joining JAT. He was inducted into JAT in Surabaya in March 2010 by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir himself. In August 2010, he left for Medan, where he joined a group around one of Indonesia's most wanted suspects, Mohammed Abdi alias Sabar alias Pak Bos. Arrested for his alleged role in a Medan bank robbery by the group in September 2010, he was released shortly thereafter. In early 2013, he joined military training in Poso under Santoso. Siswanto agreed to help him with contacts in Syria because of Santoso's recommendation.

43 Dayat had first been recruited by Rizki Gunawan alias Udin, arrested for the hacking of a Malaysian foreign exchange website that netted him almost \$700,000, a portion of which was sent to Santoso. He was sent by Rizki to Poso for military training in 2012. After Rizki was arrested and Dayat needed somewhere to hide, he chose Lamongan on the recommendation of a JI prisoner from Medan, Toni Togar. Toni Togar had an old classmate from Ngruki named Saefudin Zuhri, who had become a religious teacher. Zuhri was never told that Dayat was a fugitive. Through him, Dayat met Achsanul Huda, a fish trader, and the two became friends, so much so that Dayat married Achsanul's younger sister. It was Achsanul who invited Dayat to take part in Siswanto's religious discussion group, where he promoted Aman Abdurrahman's teaching. Dayat then became Siswanto's student.

44 Long before FAKSI sent anyone to ISIS, an Indonesian had joined and died as a suicide bomber in Iraq. This was Wildan Mukhallad, a young man from Solokuro, Lamongan, the same village as the Bali bombers Ali Ghufroon alias Mukhlas, Amrozi and Ali Imron. He was also a 2011 graduate of Pesantren Al-Islam in Lamongan, the school owned by the brothers' extended family. Wildan had moved to Egypt in July 2011, at the age of sixteen, to live with an older brother who worked there. His greatest goal was to attend Al-Azhar University in Cairo, which he entered after getting an equivalency diploma from an Al-Azhar-linked high school. He had no affiliation with radical groups before he left and the only organisation he is known to have joined was an association of Indonesians from East Java in Egypt (Organisasi Keluarga Masyarakat Jawa Timur, known for short as Gama Jatim). As the conflict in Syria heated up in 2012 and Egyptians were leaving to join the anti-Assad *mujahidin*, Wildan decided to go as well. In late 2012, he disappeared. According to his Al-Azhar friends who have since returned to Indonesia, he told people he was going back to Java, but in fact he left for Turkey, crossed into Syria and joined a group Katibah Al-Muhajirin in Aleppo. The group had been formed by foreign fighters, mostly from the Caucasus and Central Asia, and was led by a man named Abu Umar Al-Shishani. Because he was still a teenager and had no military experience, he was not sent into battle. Instead, he worked initially as a porter of arms and ammunition but took part in military training. As his dedication became apparent, he was assigned to the "police", directing traffic in a rebel-controlled area, and then moved to a contested border area. In 2013, he was finally given the green light to take part in the fighting. Around the same time, his organisation, Katibah Muhajirin, merged with two other groups to form Jaish Al-Muhajirin Wal Anshar. In May 2013, the rift between ISIS and an-Nusra exploded into the open, with smaller organisations choosing between the two. It reached Jaish Al-Muhajirin Wal Anshar as well, splitting in between the two. Wildan chose the pro-ISIS faction. He then had to choose between the two training camps, combat forces or suicide bombers. He chose the second. On 10 February 2014, his family received word that he had died in Iraq, in a suicide bombing that probably took place in January 2014.

The activist in question is referred to here as Akang, not his real name. He was a student of Aman Abdurrahman's who helped FAKSI promote support for ISIS via social media. From the beginning he wanted nothing more than to go to Syria to fight with ISIS and for months before he left, he went everywhere wearing a vest that had "Army of Caliphate" written on the back. Through a friend, Akang was able to get a recommendation from an ISIS official in Syria—such a recommendation is a prerequisite for joining. The recommender also gives the name of the contact person on the Turkish border who will arrange the schedule for travel across the border, arrange accommodation, and wait for the departure. At the end of February 2014, Akang received the contact details and word that he could leave for Syria on 26 March.

Up until this point he had concealed his plans for going to Syria and had not even told his wife. With the travel details in hand, he finally told her. He was sure she would not object, since she was also a student of Aman Abdurrahman and understood jihad in Syria as an obligation. What he was not prepared for was that she would also insist on going, together with their four children. The eldest, a girl, was a student at a pesantren for Qur'an memorisation, Pesantren Tahfidz Ibnu Masud, in Bogor, while the youngest was only a few months old. She reportedly was worried that their religious education would suffer if they were left behind with relatives.

Akang did not know how he could possibly finance the departure of the whole family. His savings totaled only Rp.10 million (around \$1,000). But after he sold his car, all his electronic goods and electrical appliances and took his final salary and social security payments, he managed to amass about Rp.100 million (\$10,000). Travel costs amount to between \$1,000-\$1,500 per person, with the biggest expenses being the flight to Istanbul and local transport to the border as well as the cost of two days' accommodation there. The rest, including a living stipend, would be handled by ISIS. The family left on 26 March, as planned. To avoid any suspicion, they removed all signs that would identify them as religious conservatives: Akang's wife removed her *niqab* (veil) and Akang wore a t-shirt and pants, as though they were an ordinary family taking a holiday.

From Jakarta, they flew first to Doha, Qatar, then changed planes for Istanbul. From there they flew to Sanliurfa near the Syrian border and took a taxi to Akcakale, about 43 km away, the town from which most would-be ISIS *mujahidin* went to Syria, because it was just across from ISIS-controlled Raqqa province. On 28 March, as planned, the contact person came to meet them at their hotel and took them to a hostel known as *rumah anshar* (house of the partisans). There they met people from Belgium and Morocco, in total about 25 people. Akang and his family were urged to rest and told that at midnight, they would leave for Syria.

They were all woken up at midnight and went in a group toward the border. It was a narrow path and dark, and they were not allowed to use any lights for fear of attracting the attention of the Turkish army. But they were caught anyway by border guards. After being held briefly, they were released but told in no uncertain terms that they were forbidden to go into Syria. They all returned to the *rumah anshar*.

On 29 March, Akang and his family were moved to an apartment where they were separated: Akang went with the men, his wife stayed with the women, including two from Australia, one from Belgium and one from Morocco. A few days later, they were all moved again, this time to a place closer to the border. They soon got word that they would try another crossing. They left again at midnight; this time they had to climb over a barbed wire fence along the border.

Their task was to get over the fence, then run 600 meters—any shorter distance and they could still be arrested by Turkish soldiers. Again, however, Akang's group was caught by a Turkish patrol, and all were told they would be expelled from the country.

They did not go back to the house but waited three hours until the patrol was asleep and tried again. This time they succeeded in getting over the fence and into the town of Tal Abyad

in Raqqa. They were met by an ISIS soldier who asked for the name of their recommender. On providing the contacts, the soldier went away and returned with a van to pick up the group and take them to a house. Akang went to a safehouse for those slated for military training while his wife and children were placed in a house for women and children (*muhajirah*). Food was provided, even medical care for the children.

ISIS had two camps: the first trained cadets who were going directly into combat forces; the second was for candidate suicide bombers. Akang chose the first. After two weeks' training, at the end of May 2014, he graduated with some 250 others, and formally became an ISIS soldier with a uniform, weapon, salary and housing for his family.

After graduation, Akang and his family were moved to Haruriyah in Halab where Akang was assigned to an ISIS unit. As a soldier he was entitled to a salary of \$50 a month, with another \$50 provided to his wife and \$25 per child, so that every month, the family received \$200. Akang joined a unit led by Abu Muhammad Al-Amriki ("the American"), a former soldier of Al-Nusra who defected to ISIS. They were assisted by a sizeable ISIS force (Akang says 3,000) under the leadership of Abu Umar Al-Shishani, former head of another rebel group, Jaish Al-Muhajirin wal Anshar (JMA). Their goal was to take Aleppo.

But Akang could not spend every day with his family because he had to go to the front lines to defend new territory that ISIS had taken. His wife stayed home with the children, like other women forbidden by ISIS from activities that would take them out of the house. The most they could do was to help the ISIS media unit. As of August 2014, the family was still there.

VI. FAKSI AND THE CALIPHATE

On 29 June (or 1 Ramadhan 1435 in the Islamic calendar), ISIS startled the world by announcing the establishment of a caliphate with Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi henceforth to be known as Caliph Ibrahim. ISIS changed its name to Daulah Khilafah or the Caliphate State, better known as the Islamic State (IS). The declaration came three weeks after ISIS's lightning victories in Iraq, including the occupation of Mosul, its second largest city.

A. *The Pro-ISIS Response*

ISIS supporters in Indonesia greeted the declaration of the caliphate with euphoria. On 30 June, Aman Abdurrahman immediately swore an oath of loyalty from his prison cell, saying, "for the second time, we pledge our loyalty to the Great Imam of the Islamic Caliphate Shaikh Ibrahim Ibn 'Awwad Ibn Ibrahim Al Qurasyiy, blessings upon him, to hear and obey... as long as he follows the word of Allah and the traditions of the Prophet."⁴⁵

Three days later, on 5 July, several terrorist suspects held in Kelapa Dua, the headquarters of the paramilitary police (Brimob) south of Jakarta, took a similar oath. Their action was considered daring, because none had yet been sentenced. Generally, the detainees tend to be well-behaved because they know they can get heavier sentences when their trials come up if they are not.

The oath-taking was led by Iskandar alias Abu Qutaibah, the FAKSI member from Bima, another student of Aman Abdurrahman's. He was arrested in December 2013 in Bima, accused of involvement in MIB under the leadership of Abu Roban (killed by police in Central Java in May 2013). He had become involved in MIB through a cousin, Robithah, who had become one of Abu Roban's trusted associates. He also had received a share of the proceeds from Abu Roban's

⁴⁵ See millahibrahim.wordpress.com/2014/07/02/baiat-untuk-khilafah-islamiyyah.

robberies and had helped arrange training for his men with MIT in early 2013. At the time, there had been a plan to establish a joint MIT-MIB camp in Bima, although it never materialised. Iskandar, however, arranged for several members of his religious discussion group in Bima to train with Santoso in Poso.⁴⁶

Iskandar maintained his extremist views in detention and persuaded other terrorist suspects there to support ISIS. He also maintained communications with friends through his mobile phone, reportedly having regular conversations with Aman Abdurrahman, who also had a phone in Nusakambangan. On 20 July, he called some of his followers in Bima and urged them to support ISIS and the caliphate. That same day, a few dozen of them met at Mesjid Istiqomah, in Penato'i, Bima, and pledged their loyalty to the new caliph. The mosque was known for hosting extremist teachings—it was not only where Iskandar taught when he was in Bima, but also the meeting place for Aman Abdurrahman's followers there.⁴⁷

Meanwhile on 7 July, Fachry, inspired by a report that Omar Bakri Muhammad had sworn allegiance to Al-Baghdadi the day before, convened a Multaqod Da'wiy meeting at the UIN mosque in Ciputat, in which Fachry stated that Al-Baghdadi had met all the conditions for establishing a caliphate and that there was no reason for Muslims to hesitate any longer about declaring their support. Hundreds did so, and similar allegiance ceremonies were held in Malang, Solo, Makassar, Mukomuko (Bengkulu), Lampung, East Kalimantan and elsewhere. By the end of August 2014, an estimated 2,000 people had sworn oaths. Not everyone knew what they were attending. Some received text messages but had little idea that the program would end with an induction ceremony. The vast majority of those 2,000 will neither seek to go to Syria or have any interest in violence. But the numbers are an indication of the appeal that the idea of a caliphate can generate in a devout public.

B. *The Anti-ISIS Response*

Despite the enthusiasm for the Islamic State in circles like FAKSI, many Indonesian jihadi groups were critical of the caliphate declaration. They questioned its legality according to shari'a. Several anti-ISIS media outlets, such as Arrahmah, Kiblat (www.kiblat.net) and others published criticisms, including one from Al-Maqdisi entitled "Why is the Declaration of the Caliphate Dividing Us?" The caliphate, he wrote, should be a protector and source of mercy and compassion for all Muslims, but the opposite had happened: this caliphate was spilling the blood of other Muslims.

The caliphate should be the heaven Muslims are seeking, not a hell that adds to their despair. The caliphate is the dream of Muslims who have struggled to bring it about. Don't let this beautiful dream become a nightmare with the beheadings of those who dare to differ.⁴⁸

Al-Maqdisi also criticised the leadership of al-Baghdadi who was so quick to kill. This was vastly different from the model set by the Prophet who tried to unite, not divide.

[The Prophet's] leadership was not designed to pepper protected people with bullets or behead them with swords. It was not designed to separate them but rather to protect them, develop them, bring them to a higher level so that as human beings they would be safe from slander.⁴⁹

46 His own connection to Santoso was through Zipo alias Ustadz Khairi, an aide to Santoso who once taught at Pesantren Umar bin Khattab in Bima but fled to Poso after an incident in July 2011 when a bomb exploded at the school, apparently while a teacher named Firdaus was making it. The teacher's younger brother was killed in a police operation in Bima in September 2014.

47 It was also the place where a previous pro-ISIS program had been held under FAKSI auspices on 2 March 2014.

48 "Syaiikh Al-Maqdisi: Mengapa deklarasi khilafah justru memecah belah", Arrahmah.com, 13 July 2014.

49 Ibid.

Abu Qatadah, the Jordanian-Palestinian cleric expelled from Britain in 2012 on charges of links to Al-Qaeda, and a scholar whom many Indonesian jihadis admire, was also sharply critical. He said one of ISIS's mistakes was to make a one-sided declaration of the caliphate without going through a religious council representing the Muslim faithful, or at the very least, representing jihadi groups from several countries. He forbade his followers from joining the Islamic State, saying it was an unwarranted innovation under Islamic law (*bid'ah*) and that its illegality was multiplied by its claim to speak on behalf of all Muslims.

The criticism increased as the Islamic State showed its brutality, and many jihadis said it was a travesty that beheadings and massacres were carried out in the name of Islam.⁵⁰ This had no impact on IS's supporters, who insisted that actions condemned as barbaric by others were indeed in line with the teachings of Islam as they understood them.⁵¹

VII. PRISONS AND THE SPLIT IN JAT

The division over ISIS in the jihadi community mirrored the *takfir mu'ayyan* versus *takfir am* debate. The *takfir mu'ayyan* group led by Aman Abdurrahman supported the Islamic State, while the *takfir am* group, led by senior JI leaders such as Abu Dujana, Zarkasih and Abu Tholut, were opposed to ISIS and generally supported the Al-Nusra Front. The fact that all were in prison appeared to be no hindrance to debate or to getting positions aired on radical websites.

Many prisons had both factions. In Kembang Kuning, Nusakambangan, for example, Aman Abdurrahman and Rois led the pro-ISIS group while the anti-ISIS/pro-al Nusra faction was led by Toni Togar and Subur Sugiarto. In Jakarta's Cipinang prison, the majority supported Abu Dujana and Zarkasih but one of Aman's followers, Abu Haikal, supported ISIS.⁵² In Pasir Putih, another prison in the Nusakambangan complex, the pro-ISIS group was led by Mustaqim alias Abu Yusuf and Zulkifli Lubis alias Abu Irhab, while Ali Miftah and Wak Geng led their opponents.

Initially, two of Pasir Putih's best-known inmates, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Abu Husna, took a wait-and-see stance, and both factions tried to win them over. Fellow inmates in the anti-ISIS group were too junior to have any influence. Some of Ba'asyir's regular visitors, including senior JAT leaders Fuad Al Hazimi and Muhammad Achwan, as well as his sons, Abdurrahim and Abdur Rasyid, tried to explain the details of conditions in Syria and urged him to stay neutral, given the complexity of the issues. But the leaders of the pro-ISIS group were very aggressive in pressing their views and had the advantage of seeing Ba'asyir every day. Moreover, Aman Abdurrahman would call Ba'asyir from Kembang Kuning prison for long discussions via mobile phone. The stakes were high because Ba'asyir was so well known, and the pro-ISIS group believed that if he could be convinced to take their side, his many admirers would follow.

Eventually, the pro-ISIS group won the battle for Ba'asyir. When the caliphate was announced on 29 June, the old cleric joined in the group's general rejoicing. On 2 July, he and other ISIS supporters swore allegiance to Al-Baghdadi in a letter that was posted on Al-mustaqbal.net, saying they considered themselves part of his army and ready to obey the orders of the caliphate

50 See for example Thariq Abdul Hamid, "ISIS Adalah Krisis-Musuh Dalam Selimut", Arrahmah.com, 24 September 2014.

51 See "Bayan Seputar Tindakan Khilafah Terhadap Kaum Nasrani", Al-mustaqbal.net, 26 August 2014.

52 Bakti Rasnah alias Abu Haikal served as bodyguard for Dulmatin, the Bali bomber who helped plan the Aceh training camp. Abu Haikal was arrested in 2010 and sentenced to six years for his role in the camp. He could be due for release in late 2014.

he led.⁵³ It was signed by Ba'asyir, Abu Husna, Abu Yusuf, Abu Ja'far and Ayah Banta.⁵⁴

In the letter, Ba'asyir and his friends asked the Islamic State to secure their freedom: "In closing, Excellent Shaikh, we the prisoners of Pasir Putih who support the caliphate, hope that Allah will facilitate you and the army of the caliphate to help release us who have been languishing in the prisons of the Indonesian idolators, via war or ransom", quoting a *hadith* that obliges Muslims to try to free Muslim prisoners in *kafir* hands.

News of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's pledge spread quickly within the JAT community. Members of its executive board immediately went to Kembang Kuning prison to seek clarification from Ba'asyir. In a meeting on 10 July 2014, Ba'asyir told the board that indeed he supported the caliphate but that he had not yet taken any oath. He also said JAT members should feel free to choose whether or not to support ISIS. Ba'asyir's refusal to admit that he had already sworn allegiance to Al-Baghdadi annoyed the pro-ISIS group in prison, and they leaked the text of his pledge to Al-Mustaqbal which published it the next day.⁵⁵

JAT then issued a statement that the news of the pledge was not true, since Ba'asyir himself had denied it, but senior JAT leaders began to wonder whether he was telling the truth. They were afraid that he was being exploited by pro-ISIS inmates; they also worried that he was not getting balanced information about the Syrian conflict. Accordingly, on 13 July, the religious and executive councils of JAT met and formally ruled that if a decision of the Amir (Ba'asyir) was in violation of Islamic law, then it was forbidden for members to follow it. The aim of the ruling was to protect members from a potentially harmful decision by Ba'asyir.

Ba'asyir, not surprisingly, reacted angrily to the ruling, seeing it as an attempt to limit his authority. A similar concern had led to his decision to leave the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI) in 2008. Because of this, in a 17 July meeting with members of JAT's religious council that MMI leader Abu Jibril also attended, Ba'asyir acknowledged that he had indeed sworn an oath to Al-Baghdadi and moreover, that it was obligatory for all JAT members to obey that decision. Whoever refused, he said, would have to leave the group.⁵⁶ At the same time, he fired Muhammad Achwan as JAT operational commander (*amir biniy-abah*) and Fuad Al Hazimi as head of the religious council on the grounds that they opposed Ba'asyir's decision on the pledge. He replaced both with Afif Abdul Majid, a Ngruki teacher.

As a result, Muhammad Achwan, Fuad Al Hazimi and Ba'asyir's own son Abdurrahim alias Im decided to form a new organisation in August 2014 that they called Jamaah Ansharusy Syariah (JAS).

VIII. DEVELOPMENTS IN SYRIA

Meanwhile, Indonesians continue to leave for Syria, where they seem to be making contact with fellow Southeast Asians, especially Malaysians.

The number of Indonesians in Syria remains a matter of conjecture. On 14 August, General Sutarman, the national police commander, said police had the names of 56 Indonesians in Syria, including four who had died as suicide bombers.⁵⁷ On 25 August, Ansyad Mbai, the head of

53 "Bai'at Ikhwan Masjunin Di LP Pasir Putih Yang Mendukung Khilafah Islamiyah", Al-mustaqbal.net, 11 July 2014.

54 Abu Yusuf's real name is Mustaqim. A Lampung native, he was arrested in connection with the Aceh training camp. Abu Ja'far is Aryanto Haluta, arrested for shooting two police in Poso in May 2011. The last is particularly interesting. Ayah Banta is an Acehnese and Partai Aceh supporter arrested for the politically motivated killing of Javanese workers before the 2012 local elections in Aceh and for plotting to kill then-governor Irwandi Yusuf, who was running for a second term against Partai Aceh's candidate. Ayah Banta had no previous connection with jihadi organizations.

55 "Bai'at Ikhwan Masjunin Di LP Pasir Putih Yang Mendukung Khilafah Islamiyah", op.cit.

56 IPAC interview with former member of radical discussion group, Jakarta, August 2014.

57 "56 WNI ke Suriah, 4 Tewas Karena Bom Bunuh Diri, *Solo Pos*, 14 August 2014.

the National Anti-Terrorism Agency (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terrorisme, BNPT) said that his agency had the names of 34 Indonesians who had joined ISIS. Those numbers, gleaned from families and friends, interrogation depositions of would-be terrorists arrested over the last year, and social media are widely believed to be low. The true figure is probably over a hundred, though estimates in the Australian media of over 300 are almost certainly too high.⁵⁸

Indonesians' lack of facility in English and Arabic may be another factor keeping the numbers down, but language may also be drawing Indonesians and Malaysians together. From Facebook pages, it was clear that ISIS supporters in Indonesia and Malaysia were "friending" each other. It was also clear that some Indonesians were identifying themselves as Malaysians, perhaps as a security measure, just as when Indonesians and Malaysians were going to Afghanistan in the early 1990s, many identified themselves as Filipinos. To further throw possible trackers off the scent, Indonesians headed for the Middle East are reportedly leaving from Malaysia, and Malaysians are leaving from Indonesia. There is so much travel between the two countries that it would raise no flags with immigration authorities on either side.

But in July 2014, the Indonesian-Malaysian connection in Syria took on a new dimension, with the idea of a *katibah nusantara*, or special unit for Malay-speaking *mujahidin* in ISIS. Before the declaration of the caliphate, there were relatively few Malaysians with ISIS; more had joined the Ajnad Al-Sham Islamic Union based in and around Damascus.⁵⁹ One of the few to join ISIS was Ahmad Tarmimi, who became the first Malaysian to die as a suicide bomber in Iraq in late May 2014. By early August, at least 22 Indonesians and Malaysians had come together under the ISIS banner in the town of Al-Shadadi, Hasaka province in early August, and they began to discuss the desirability of forming a *katibah*, a military unit roughly equivalent to a company, about 100 men. Bahrum Syah and Rosikien Nur took part in the discussions and posted a photo of one meeting on the subject on Facebook.⁶⁰

A Malay-speaking unit made sense militarily, because communication was a perennial problem. Most Indonesians were not fluent in either English or Arabic, and those assigned as individuals to Arabic-speaking units were often at a loss. It also made sense given the ISIS agenda to expand the reach of the caliphate to other areas, including Southeast Asia. Members of the *katibah* could become the vanguard for a fighting force that would reach into Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

The creation of the *katibah* that another possible consequence of Southeast Asians fighting in Syria is better connections and a shared strategy after they return home.

IX. THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The Indonesian government has reacted more forcefully to the appearance of IS than to any other extremist movement in memory and so has the mainstream Muslim community. The difficulty will be to translate genuine concern into meaningful change in terms of new legislation, improved immigration controls and better management of prisons.

58 See for example "Indonesia lauds Australia security code to keep out militants", *The Australian*, 18 September 2014, which cites an estimate of 350 from unnamed intelligence sources. It is surprising to some that European countries could have more nationals fighting in Syria than the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, but Indonesians do not have the family ties to Syria and its neighbours that many *mujahidin* from immigrant communities in Europe do; Europe is also closer than Indonesia.

59 See "Islamic militant's deaths sparks eulogies in Malaysia," Reuters, 15 September 2014 and www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-DTD7-H83s0.

60 The Facebook page, "Bersama Ad Dawlah Al Khilafah Al Islamiyyah #9", 17 August 2014, has since been closed.

A. *New Instructions*

Though forceful, the government reaction was somewhat delayed. The pro-ISIS demonstration in central Jakarta on 16 March did not attract much notice in the Indonesian media, nor did the first group of pledging ceremonies, although the 20 July event in Malang event had to be moved twice before finding a mosque that would allow it to go forward. It was the appearance of the “Joining the Ranks” video on 23 July and the coverage it received that shocked the government out of its complacency. Here was an Indonesian urging other Indonesians to join a political entity other than the Indonesian republic. It was not that IS was more violent or more of a security risk than earlier movements, although both may well be true; it was that it constituted a direct challenge to national loyalty that so alarmed officials.

On 4 August, following a special security meeting, with police, TNI, BNPT and the intelligence agencies present, Coordinating Minister for Security Djoko Suyanto announced the ideology of IS was contrary to Pancasila, the unitary state of Indonesia and the national motto, “Unity in Diversity”. Accordingly, there would be an all-government effort to prevent the establishment of IS branches and the dissemination of its teachings. The president, said Djoko, had ordered the Minister of Religion to work with community leaders to explain to the public the dangers of IS; it was not a question of religion but one of ideology, he stressed.

Shortly afterwards, banners began appearing all over Indonesia, on mosques, police stations, traffic circles and elsewhere, presumably funded by the government, saying “[name of town] rejects ISIS”.

It was not clear what law would be used. A few days earlier, BNPT director Ansyad Mbai suggested that Indonesia could and would revoke the citizenship of Indonesians under Article 23 of the 2006 Citizenship Law which punishes anyone who “voluntarily takes an oath or declares loyalty to a foreign state or part of such a state”.⁶¹ But it was not clear how this could actually be enforced. As one pro-ISIS supporter said defiantly in a BBC interview on 6 August, “What are they going to do, deport me?” He was arrested three days later, but charged with an earlier crime and no mention was made of the citizenship law.⁶²

On 5 August, the Corrections Directorate issued a circular to all prisons about preventing ISIS influence in prisons and detention centers.⁶³ It instructed all officials to increase supervision of terrorist prisoners; discipline any inmate who took an oath of loyalty to ISIS; search visitors and prisoners nearing the end of their sentences who are allowed to leave the prison during the day; carry out regular searches of cell blocks; confiscate any items with the word “ISIS” on it; and prevent any provocative words or actions on the part of prisoners.

Local officials issued their own regulations. On 12 August, for example, the governor of East Java issued Gubernatorial Regulation No. 5/2014 that ISIS henceforth was banned in East Java; that all districts and municipalities undertake an information and public guidance campaign about ISIS and report any ISIS activities to the security authorities; and that the latter coordinate with law enforcement to act on any reports from the public.⁶⁴

As the world’s media covered ISIS atrocities in the areas under its control, President Yudhoyono decided that more steps were needed. On 14 September, he issued a seven-point instruction aimed at curbing the dissemination of ISIS teachings. They included the following:

61 “BNPT: Pendukung ISIS Terancam Hukuman”, *Kompas*, 1 August 2014.

62 The man in question was Afif Abdul Majid, a teacher at Al-Mukmin pesantren in Ngruki who was arrested because of his ISIS activities but charged for having helped fund the 2010 Aceh training camp. Police said he had been on the wanted list since then, but he had been preaching openly ever since and they had made no attempt to arrest him.

63 Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Corrections Directorate, “Surat Ederan No. Pas-330.PK.01.04.03 tahun 2014 tentang Peningkatan Kewaspadaan Terkait Aktivitas Narapidana Teroris di Lapas dan Rutan”, 5 August 2014.

64 “Ini Peraturan Gubernur Jatim soal Larangan ISIS di Jatim,” *Kompas*, 12 August 2014.

- Stepped-up efforts to prevent Indonesians citizens from going to join ISIS by being more “selective” in the issuance of passports and urging embassies in Jakarta to also be careful in their issuing of visas to the Middle East. Djoko suggested that Turkey’s policy of visas on arrival for Indonesians made monitoring more difficult.
- Improved monitoring of Indonesians already in Syria and their possible return. He said the police had information on four who had died there.
- Stricter monitoring of foreigners in Indonesia.
- Better supervision of prisons where terrorist prisoners are held, given that pledging ceremonies that took place there.
- Stepped-up security in areas known to be home to radical networks such as Poso, Ambon, East Java and Central Java.
- Deployment of “soft power” in an effort to be led by the Minister of Religion and involving community leaders and clerics to try to guard against the influence of ISIS teachings.
- Firm punishment against those involved in terrorist activities.⁶⁵

Many of these are in the spirit of the proposed UN Security Council resolution that would require countries to adopt legislation that requires prosecution of those who join or aid terrorist organizations abroad and that bans transit through their territory of people involved in such organizations.⁶⁶ The problem will be to translate the president’s instructions into law. President Yudhoyono has only a month left in office; it will be up to his newly elected successor, Joko Widodo better known as Jokowi, and his security team to push a new bill through a fractious parliament with other priorities.

B. Arrests Since 1 July 2014

Indonesian counter-terror police have made numerous arrests since the ban on ISIS was announced but most of those taken into custody have been charged for other alleged crimes. Those arrested only for possession of ISIS materials have generally been let go with a warning.

One of the most high-profile ISIS supporters to be arrested was Afif Abdul Majid, a JAT leader and teacher at Ba’asyir’s Al-Mukmin pesantren in Ngruki. On 9 August 2014 he was apprehended in Bekasi, outside Jakarta, and charged with fund-raising for the 2010 Aceh camp. According to police, he had been active in ISIS since late 2013. He had gone to Syria, lived with ISIS for several months and taken an oath there to one Abu Hisham, representing Al-Baghdadi.⁶⁷ In May, Ustad (teacher) Afif had given a lecture in Solo at the Baitul Makmur Mosque, festooned with ISIS flags, about his experience in Syria. The second speaker had been M. Fachry and the meeting appears to have been organised by Al-Mustaqbal.⁶⁸

Another prominent pro-ISIS activist arrested was Muhammad Saifudin Umar, better known as Abu Fida. A former JI member who left to join JAT in 2008 and became a member of its

65 “Ini Tujuh Instruksi Presiden Untuk Pencegahan Paham ISIS”, *Kompas*, 14 September 2014.

66 “Obama to Lead U.N. Effort to Halt Movement of Terror Recruits”, *New York Times*, 22 September 2014.

67 “Polri: Ketua JAT Afif Dibaiat ISIS di Suriah”, *Tempo.co*, 10 August 2014.

68 “Tabligh Akbar Daulah Islamiyyah Menyongsong Khilafah Sukses di Solo, Alhamdulillah!”, *Al-mustaqbal.net*, 12 May 2014.

shari'a council, Abu Fida was arrested in Surabaya on 14 August 2014.⁶⁹ He had left for Syria on 3 August to join ISIS, in a group of eight, arranged by Salim Mubarok. He became ill with the flu and was quarantined by Turkish authorities before he left for Syria, however, and was subsequently deported, only to be arrested shortly after his return. The other seven presumably made it to Syria. Abu Fida was one of the main speakers at a program on 15 July 2014 at the Baitul Makmur mosque together with Ustad Afif, above, that concluded with a pledge of loyalty to the new caliphate. He was charged under the terrorism law for his role in hiding fugitives in a number of cases dating back to 2012.⁷⁰

Others have been arrested for their connections to MIT or MIB or for possessing arms and ammunition.⁷¹

As of late September, however, M. Fachry continued to openly preach support for ISIS. As someone who has never committed a violent act, hid fugitives or possessed weapons, he is difficult to prosecute under Indonesian law.

C. *Reaction in the Muslim Community*

The declaration of the caliphate and the excesses of ISIS have generated a huge backlash in Indonesia, even before the government declared it a banned organization. All of the mainstream Muslim organizations have condemned it. In a statement on 7 August, leaders of major Muslim organizations grouped together as the Brotherhood Forum of the Indonesian Council of Religious Scholars (Forum Ukhuwah Islamiyah Majelis Ulama Indonesia or FU-MUI), declared:

1. The Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS) is a radical movement in the name of Islam but does not put forward the compassionate and merciful aspects of Islam. On the contrary, it tries to impose its will using violence, murder of innocents, and destruction of places considered holy by Muslims and seeks to bring down states that came into being as the result of the struggle of the Muslim community against colonialism.
2. Muslim mass organizations and other institutes reject the existence of the ISIS movement in Indonesia that has a great potential to divide the Muslim community and shake the Unitary Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila.
3. We urge all Muslims not be incited by the agitation and provocations of ISIS that is trying to impose its teachings in Indonesia and the rest of the world. We warn all Muslim organ-

69 Abu Fida was born in Surabaya on 26 January 1966. A graduate of Ummul Qura university in Mecca, he was arrested in 2004 for sheltering Noordin Top and tortured but never tried. He became active in MMI Surabaya, then joined JAT after 2008 and became a member of its shari'a council. Around 2008 he led an organisation called the Solidarity Forum for the Islamic State of Iraq (Forum Solidaritas Daulah Islamiyah Iraq, FORSODIQ) in Surabaya that was very admiring of Al-Zarqawi's tactics. In December 2013, he took part in a discussion of the book, *The Two-Arm Strategy*. Among other things he says one does not have to choose between the struggle in Syria and the struggle in Poso. By supporting the jihad in Syria, the struggle in Poso can be widened. He cites Al-Zawahiri throughout, not Al-Baghdadi, but that was before the caliphate was proclaimed. See www.shoutussalam.com/2013/12/antara-jihad-poso-dan-jihad-suriah.

70 See www.youtube.com/watch?v=Trj_xuWi83M and www.beritaumat.com/berita/sang-aktor-perekruit-mujahidin-indonesia-berperan-seolah-olah-gila-setelah-ditangkap-tim-densus-88.

71 On 19 July, Adham Halid alias Rafi alias Memet and Agussalaim alias Agus Abdullah bin Ibrahim/Jaho, were arrested in Bima and charged with links to Abu Roban and MIB. On 11 August, a man named Riyanto was arrested in Karanganyar, Central Java and accused of hiding a gun and bullets at the request of an MIB fugitive. See www.beritaumat.com/berita/sederetan-peran-riyanto-alias-jono-dalam-aksi-terorisme-bersama-mib. On 14 September, three men, Saiful, Irfan and Yudi, were arrested in Palu, Central Sulawesi together with four Uighurs who were apparently trying to get to Poso to train with Santoso. On 20 September, five men suspected of links to Poso were arrested in Bima: Juwaid alias Herman alias David, Suhaili alias Gondrong, Ustad Juned, Dedi Irawan and Salman. The arrests followed the capture in June of another Bima fugitive, Idham alias Oni. A sixth man named Nurdin was killed in the 20 September police operations in Dompu, Sumbawa. He was said to be the younger brother of Firdaus, a religious teacher from Bima who died in 2011 apparently while constructing a bomb.

isations, institutes, mosques and families to be vigilant and prevent the development of the ISIS movement in all corners of our country.

4. We support the speedy, appropriate and firm action of the government to ban the ISIS movement Indonesia and urge the government to enforce the law.⁷²

Probably far more effective than this declaration has been the outpouring of anti-ISIS sentiments on Facebook, Twitter and other social media, from ordinary Indonesians shocked at the image of Islam that ISIS conveys.

It is also important to note that most of the hardline Muslim community have distanced themselves from ISIS or have taken a wait-and-see stance, including Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), Hizb ut-Tahrir, Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia and others. MMI went further than most in calling it a *khawarij* (deviant) movement. Others are convinced that the ISIS issue is being deliberately fanned by the intelligence community to divide the Muslim community.⁷³

X. CONCLUSIONS: DEALING WITH HEIGHTENED RISK

The ISIS network in Indonesia is dangerous, but the strong, unequivocal government and community reaction in rejecting it is very good news. Now the Yudhoyono government needs to implement its instructions in the month it has left in office, and the incoming Jokowi government needs to follow through.

One critical area is obviously prison management. Stopping Aman Abdurrahman from translating ISIS pronouncements will not stop their dissemination but it could slow them down and in any case could be a test case of ability of the Indonesian prison system to manage prisoners, their visitors and their communications. It is not against Aman's human rights to deny him access to a cell phone or reading materials in Arabic, nor to prevent visitors from bringing in any form of printed or electronic material.

The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, international guidelines first published by the United Nations in 1977, state that "Prisoners shall be kept informed regularly of the more important items of news by the reading of newspapers, periodicals or special institutional publications, by hearing wireless transmissions, by lectures or by any similar means as authorised or controlled by the administration" (Rule 39) and "So far as practicable, every prisoner shall be allowed to satisfy the needs of his religious life by attending the services provided in the institution and having in his possession the books of religious observance and instruction of his denomination" (Rule 42). Prison officials need much more explicit training in what is and is not allowed and ensure that tight control is maintained over communication and reading materials.

The Jokowi government also needs to follow through on Yudhoyono's instructions to strengthen the capacity of the immigration service to monitor the comings and goings of ISIS supporters. This means more coordination with Detachment 88 and BNPT in providing watch lists for officials at ferry terminals and airports as well as timely sharing of information with governments in the region, especially Malaysia. Any bureaucratic obstacles to that sharing should be reviewed.

It also needs to consult with other governments before issuing visas for radical clerics such as Anjem Choudary and Omar Bakri.

Indonesia does need a number of stronger laws to enforce its commitment to banning ISIS. For example, at present it is not illegal for Indonesians to travel overseas to take part in military

⁷² Majelis Ulama Indonesia, press release, "Pernyataan Sikap FU-MUI tentang ISIS", 7 August 2014.

⁷³ See for example "Wawancara Harist Abu Ulya: ISIS Antara Khilafah & Jebakan Intel", *voa-islam.com*, 4 August 2014.

training, and it should be. At the same time, Indonesia needs to avoid the temptation to turn the current anti-terrorism law into something that more resembles an Internal Security Act like Singapore's, with provisions for lengthy preventive detention without trial. In the absence of new laws, the government may have to fall back on prosecuting some ISIS organisers under Criminal Code provisions that punish criminal incitement.

President-elect Jokowi will likely defer to his security advisers on the issue of counter-terrorism but he needs to think very carefully about staffing key positions. If the head of BNPT changes, for example, it is important that it stay with the police, not the army, and that the danger posed by ISIS is not seen as an opening to give a greater role to the Indonesian military. It is the counter-terrorism police who have the institutional knowledge, the intelligence networks and the track record to manage the problem, although the high rate of deaths of suspected terrorists in police operations over the last two years also needs to be brought down.

Finally, the incoming government also needs to rethink a strategy for counter-radicalisation, including through the development of a social media strategy.⁷⁴ This is where BNPT and the Yudhoyono government have been weakest. It should not have taken a video posted on YouTube on 23 July to convince the government that ISIS was a threat, when incendiary teachings had been taking place across Indonesia for the preceding year.

74 For more on needed improvements in Indonesia's efforts to counter violent extremism, see IPAC Report No. 11, *Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia: Need for a Rethink*, 30 June 2014.

INSTITUTE FOR POLICY ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT (IPAC)

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In areas wracked by violence, accurate analysis of conflict is essential not only to peaceful settlement but also to formulating effective policies on everything from good governance to poverty alleviation. We look at six kinds of conflict: communal, land and resource, electoral, vigilante, extremist and insurgent, understanding that one dispute can take several forms or progress from one form to another. We send experienced analysts with long-established contacts in the area to the site to meet with all parties, review primary written documentation where available, check secondary sources and produce in-depth reports, with policy recommendations or examples of best practices where appropriate.

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