

THE CENTER FOR PREVENTIVE ACTION

Peace in Papua

Widening a Window of Opportunity

Blair A. King

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FOREWORD

The Council on Foreign Relations' Center for Preventive Action works to develop and promote tangible, practical recommendations for averting deadly violence. In 2003, the CPA convened an independent Commission on Indonesia to address the regional conflict in the archipelago's easternmost province of Papua (formerly Irian Jaya), where proindependence groups have waged a long struggle against the central government. This Council Special Report follows up on that commission's report, *Peace and Progress in Papua*, since much has happened in the country since then, including devastating December 2004 tsunamis, movement toward peace in Aceh, and a change of leadership in Jakarta.

Peace in Papua outlines specific recommendations for the U.S. government, the Indonesian government, Papuans, and other actors to follow in moving toward a comprehensive resolution of the conflict. A failure to capitalize on the momentum generated by the Aceh peace agreement would be a missed opportunity for preventing violent conflict; far worse, failure would prolong the suffering in Papua.

Richard N. Haass

President

Council on Foreign Relations

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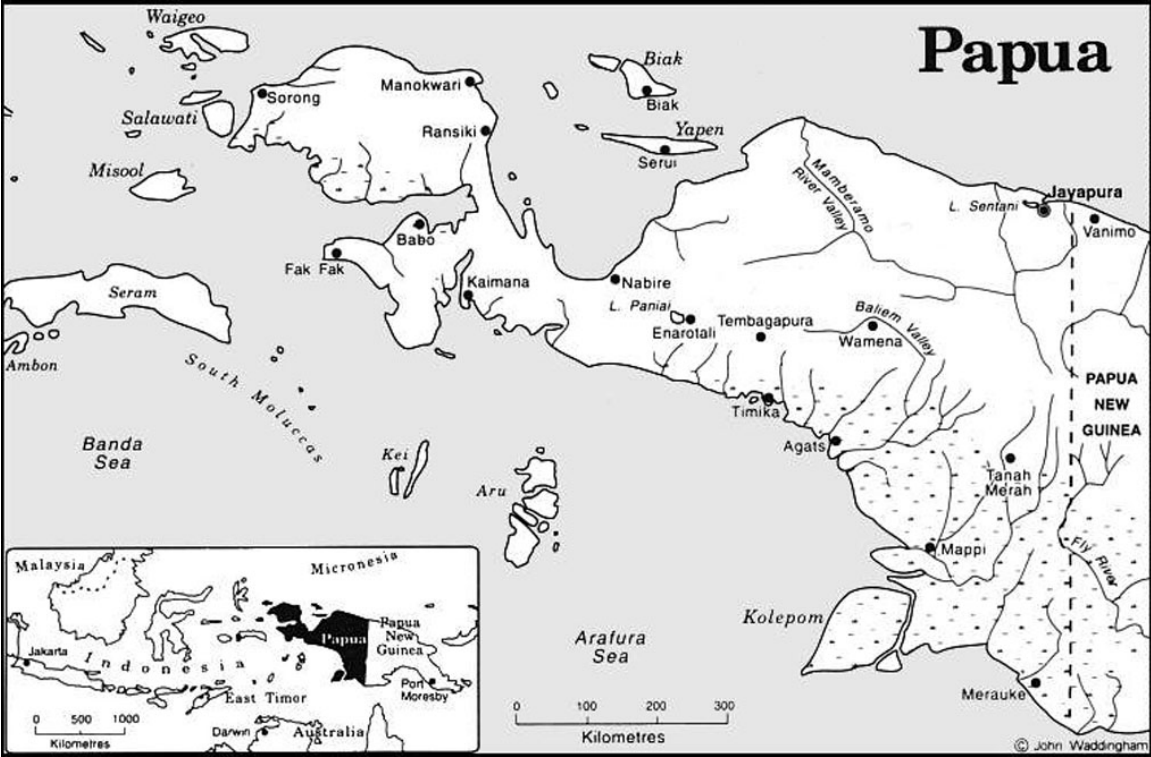
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Blair A. King

MAP



Source: Based on a map from <http://www.cs.utexas.edu/users/cline/papua/map.jpg>.

ACRONYMS

AMM	Aceh Monitoring Mission
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
COHA	Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (in Aceh)
DPR	People's Representative Council (of Indonesia)
DPRD	Regional People's Representative Council (in West Irian Jaya)
DPRP	Papuan People's Representative Council (in Papua)
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EU	European Union
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GAM	Free Aceh Movement
MRP	Papuan People's Assembly
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OPM	Free Papua Organization
TNI	Indonesian Armed Forces
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

COUNCIL SPECIAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2006 and 2007, the Indonesian government and the international community have a window of opportunity to begin to achieve a comprehensive solution that is acceptable to all sides to the conflict in Papua. With the October 2004 inauguration of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Vice President Jusuf Kalla, Papuans had raised expectations that a comprehensive settlement could be achieved. These expectations have only increased with the implementation of a peace agreement for Aceh since August 2005. Furthermore, Yudhoyono and Kalla are not up for reelection until 2009, and their national public approval ratings remain quite high, providing them with plenty of political breathing room for reasonable initiatives.

Within Papua, conditions are also ripe for a solution. The Papuan People's Assembly (MRP), an important component of the 2001 Law on Special Autonomy for Papua, was finally established in November 2005. Gubernatorial elections in Papua and West Irian Jaya took place in March 2006. The Papuan public has appeared willing to give the new administration the benefit of the doubt, and there remains a relative lack of separatist violence in the province.

Nonetheless, the window may be closing. Since President Yudhoyono's inauguration, progress in fully implementing the special autonomy law has remained slow and controversy has continued over dividing Papua into two to five smaller provinces. While local governments are receiving increased funding, these institutions remain ill-prepared to handle the funds, contributing to corruption and delaying improvements in services, infrastructure, and economic benefits for Papua's impoverished population. More troublesome are the reported augmentation of Indonesian military forces in Papua in recent months and the incidents of human rights violations that continue to go unpunished. Some Papuans are beginning to regard the current administration as no different from past administrations and are growing more frustrated by what they perceive to be a lack of respect for their legitimate concerns.

European states, Japan, Australia, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states, and international organizations—such as the United Nations, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank—can help push this window open, with U.S. leadership, by creating the conditions under which a meaningful dialogue between Papuans and the Indonesian government can take place. The Indonesian government and Papuans should take an integrated approach to resolving the conflict, beginning with more easily achievable objectives and working gradually toward more difficult issues in a series of confidence-building measures. Concerned states and international organizations can assist this process by quietly pressuring both parties to take a sincere and realistic approach to conflict resolution, acting as a neutral interlocutor if necessary, and marshaling an assistance package targeted toward supporting peace efforts.

This report outlines recommendations for the Indonesian government, Papuans, and other countries, particularly the United States, for moving toward a comprehensive resolution of the conflict while still addressing Aceh and other challenges. It strives for balance—rooted in an idealistic vision of peace, but with concrete recommendations for steps to take to achieve a realistic compromise.

Recommendations for the Indonesian government focus on adhering, in 2006 and 2007, to its public commitments to achieve a comprehensive solution to the conflict in Papua by:

- Engaging with legitimate representatives of Papuan society in a wide-ranging dialogue regarding various issues, including truth, justice, and reconciliation; security arrangements; and division of the province;
- Fully implementing special autonomy for the region;
- Improving local governance and increasing transparency so that special autonomy funds improve the well-being of ordinary Papuans; and
- Reforming security arrangements so that human rights abuses cease.

Recommendations for the United States and others, including European countries, Japan, Australia, and ASEAN member states, include constructive engagement and support to Indonesian conflict resolution efforts through quiet but firm diplomacy. A

package of technical and financial assistance, worth at least \$50 million per year for ten years, is needed and should include support for:

- Education and training for Papuans in public administration, regional planning, natural resource management, and other relevant fields;
- Accountable and sustainable management of Papua's natural resources;
- Education and public health sector improvements;
- Civil service, judicial, military, and police reform in Papua, building on national efforts;
- Expansion of the lawmaking, budgeting, and oversight capacity of legislatures in Papua;
- Enhancement of civil society's ability to monitor, investigate, and expose human rights violations, corruption, and other abuses of power; and
- Establishment of a Papua trust fund to lengthen and smooth out the flow of special autonomy funds to the region.

Failure to take advantage of the current window of opportunity will prolong the suffering of the Papuan people, rendering peaceful resolution of the conflict increasingly unlikely. The potential for conflict was vividly and tragically demonstrated as this report was going to press, with the deadly confrontations in mid-March 2006 in Timika and Jayapura. The next two years are a critical period in which the government and Papuans should embark on bold initiatives toward peace, before the 2009 presidential and legislative elections begin looming on the horizon.

BACKGROUND AND ASSESSMENT

Papua remains incompletely integrated into Indonesia, and Papuans feel culturally, politically, and economically marginalized as a result. Native Papuans are of Melanesian racial stock and are distinguished from the Malay racial majority of Indonesia by their darker skin, curly hair, and facial features. The majority has generally perceived Melanesians to be a culturally inferior people in need of paternalistic treatment in order to civilize them. Most Papuans are Christian or animist, another source of difference with the Muslim majority of Indonesia. Cultural marginalization has been exacerbated by significant in-migration from other parts of Indonesia. An estimated 34 to 40 percent of Papua's total population of 2.3 million is ethnically non-Papuan.¹ With greater education and connections to the rest of Indonesia, these migrants have tended to crowd native Papuans out of jobs in agriculture, commerce, and government. Indeed, health and educational attainment indicators in Papua remain among the lowest in Indonesia, and the rate of HIV/AIDS infection in the region is estimated to be among the highest nationally.²

Politically, unlike East Timor, West Papua (as it was known at the time) had been part of the Netherlands East Indies, but the Dutch retained control over it when the rest of Indonesia won its independence at the end of 1949. Under increasing international pressure, especially from the United States, the Dutch transferred control to Indonesia via the United Nations in 1962–63, on condition that a referendum on the territory's future be held within six years. In 1969, 1,024 Papuan leaders gathered for an "Act of Free Choice" and, under intimidation by the Indonesian military, made a unanimous declaration of their support for integration with Indonesia as the province of West Irian (later renamed Irian Jaya, "Victorious Irian"). The United States and the Netherlands accepted this process, largely because they wanted to retain Indonesia as a Cold War ally against the Soviet

¹ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Papua Needs Assessment: An Overview of Findings and Implications for the Programming of Development Assistance*, August 2005, p. 12; Olivia Ward, "Eloquent Voice for Remote People," *Toronto Star*, December 9, 2005.

² UNDP, *Papua Needs Assessment*. See also Graeme Hugo, *Indonesia: Internal and International Population Mobility: Implications for the Spread of HIV/AIDS*, UNDP South East Asia HIV and Development Project, November 2001, pp. 14–19.

Union.³ In a resolution expressing approval later that year, the UN General Assembly simply took note of the results of the act. Papuans have chafed under Indonesian control ever since, although the level of armed resistance has never been comparable to that in Aceh. Irian Jaya continued to suffer economic marginalization under President Suharto's authoritarian New Order regime from the 1970s to the 1990s, even as the region's natural resource wealth—including forests, oil and gas reserves, and mineral deposits, such as one of the largest copper and gold mines in the world, operated by U.S.-based Freeport-McMoRan—began to be exploited. Although allegations of genocide are perhaps exaggerated, the Indonesian military, the backbone of the New Order, has been especially brutal in Irian Jaya, resulting in the death and disappearance of thousands of Papuans since 1969.⁴ Human rights abuses have gone largely unpunished, with little significant improvement in this regard under the new democratic regime.

President Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie's (May 1998–October 1999) administration initiated a nationwide decentralization policy, although his tenure was also noted for a law that divided Irian Jaya into three smaller provinces. That law was not implemented at the time due to the significant resistance it met in Irian Jaya, where it was perceived as an attempt to sow discord among Papuans and maintain central government control over the province's natural resources. President Abdurrahman Wahid (October 1999–July 2001) was seen as more sympathetic to Papuans; during his administration the name of the province was changed from Irian Jaya to Papua and the Law on Special Autonomy for Papua was drafted. This law established the MRP to represent ethnic Papuans, enabled the province to retain, through 2026, an even greater share of its natural resource revenues than that provided under the decentralization policy, and required the central government to consult with Papuans on a wide range of policy areas, including division of the province. President Megawati Sukarnoputri (July 2001–October 2004), although

³ A report commissioned by the Dutch foreign ministry that questions the legitimacy of the Act of Free Choice was released in mid-November 2005. P.J. Drooglever, *An Act of Free Choice (Een Daad van Vrije Keuze)* (The Hague: Uitgeverij Boom, 2005).

⁴ John Wing with Peter King, *Genocide in West Papua? The Role of the Indonesian State Apparatus and a Current Needs Assessment of the Papuan People* (Sydney: West Papua Project, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney, 2005). See also Elizabeth Brundige, Winter King, Priyeha Vahali, Stephen Vladeck, and Xiang Yuan, *Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua: Application of the Law of Genocide to the History of Indonesian Control* (New Haven: Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic, Yale Law School, 2003), paper prepared for the Indonesian Human Rights Network.

not generally in favor of decentralization and special autonomy, did allow the law to be passed in November 2001 and implemented—at least in terms of the revenue enhancements—beginning in 2002. Although her political party fared well in Papua in the 1999 parliamentary elections, she disappointed many Papuans by summarily announcing in January 2003 her intention to implement the law dividing the province. Papuans were able to scuttle the formation of Central Irian Jaya, but her administration proceeded with preparations for the establishment of West Irian Jaya, which was later endorsed by the Constitutional Court.

In the meantime, with the demise of the authoritarian regime in 1998, Papuan civil society began to mobilize. President Habibie was shocked when Papuan leaders he had invited for a dialogue at the palace called for independence. In 2000, President Abdurrahman helped sponsor the Second Papuan People's Congress, but was embarrassed when it was perceived to be supporting independence. Congress delegates were chosen in a highly democratic manner from the grass roots, and they in turn elected members of the *Dewan Presidium Papua* (Papuan Presidium Council). Council Chairman Theys Eluay was murdered in 2001 by members of *Kopassus* (army special forces).⁵ The *Dewan Adat Papua* (Papuan Customary Council) is another very active body that represents traditional leaders of various political persuasions.

Despite this tortured history, survey results show that there remains a significant reservoir of identity with the Indonesian nation-state among Papua residents. In September 2005, for instance, 56.6 percent of Papua residents stated that they felt more Indonesian than Papuan.⁶ In the same survey, a full 82.3 percent stated that they felt proud or very proud to be Indonesian. Given the ethnic composition of Papua residents noted above, these results are too high to be based strictly on the opinions of non-Papuans resident in the region.

⁵ “Kopassus Guilty of Eluay Murder,” *The Age*, April 22, 2003, see <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/04/21/1050777211770.html>.

⁶ Lembaga Survei Indonesia, “Gubernatorial Pre-Election Survey in Papua,” September 2005. Margin of error is +/- 4.9 percent at a 95 percent confidence level.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

National Leadership

Papuans had raised expectations of the likelihood of a resolution to the conflict when President Yudhoyono and Vice President Kalla were elected. They defeated incumbent President Megawati and her running mate Hasyim Muzadi by a margin of 61 percent to 39 percent in the first ever direct election for president in Indonesia. This wide margin provided them with a strong popular mandate to implement their policy agenda.

The main reason for the heightened expectations is that under Presidents Abdurrahman and Megawati, both Yudhoyono and Kalla played critical roles in helping resolve several important regional conflicts. Yudhoyono, as chief security minister, supported negotiations for the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA) in Aceh, over the opposition of the military and several cabinet members. Regarding Papua, in part given Yudhoyono's status as a retired army general, he is expected to be able to bring along the military despite its objections. Kalla, as chief social welfare minister, played the central role in arranging the Malino I and II dialogues that helped break the destructive cycles of communal violence in Ambon (Maluku) and Poso (Central Sulawesi), respectively.

National Reform Agenda

The progress since 1998 of Indonesia's democratic transition has been impressive, yet much remains to be done. Improving Papuan governance cannot be undertaken in Papua alone, but instead should be part of a broader national process of reform. That includes reforms of the military, police, judiciary, and civil service, all of which are rife with corruption and abuse. To a certain extent, some of these reforms are already under way. A national campaign to end illegal logging, which involves foreign and Indonesian private businesspeople as well as elements of the military, police, and civil bureaucracy, has begun to have some effect, including in Papua. Nonetheless, critical elements of the reform agenda remain only partially implemented. The Yudhoyono administration

appears committed to addressing these problems, even though initial progress might be slow due to entrenched practices and interests.

Decentralization

Indonesia remains a unitary state, and any talk of federalism is anathema to most national politicians. However, as part of the transition to democracy, significant political and fiscal power has been granted to local authorities, accompanied by special autonomy laws for Aceh and Papua. The Papua law, passed in November 2001, changed the name of the provincial legislature to the Papuan People's Representative Council (DPRP) and established a new representative body—the MRP—composed of members of the three major components of Papuan society: religious, *adat* (traditional), and women's leaders. Among other powers, the MRP is to be consulted regarding division of the province, and it reviews candidates for governor and vice governor to ensure they are native Papuans. The law also stipulated that an increased share of Papua's natural resource revenues would remain in the province (over and above the decentralization funds already provided to every province under the national policy), although these special autonomy funds have sunset provisions phased in between 2021 and 2026. The law provided for a truth, justice, and reconciliation process and required consultation with provincial authorities in a number of important policy areas, such as security arrangements, reserved for the central government under the national decentralization policy. As with most Indonesian laws, Papua's special autonomy law is vague on many points, leaving details to be determined in implementing regulations, only some of which have been promulgated.

Aceh Peace Process

The Yudhoyono administration inherited two long-running separatist conflicts: Aceh and Papua. The COHA, negotiated in 2002 with the assistance of the Geneva-based Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, did not last long and hostilities resumed in 2003 under President Megawati. However, following the widespread human and physical destruction caused by the December 2004 earthquake and tsunamis, the government

under President Yudhoyono and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) resumed peace talks, this time in Helsinki, mediated by the former president of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari. In August 2005, the two parties signed a peace agreement in the form of a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU included provisions for the phased disarmament of GAM and the phased pullout of nonorganic⁷ Indonesian military troops from the province (both of which were concluded in December 2005); the reintegration of former GAM rebels into society and politics; and the participation of GAM (either as an organization or as individuals) in direct elections for governor, mayor, and *bupati* (regent). The MOU also established the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM), a joint operation of European Union (EU) and ASEAN countries, to monitor implementation of the peace agreement. Although major elements of the agreement, such as the establishment of local political parties for the upcoming elections, may yet prove problematic, to date implementation appears to be progressing smoothly.⁸ In light of this achievement, domestic and international attention has now turned to Papua.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

If anything, conditions in Papua have somewhat worsened in the last three years. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), “[Papua] stands out as one of the few ‘declining’ regions, actually suffering *deterioration* in [Human Development Index] status, which is mostly attributed to declines in education coverage and income levels.”⁹ Politically, the government continues to move forward with the controversial division of Papua into at least two provinces, with the creation of West Irian Jaya. One reason the Yudhoyono administration is beginning to be perceived by Papuans as no different from its predecessors is its insistence on the establishment of this province. In Manokwari, the intended capital of the new province, the interim governor

⁷ Under the Indonesian army’s territorial system, “organic” troops are those permanently stationed in each province, and “nonorganic” troops are additional units posted to a province, usually to address armed conflict or to secure a major industrial installation.

⁸ International Crisis Group, *Aceh: Now for the Hard Part*, International Crisis Group Update Briefing, Asia Briefing No. 48, March 29, 2006.

⁹ UNDP, *Papua Needs Assessment*, p. 6. Emphasis in original.

and assembly continue to create separate provincial offices, construct new buildings for them, and expand the civil service. The central government went ahead with separate elections for governors in Papua and West Irian Jaya in March. Nonetheless, the MRP has rejected the creation of West Irian Jaya, in part to enhance its legitimacy with Papuans, who are deeply unhappy with the central government on this issue. The DPRP has also rejected the new province. Efforts to achieve a compromise, led by Vice President Kalla, have so far failed.

Implementation of Special Autonomy

At present, implementation of special autonomy has been partial, with an emphasis on transferring increased fiscal resources to the province. Progress has continued to be slow in implementing the enhanced representational, accountability, and oversight elements of the law. The results have been that the enormous fiscal stimulus has not produced substantial material improvements for the majority of Papuans, has increased opportunities for corruption, has widened the wealth gap between Papuan elites and the broader society, as well as between nonethnic and ethnic Papuans, and has spurred even greater in-migration from other provinces.

The MRP was not established until November 2005, four years after the passage of the special autonomy law. In December 2004, just months after Yudhoyono took office, the central government finally issued the regulation outlining the process for choosing MRP members. Each of the three societal components in the MRP elects its own representatives. Religious leaders were to be chosen at the provincial level, while traditional and female leaders were to be chosen in a two-stage process, first at the district and then at the regency/municipality level. These sectors of society have been the most alienated from Indonesia but tend to have much higher legitimacy among ordinary Papuans than political leaders.

In the first half of 2005, the provincial government did nothing to carry out the regulation. It was not until the second half of 2005, with gubernatorial elections looming in Papua and West Irian Jaya, that the central and provincial governments suddenly expressed their desire that the MRP be formed immediately. This abrupt attitude reversal made many Papuans suspicious that the MRP was being established not to represent

Papuan society but rather to become a new ally in the tug-of-war over West Irian Jaya. Thus the MRP was born in a highly charged political atmosphere, less than ideal conditions for the development of a new institution. Papuan suspicions regarding government intentions were aggravated by the fact that the government agency tasked with overseeing the formation of the MRP was the “National Unity” directorate-general within the Ministry of Home Affairs and the provincial government. During the New Order, this agency was entitled “Social Political” and its primary functions were to issue and deny permits for public events such as seminars, workshops, etc., and to screen legislative candidates from all parties for loyalty to the regime. Many of its officials are retired military officers suspected of manipulating the membership of the first MRP to suit Jakarta’s tastes, and at first religious and traditional leaders were reluctant or even outright refused to be considered for membership.

Due to these aspects of its formation, the MRP does not enjoy unchallenged legitimacy in Papua. Furthermore, many Papuans are generally skeptical of representational politics, an attitude rooted in their experience with the 1969 “Act of Free Choice.” Nonetheless, the MRP and the provincial legislatures (DPRP in Papua and DPRD in West Irian Jaya) elected in 2004 remain the most broadly representative of any formal governing structures in Papua and thus are the most appropriate partners for a dialogue with the central government. All of Indonesia’s major national political parties are represented in the DPRP and DPRD.¹⁰ These bodies also include both ethnic Papuans and non-Papuans. In contrast, the MRP consists strictly of ethnic Papuans, and members are elected on a nonpartisan basis.

There are few alternatives to these institutions. In the years since its formation, the Papuan Presidium Council has frittered away some of the legitimacy it enjoyed among ordinary Papuans. In addition, this council and the Papuan Customary Council do not share the legitimacy bestowed on the MRP, DPRP, and DPRD by their legal status and formal election procedures. It is also not clear to what extent the positions taken by the councils reflect public opinion. For instance, in August 2005, the Papuan Customary Council “returned” special autonomy to the central government as a failed concept, but

¹⁰ Local political parties are not allowed in Indonesia, with the possible exception of Aceh under the new peace agreement.

did not offer an alternative framework. In a survey conducted in late 2002, the first year of the law's implementation, only 17 percent of Papua residents (and only 14 percent of ethnic Papuans) reported even being aware of the law.¹¹ Clearly, the central and local governments need to act quickly to improve the implementation of special autonomy before its legitimacy is further eroded.

Currently, Papuan governing institutions do not have the capacity to implement fully the special autonomy provisions so that the main beneficiaries are Papuans themselves. Governance in the municipalities and regencies of Papua (including West Irian Jaya) is generally quite poor, and downright awful in some. Fortunately, the picture is not entirely negative, with a few localities providing potential role models of more positive examples of better governance for the others to emulate.

Security Conditions

Security conditions in Papua are generally much better than they had been in Aceh before the tsunamis and peace agreement. The separatist Free Papua Organization (OPM) hardly exists and mounts few attacks. Therefore, there is little justification for the large (and reportedly increasing) contingents of nonorganic Indonesian military forces in Papua; the organic troops and the police should be sufficient to maintain international and domestic security.¹² The primary threat to security in Papua is thus not separatism but lawlessness. The solutions to that problem are to foster broad-based economic development that benefits the population as a whole and to reform the military, police, and judiciary—which, as noted above, must begin with national-level policies complemented by local efforts.

¹¹ International Foundation for Election Systems, "Papua Public Opinion Survey Indonesia," February 2003.

¹² See Ridwan Max Sijabat and Tiarna Siboro, "Protests Increase Against Heavy Military Presence in Papua," *Jakarta Post*, December 3, 2005; Fanny Febiana, "Indonesian Defense Minister: TNI Needs to Be Present in Outer Islands," *Tempo Interactive*, December 21, 2005, available at <http://www.tempointeraktif.com/hg/nasional/2005/12/21/brk,20051221-70943.uk.html>.

Economic and Social Conditions

In the past three years, economic and social conditions have deteriorated in Papua, despite the greatly increased flow of funds under special autonomy, mainly due to the poor quality of governance at all levels in the region: provincial, regency/municipality, district, and village. Special autonomy funds are supposed to be targeted toward the priority sectors of education, health, and infrastructure. However, a September 2005 World Bank study of Papua reveals that spending on all sectors has increased, and thus the relative priorities have hardly changed.¹³ Furthermore, most of the increased revenues have been allocated to routine spending, rather than development spending, and the category of greatest increase is “unspecified expenditures.” With a significant portion of these resources not reaching their target due to corruption or misallocation, health and educational levels in Papua continue to be far below national averages and have not improved significantly.

RIPE FOR SETTLEMENT?

With implementation of the Aceh peace agreement progressing fairly smoothly, domestic and international attention has turned to Papua as the only remaining regional conflict in Indonesia with explicit separatist overtones.¹⁴ However, there are at least four reasons why the Indonesian government may feel less urgency to address this conflict. Most importantly, Papua lacks the catalyst for a settlement that the human and physical destruction caused by the earthquake and [tsunamis] became in Aceh. Both the government and the rebels seized upon this destruction as an opportunity to resolve the conflict.

Second, Papua lacks an insurgent force with the organizational strength that the GAM had. There is very little insurgent activity, and the Free Papua Organization, to the extent it even exists, lacks the capacity for violence demonstrated by GAM. This relative

¹³ World Bank, “Papua Public Expenditure Analysis—Overview Report: Regional Finance and Service Delivery in Indonesia’s Most Remote Region,” September 2005, see http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTINDONESIA/Resources/Publication/280016-1106130305439/PEACH_eng.pdf.

¹⁴ Several other remaining regional conflicts have little separatist element, but are based strictly in communal rivalries, economic competition, local politics, or just plain thuggery.

lack of insurgent violence means that Papuans generally live in less fear for their lives and livelihoods than did the Acehnese. However, it also means that the government may perceive that there is less of a direct threat to national unity and no natural partner for negotiation in Papua. Nonetheless, the government would be mistaken to equate the lack of a strong insurgent force with Papuan satisfaction with Indonesia. Papuan alienation from Indonesia is real, and thus the relative lack of violence should be seen as an opportunity to resolve issues peacefully before greater violence breaks out.

Third, Papua and Papuans have held a less central place in Indonesian national discourse than have Aceh and the Acehnese, for the particular cultural and historical reasons noted previously. In addition, there are no myths regarding Papuan contributions to national independence, along the lines of the story of the Acehnese who donated all their gold to purchase the first airplane that helped break the Dutch blockade in the late 1940s. For meaningful and productive dialogue to occur, the Malay majority in Indonesia must begin treating Papuans as equals at the negotiating table.

Fourth and finally, the history of UN involvement in Papua's reintegration into Indonesia in the 1960s makes the Indonesian government much more nervous about a possible role for a third party in any negotiations regarding Papua. There was no such history in Aceh, which paradoxically made it somewhat easier for the government to involve foreign organizations in the peace process. In Papua, the government is concerned that international involvement would send a signal to Papuans that the clock has been turned back to 1969 and thus independence is back on the table as a possible outcome. For negotiations to be meaningful and productive they must be based—at least implicitly—on the premise that independence is *off* the table and that Indonesian national unity will be respected. That will likely prove to be one of the most difficult hurdles to initiating a dialogue between the central government and Papuans. The government would be more comfortable with an explicit rejection of independence at the outset of any talks.

However, given the undercurrents of sympathy for independence in Papuan society, local representatives to the dialogue could lose significant public legitimacy if they were to make such an explicit rejection. A compromise would be for the final status of the territory to be left off the table for now. As confidence-building measures are

ramped up and the full and accountable implementation of special autonomy begins to have a greater positive impact on Papuans as a whole, it is likely that separatist sentiment would be dampened. Papuans should also be encouraged to develop a political discourse that distinguishes between *merdeka* (social freedom or emancipation) and *kemerdekaan* (political independence), two terms that are conflated in current discourse. The recommendations of this report are predicated on the assumption that the former is possible in the absence of the latter.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The next two years should be an opportune time to achieve peaceful resolution of the conflict in Papua. However, there is a lot of groundwork to be laid before solutions become feasible. The policy recommendations made in this report for halting a deterioration of the situation emphasize the importance of dialogue between the central government and Papuans, of full implementation of special autonomy, and of keeping U.S. and international attention and policies toward Papua constructive rather than inflammatory.

INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT

Do Not Ignore Papua While Addressing Aceh and Other Challenges

Indonesia continues to face many challenges, but the government should make Papua one of its top priorities for 2006 and 2007. In order to restore Papuan trust in the central government, the Indonesian government needs to demonstrate that Papua is in fact a priority. There are several ways to do this. One of the recommendations of the Center for Preventive Action's (CPA) 2003 Indonesia Commission Report was for the government to name a Papua coordinator to act as its primary liaison—both to Papuans and the international community—on Papua issues, and that remains a worthwhile idea.¹⁵ The coordinator should be a senior civilian who has the trust of, and thus can speak for, the president and vice president, and who is respected in Jakarta, Papua, and abroad. Naming an individual with a military background to this position, except one of Papuan ethnicity, would send the signal to Papua that it is business as usual for the central government. In 2005, Yudhoyono formed a small team of advisers and ministers to address problems in Papua. The coordinator can build on the work already done by this team; the advantage of

¹⁵ *Indonesia Commission: Peace and Progress in Papua* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 2003), p. 47.

an individual, however, is that it is clear who is responsible for coordinating Papua policy.

President Yudhoyono should demonstrate both his personal and his government's commitment to Papua by visiting the region to make a major policy speech, as he did in December 2004. Ideally, this speech should be timed to kick off the Papua dialogue with the MRP and DPRP/DPRD as suggested below. An acknowledgment of—if not an outright apology for—past abuses, including the manipulated nature of the 1969 “Act of Free Choice” (while making it clear that the government is not prepared to discuss a new referendum), and a pledge to conduct a meaningful dialogue, would begin the process of healing old wounds. The speech could also subtly underscore the differences between the current president and past presidents, emphasizing to Papuans the opportunity that should not be passed up.

Increase Transparency

The government should open up Papua to the scrutiny of the international community—including diplomats, journalists, and nongovernmental organization (NGO) activists—by ending the policy of requiring special permits issued by the police in Jakarta for foreigners to visit the region. This would demonstrate that the government has nothing to hide and that it recognizes that there is no significant separatist security threat in Papua.

Engage in Dialogue with Legitimate Representatives of Papuan Society

One of the main demands made by Papuans is for a dialogue to be held between the central government and the legitimate representatives of the broad sweep of Papuan society. The government's partner for the Papua dialogue should be a joint sitting of the MRP and DPRP (and West Irian Jaya DPRD, if the separate province gains final approval). Together these institutions represent Papuans and non-Papuans resident in the region, as well as the local leaders of the national political parties, religious and traditional leaders, and women. The MRP and DPRP have rejected the establishment of West Irian Jaya, but they should not let that prevent them from cooperating with the

DPRD for the purposes of this dialogue, for a lack of cooperation would help fulfill the aims of those wishing to divide Papuans against themselves.

To demonstrate the central government's commitment to this dialogue, its team should be led by Yudhoyono, with the Papua coordinator managing the delegation following the opening session. Based on experience with the Aceh peace process, the government team should include members of the People's Representative Council (DPR) and the military to ensure their buy-in to the process and results. The dialogue should be open to the public, broadcast widely on electronic media, and monitored closely by civil society organizations. Informal representative organizations, such as the Papuan Presidium Council and the Papuan Customary Council, should be invited as observers to monitor the proceedings.

The ground rules for the Papua dialogue should be simple and clear. For example, the central government could pledge that the ultimate goal is the improvement of the overall welfare of the Papuan people, including respect for human rights, through the full and accountable implementation of special autonomy. The MRP, DPRP, and DPRD could agree not to discuss a referendum in the early stages of the process.

At the beginning of the confidence-building process, less controversial topics to address at the Papua dialogue could include governance reform and the establishment of a Papua trust fund (both discussed below). As both parties become more comfortable with the dialogue, the following discussion topics could be included as well:

- **Truth, justice, and reconciliation.** A process of uncovering truth, establishing justice, and fostering reconciliation should include what Papuans refer to as *pelurusan sejarah* (correction of history), i.e., a full accounting of what took place regarding the reintegration of Papua into Indonesia. However, it should be done with the overall understanding that this process does not imply support for a referendum.

The primary danger in any process of truth, justice, and reconciliation is lack of trust and political will. That is certainly an issue in this case, particularly given recent Indonesian history in this regard. Recently, Indonesia has been rife with truth and reconciliation commissions, ad hoc human rights courts, etc., regarding both national

issues and East Timor. However, many of these have been criticized, rightfully, as shams designed more to continue to cover up, rather than rectify, past mistakes.

Thus, in addressing Papuan concerns, the central government should demonstrate the political will and the humility to acknowledge past abuses and work in good faith to make amends. Part of this process is engaging Papuans in this dialogue regarding the format and objectives of any truth, justice, and reconciliation process, to ensure the process has broad support. The dialogue, however, should just address these framework issues; the actual process of truth, justice, and reconciliation should take place separately.

- **Security arrangements in Papua.** One of the most important issues in Papua is security. Due to the breakdown in trust, the central government needs to send a strong signal prior to the start of the dialogue that it is sincere in its willingness to achieve a comprehensive solution. Papuans are particularly concerned about the recently reported buildup of military personnel in the region. One way for the central government to signal its good intentions would be to withdraw a significant portion of the intelligence agents and nonorganic military forces (both uniformed and plainclothed) currently stationed in Papua. Furthermore, determining the timetable for the withdrawal of the remaining such security forces (as in Aceh) should be one element of the dialogue. Consistent with the process already under way at the national level, the military and police should be extricated from their role in the formal and informal sectors of the economy. Given the security forces' involvement in such activities as illegal logging and prostitution, this process would have positive implications for environmental protection and public health as well.

The dialogue should also be designed to discuss future security arrangements in Papua that emphasize the role of the police and organic military forces. That is consistent with the spirit of the special autonomy law, which requires the central government to coordinate security policy for Papua with the governor. Some of the recent increases in troop strength are potentially justifiable, such as the proposal to establish the navy's eastern regional command at Sorong. However, Papua's government and people have not been adequately communicated with, much less consulted, regarding these types of decisions.

- **Division of the province.** The division of Papua remains a major sore spot, as it is perceived as an attempt to divide and conquer, as well as to maintain central control over Papua's natural resource wealth. Many Papuans feel that Megawati's peremptory decision to implement the division of Papua violated the spirit and the letter of the special autonomy law, which requires the central government to consult with the MRP and the DPRP regarding any such plans.

Even following the formation of the MRP, the central government continued to move forward with the preparations for the permanent establishment of West Irian Jaya. The government should rethink its decision to ignore the MRP's rejection of the new province, an approach that is crippling a significant representative institution in the initial stages of its development.¹⁶ The Papua dialogue may also be an appropriate forum for discussion and final resolution of this issue. Papuans may end up deciding to divide the province, but the most important thing is for them to be consulted in a meaningful way in the decision-making process.

Fully Implement Special Autonomy

Special autonomy remains the most comprehensive and appropriate overall framework for resolving outstanding issues and improving livelihoods in Papua. It was also the core recommendation of the CPA's 2003 Commission Report. However, more than four years after its passage, the special autonomy law remains only partially implemented, which has been worse than no implementation at all, because expectations of change have been raised and then dashed again.

Although full implementation of special autonomy will not solve all of the region's problems, it will enhance the ability of Papuans to control the allocation of the increased resources. In addition, expansion of the health and educational infrastructure and improvement of its quality will also mean that Papuans—especially in the more isolated parts of the region—will begin to associate the government not only with soldiers and police officers but also with doctors, nurses, and teachers. Raising the health and educational levels of ethnic Papuans will help them compete for jobs with migrants

¹⁶ International Crisis Group, *Papua: The Dangers of Shutting Down Dialogue*, International Crisis Group Update Briefing, Asia Briefing No. 47, March 23, 2006.

from other parts of Indonesia. Consideration should also be given to establishing temporary affirmative action provisions for ethnic Papuans. Special autonomy revenues will begin to be scaled back in 2021. The province should use the opportunity of the next fifteen years to make immediate improvements in its human and physical capital in order to attract other investments whose tax revenues can begin to replace special autonomy revenues at that time.

As part of the Papua dialogue, the central government and the MRP, DPRP, and DPRD should jointly develop performance standards to measure the progress made by local governments in fostering economic growth, reducing poverty, improving health conditions, increasing access to education, establishing security and justice, and fighting corruption. These benchmarks can be updated annually as part of the budgetary process. The central government should conduct special audits based on these performance standards. Civil society should also be encouraged and trained to monitor progress regarding these benchmarks, including by producing and publishing “report cards.”

To support the transparent and accountable management of natural resource revenues in Papua and elsewhere in Indonesia, the central government should sign up to implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) before the entry “thresholds” become more difficult to fulfill. That will give the private sector a legal and political framework to contribute to the process.

Finally, the MRP should be granted special oversight authority regarding the management of the Papua trust fund discussed below. That will serve to increase the legitimacy of the MRP and improve accountability of the management of these resources.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Continue to Support the Peace Process in Aceh

The more successful the peace process in Aceh, the more the central government will be able to turn its attention to Papua and to feel confident addressing the conflict. The United States, European Union, Japan, Australia, and ASEAN member states should not let their commitments to either region starve the other of resources. Sufficient resources

should be mobilized to support the resolution of both conflicts. These countries have committed at least \$150 million to support the peace process in Aceh, over and above the billions of dollars committed to tsunami relief and reconstruction. At least \$50 million per year for ten years should be mobilized for Papua. Unlike Aceh, Papua does not need extensive combatant demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration programs.

Engage Constructively with the Indonesian Government

President Yudhoyono and Vice President Kalla have expressed publicly on numerous occasions their desire to achieve a comprehensive settlement in Papua.¹⁷ Given their combined track record of resolving communal or separatist conflict in Maluku, Central Sulawesi, and now Aceh, they appear to be sincere in this desire, although other parts of the national government may not be as enthusiastic. Thus the international community's engagement with them and their administration should be based on public support for their efforts combined with private pressure to fulfill these commitments. The primary exception to this approach should be human rights organizations, which should continue their public campaigns to investigate and expose human rights abuses. Clumsy public criticism by governments could only have a detrimental effect on the effort to resolve the conflict, generating a nationalist backlash that makes the government and the Indonesian people less, not more, likely to engage on Papua. A recent example of this dynamic was the 2005 controversy over U.S. congressional action on Papua, particularly the proposed requirement for the U.S. Department of State to produce "a report analyzing the 1969 Act of Free Choice."¹⁸ Although misreported in the Indonesian press as having become U.S. law—the bill passed in the House but has little chance of passage in the Senate—this controversy demonstrates the need for a more subtle approach. Of course, this approach will only be effective as long as there is genuine political will on the part of the Indonesian government to address the conflict.

The United States and other foreign powers should also refrain from expressing any public or private, implicit or explicit, support for Papuan independence. Although there were serious problems with the process by which Papua was reintegrated into

¹⁷ For example, see "President Yudhoyono Meets with 29 Papua Figures," *Antara News*, August 9, 2005.

¹⁸ *Foreign Relations Authorization FY 2006–2007*, HR 2601, Section 1115, 2 (c) (2), 109th Cong., 1st sess.

Indonesia between 1962 and 1969, turning back the clock will not solve those problems and will only create new ones. Reexamination of this history should be undertaken as part of a broader process of truth, justice, and reconciliation and not in a way that implies support for a new referendum. Equally important is to focus on helping Papua achieve security and prosperity, which can still be done as a part of Indonesia.

In addition, as a practical matter, talk of independence is a deal-breaker for the central government: If Indonesia believes that any part of a conflict resolution process is leading toward a referendum, and possibly independence, that process will not move forward. For its part, the Indonesian government must recognize that full implementation of special autonomy is not the first step down a slippery slope toward independence, but rather the primary means to ensure that Papua remains a part of Indonesia through dignity and mutual respect rather than repression.

To help coordinate its engagement with the Indonesian government and with Papua, the international community's representatives in Jakarta, led by the U.S. ambassador to Indonesia, should form an ambassador-level international working group on Papua. The membership in this working group should be all foreign governments and intergovernmental organizations with a stake in or concern for Papua, including the United States, European Union, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and UNDP. The forum can serve as a mechanism for coordination of diplomatic efforts as well as financial and technical assistance. Jakarta-based diplomats do not travel to Papua often enough; members of the working group should demonstrate their commitment to the region by visiting it regularly to observe conditions firsthand and learn about the views of Papuans.

It may also be useful for an international actor to facilitate the Papua dialogue. However, it may be more palatable for the Indonesian government if that actor is a regional organization such as ASEAN rather than a Western government or entity.

Support Governance Reforms in Papua

The increased resources that have flowed to Papua in recent years as a result of the partial implementation of special autonomy have not significantly improved the lives of ordinary Papuans for two reasons: (1) local governments in Papua lack accountability and are rife

with corruption; and (2) even absent corruption, the ability of local governments and societies to absorb these increased resources is limited.

To improve governance in Papua—and thus make full implementation of special autonomy meaningful—local governments and civil society in Papua, the national government, and the international working group should work together to establish benchmarks, monitor progress, and provide training and educational opportunities within Indonesia and abroad. Training and education should focus on areas such as public administration and finance; urban and regional planning; natural resource management; agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries; public health; education; law; and economics. International technical assistance should also be provided for the implementation of important policy areas, such as addressing the HIV/AIDS crisis and improving literacy.

Few systematic measures of Papuan public opinion are currently available; regular surveys and focus group research should be undertaken in order to understand better their views—if necessary with the financial support of the international community. Technical assistance would not be necessary, as one of the consequences of the democratic transition has been the emergence of several Indonesian organizations skilled in public opinion research.

Sister province, regency, and municipality relationships should be established between local governments in Papua and elsewhere in Indonesia, including hands-on internships or exchanges for Papuan officials to regions where governance has significantly improved.

The Partnership for Governance Reform, a UNDP-affiliated national body, should open a representative office in Jayapura to work with the international working group on Papua on coordinating international assistance to governance reforms. The United States should lead the effort to create a multifaceted, multidonor package of assistance, to support:

- **Local government reform**, such as performance benchmarks, report cards, and civil service reform. It is critical that local governments be held accountable for the use of the increased fiscal resources made available to them under special autonomy.

- **Civil society monitoring of government performance benchmarks as well as military and police behavior.** The capacity of civil society to monitor and report on this progress should be strengthened through training and technical assistance. Regencies and municipalities that meet or exceed their performance goals could be rewarded with bonuses from the Papua trust fund (discussed below).
- **Judicial and police reform.** As part of the new security arrangements established by the Papua dialogue, the role of the police should be enhanced. That is consistent with national policies to reorient the military toward external defense. With the exception of the paramilitary police mobile brigades, the police are generally regarded with less suspicion in Papua than the military. That is because their behavior has sometimes been better, they have been quicker to change their approach in recent years, and there are more Papuans in the police. Particularly egregious cases of judicial miscarriage should be reopened and prosecuted to the full extent of the law; and
- **MRP, DPRP, and DPRD lawmaking, budgeting, and oversight capacity.** Local legislative bodies remain weak vis-à-vis local governments, and their capacity to represent their constituents and provide oversight of the executive should be strengthened.

The United States, European countries, Japan, Australia, and other members of the international community should support all of these reform efforts by prioritizing Papua within existing programs and by increasing resources to establish new programs. These programs should begin immediately to demonstrate the international community's and the central government's commitment to the improvement of conditions in Papua and to help create the conditions for successful resolution of the conflict. For instance, international educational support programs such as the U.S. Fulbright and the British Chevening scholarships should make Papuans inside and outside of local government a priority target population. Prioritization also should be made for Papuans within existing police training programs, such as those funded by the United States and Japan. Legislative strengthening programs, such as those supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and UNDP, should be expanded to include all of

Papua. Greater efforts should be made to establish public-private partnerships, such as those under the USAID Global Development Alliance.

Foreign governments, including the U.S. government, should also make progress toward peace in Papua a measure of the extent to which reengagement with or increased assistance to the Indonesian military is appropriate. The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) should renew and step up its efforts to discover the truth behind the killing of one Indonesian and two American teachers near the Freeport mine in 2002. The U.S. government should insist on full access for FBI personnel and should assist with and monitor the judicial process against Antonius Wamang and his cohorts to ensure that potential links to any coconspirators are fully investigated and prosecuted.

The private sector can also assist reform efforts by adhering to the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and participating in the EITI, once the government has signed up to implement it. Corporations should support governance reform efforts by refusing to make bribes, and support reformed security arrangements by refusing to make payments to the military. BP's efforts in this regard for the Tangguh Bay liquefied natural gas project are admirable, but require further strengthening for the construction and operational phases. Mining, oil, and gas firms should support the transparent management of Papua's natural resources by publishing the amounts of royalties and shared production paid to the central and local governments. Shareholder initiatives to encourage all of these efforts should be supported.

Support Accountable and Sustainable Management of Papua's Resources

When heavy rains suddenly hit a drought-stricken area, the soil is not prepared to absorb much of the moisture, and water tends to run off in flash floods rather than soak in and rejuvenate the land. That is akin to the situation in Papua since 2001 with the sudden increase in fiscal revenues due to the partial implementation of special autonomy. Under that law, these increased revenues will phase out between 2021 and 2026. The last five years have largely been a lost opportunity, and fifteen to twenty more years is not a sufficient amount of time to rectify the physical and human resource underdevelopment experienced by Papua and to create an attractive climate for investment that will form the foundation for self-sustaining economic growth.

A mechanism, such as a Papua trust fund, should be established, which, in the short term, smoothes out the fluctuations in and, in the long term, extends the flow of special autonomy funds to Papua beyond 2026. That would require Papuans to take an extended view of development, postponing expenditure of a portion of the revenue stream for future sustainability. There are numerous models for such a fund, the most recent being the East Timor Petroleum Fund, set up with technical assistance from Norway based on its own Government Petroleum Fund experience. The Alaska Permanent Fund and the Equatorial Guinea Social Development Fund are further examples, although the direct payments to residents that are a hallmark of the Alaska fund may not be appropriate in Papua.

Because the revenues flowing into the Papua trust fund would be derived from special autonomy and therefore belong to Papua under the law, the fund should be managed by the provincial government(s) in Papua with oversight from the MRP. However, given the governance capacity issues raised elsewhere in this report, it may be prudent for an international financial institution such as the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank to be involved in administering the fund, at least initially. International involvement would be designed both to ensure the commitment of the provincial government(s) to the proper maintenance of the fund as well as to assure Papuans that this does not represent a rollback of special autonomy. Over time, as the governance capacity of the provincial government(s) improves, sole management of the trust fund can be transferred to those governments.

A significant portion of current special autonomy revenues (perhaps as much as 50 percent of total revenues) could be paid into the trust fund. The remaining revenues would continue to be distributed to provincial, regency, and municipal governments as they are at present. Some portion of the fund (perhaps as much as 17 percent of total revenues, i.e., one-third of the revenues paid into the fund) could be paid out immediately in the form of bonuses to those regencies and municipalities meeting or exceeding their performance targets. In this way, governments in Papua would receive in current fiscal years up to two-thirds of their special autonomy revenues. The remaining one-third would stay in the trust fund for payout when special autonomy revenues begin to taper off between 2021 and 2026. That would have two benefits: In current years, as

governance capacity remains weak, revenue increases would not overwhelm local absorption ability and could be phased in more rationally; and in future years, increased revenues could be maintained beyond the current legal sunset provisions, thereby providing a softer landing for local governments.

CONCLUSION

Conditions may be ripe, both in Jakarta and in Papua, for new efforts to achieve a comprehensive solution to the conflict in Papua. However, resolution is not inevitable, and the United States can play an important role in creating the conditions for both a meaningful dialogue and a just solution. International actors should reiterate their support for Indonesia's territorial integrity while underscoring the importance of addressing Papua's legitimate concerns. Quiet pressure should be put on the Indonesian government to fulfill its public commitments to resolve the conflict.

There may be a role to play for a regional organization such as ASEAN to facilitate dialogue between the central government and Papuans. Financial and technical assistance to Papua remains essential to support the implementation of special autonomy, resolution of the conflict, respect for human rights, and improvement of livelihoods. An integrated approach that addresses political, security, economic, and social aspects of the conflict will have the greatest prospects for success. Addressing less intractable elements of the conflict first, in a confidence-building process that slowly ramps up to more controversial elements, will also be more likely to succeed. Finally, it is important to recognize that success may not come all at once. Nonetheless, a coincidence of factors in the international community, Indonesia, and Papua may mean that 2006 and 2007 present an opportunity to start making progress on resolving the conflict.

Tragically, events unfolding as this report went to press vividly demonstrate the potential consequences of lack of progress toward peaceful resolution of the conflict over the next two years. In mid-March, just days after the controversial gubernatorial elections in Papua and West Irian Jaya, violent demonstrations took place in both Timika, near the Freeport mine, and Jayapura, the capital of Papua. In Jayapura, a demonstration near the state-run Cenderawasih University campus resulted in three police officers and one air force intelligence officer being beaten to death by the crowd. Numerous other people, both security forces and civilians, were injured. These demonstrations in Timika and Jayapura ostensibly were regarding Freeport's environmental, human rights, and community development record, but the larger context was Jakarta's overall treatment of

Papua, including the process by which the province has been subdivided. Violent clashes between security forces and residents, resulting in deaths and injuries to both, can be expected to continue in the absence of progress toward peace. Each incident increases tensions and polarizes the situation even further, making peace and reconciliation that much more difficult.

Such overt violence, however, only directly impacts a small minority of the population. Much more widespread suffering is due to poverty, malnutrition, poor health (including but not limited to the HIV/AIDS crisis), illiteracy, corruption, and environmental degradation. While peaceful resolution of the conflict will not magically solve these endemic problems, it will make addressing them far easier. If significant steps toward peace in Papua are not taken over the next two years, the 2009 presidential and legislative elections will be looming, making it much less likely for politicians to have the stomach for bold policy initiatives. The Indonesian government and Papuans, with the support of the international community, should act now to push open the rapidly closing window of opportunity for peace.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Blair A. King is senior program manager for Asia at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs in Washington, DC. He oversees democracy promotion programs in Bangladesh, Burma, China, East Timor, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Nepal. Dr. King has authored articles, book reviews, and columns in academic journals, magazines, and newspapers, including *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, *Journal of Asian Business*, *Inside Indonesia*, *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Tempo*, and *Kompas*. He is a regular guest lecturer at the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. Department of State. In 1999 and 2000, Dr. King managed NDI's long-term election monitoring and civil-military relations programs in Indonesia. He has lived in Indonesia for a total of seven years and is fluent in Bahasa Indonesia. He received a BA in international relations and an MA in international policy studies from Stanford University, and a PhD in political science from Ohio State University.

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