

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
CENTER FOR EAST ASIA POLICY STUDIES

**ISIS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: PROBLEMS
NOW AND LATER**
**PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH
SIDNEY JONES**

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. LIOW: Good morning, everyone, if you could just settle down. We're about to start. Thank you all for taking time off this morning to come and join us for this session. We're going to be talking about ISIS, a very timely topic, and specifically ISIS in Southeast Asia.

Those of you who follow the issue, you know that recently in Singapore there was a deradicalization conference, that big thing where my Prime Minister -- I'm Singaporean -- where my Prime Minister spoke and he basically mentioned that the ISIS threat is not one that's just there in Syria and Iraq, but very much in Southeast Asia as well. And if you've been following developments, you'll know that in Malaysia alarm bells have been ringing. In Indonesia they've been ringing I think a bit earlier, so they've been ringing a bit earlier than in Malaysia and certainly in Singapore as well.

So it's a very timely topic. It's a very important topic. And this morning it is indeed our great privilege to have Sidney Jones to share her thoughts on this topic. I think she needs no introduction. Sidney is simply put the best scholar and analyst on terrorism and extremism in Southeast Asia, has been so I think for the last 15 years at least. So if you don't believe me, I think by 11:30 you will.

It's a field that has a lot of people working on it and a lot of people claiming all sorts of knowledge and information. But I think in my humble opinion no one has sort of unpacked the issues with the analytical nuance that Sidney has over the last few years. So it's a great pleasure to have her here. Sidney, please.

DR. JONES: Thank you very much. Thank you, Joseph and Richard, and all the

friends that showed up on this incredibly cold, wintry day in Washington. I brought clothes that were Jakarta-like. I expected the kind of summery blast of heat.

So let's talk about extremism in Indonesia and Southeast Asia and just a quick reminder of the area that we're dealing in. I think it's important to underscore that across the region we've had different paths to extremism and it's also worth underscoring that not all extremism is Islamist. You only have to look in Myanmar to see extremism in another form.

But I think it's important to note that we've had a history of extremism in the region, but none of it has gelled into a Southeast Asian movement with the exception of one very brief period. We had in Afghanistan in the period 1985 to 1994 a number of Southeast Asians from different countries who met each other in training on the Afghan-Pakistan border. And we did have Malaysians, Thais, Moros, Sham, Rohingya, and Indonesians and others to boot meeting each other, training together, and developing some kinds of contacts. We had a particularly strong bond between Indonesians and Malaysians not only because of the Afghan training and because of the language, but because the core leadership of the Indonesian extremist movement basically was living in exile in Malaysia for a long period from about 1985 until 1998, 1999, when Suharto fell and they could all come back. So there was a strong bond established that became the leadership of the organization known as Jemaah Islamiyah, which for a brief period did have a regional scope and we did have branches of Jemaah Islamiyah from its founding in 1993 until 2001 basically in Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, and a very small branch in Australia.

That said there's never been a real coalescing of interests in a regional Islamic state even with those branches. JI was always under Indonesian leadership with a couple of

Malaysians who took a key role as well. If you look at violence issues, it's actually southern Thailand and southern Philippines that today have a much greater rate of violence than Indonesia, Malaysia, or any of the places where you've got a strong basis for Islamist extremism. But southern Thailand and southern Philippines even today are not that plugged into the global jihad -- southern Thailand not at all -- and even in the southern Philippines it's much more ethno-nationalist struggles than it is Islamist extremism. We've got a couple of splinters of the MILF that have caused concern, but I don't think they're real serious problems. Southern Philippines remains a problem and I think will remain a problem in the future as a safe haven for fugitives, but not as a basis for an organization like ISIS. So the real problem when we're talking of ISIS in the region, we're talking mostly of Indonesia and Malaysia.

We have now a unit of the ISIS armed forces known as Katibah Nusantara. And even though its Arabic name (Majmu'ah al Arkhabiliy) has been promoted in some of the ISIS propaganda, people in the region still know it as Katibah Nusantara. And it's interesting that it was formed out of necessity because most Indonesians and Malaysians don't speak English very well and they don't speak Arabic very well. So just for command structure you needed to have people who spoke Malay working together with a few interpreters. And recently we've seen the first deployment of this unit particularly against the Kurds in a way that's caused serious casualties. So in the last two months alone, from March 1 to basically the beginning of May, we've had about 40 Indonesians killed out of a not very large contingent and one of the issues is what impact this will have. We also now have a Malay language school for all the children of Malaysian and Indonesian fighters who are in the region, and we have a Malay language branch of the media operation of ISIS.

If we're going to look briefly at the overall impact thus far, I think one of the issues is that we have Malaysians and Indonesians fighting together in a way that has caused concern that when foreign fighters return to their home countries, when and if the conflict dynamics change, we're going to have bonds that have been established that might provide the basis for cross-border efforts between Malaysia and Indonesia.

Also, and maybe more interesting for this audience, there are international connections being made in Syria and Iraq that could come back to haunt this region. We've had one fascinating example thus far of seven Uyghurs ending up, trying to fight with a small extremist base in central Sulawesi of an organization called the Mujahideen of Eastern Indonesia. I'll come back to that, explaining how they came and so on. But the connection between Xinjiang and Poso in central Sulawesi was made in Syria, and I think that's something that has just shaken up some of the people watching terrorism in the region.

We also could see a possible change in the targeting. Thus far, as many of you know, basically since 2010 in Indonesia all of the attacks and planned attacks save for a very few have been aimed at the Indonesian Police. The police are the main target. The main motivation is revenge for the fact that the police themselves, the counterterrorism police in particular, have killed by now over 100, I think, members of extremist organizations on suspicion of being terrorists in the course of operations and they've arrested hundreds. So the police have become the major target. There hasn't been an attack against Westerners since the 2009 Bali bombings in two hotels in Jakarta. And while we've had a couple of planned attacks aimed at proxies for Myanmar Buddhists as a way of trying to avenge deaths of Rohingya or other Burmese Muslims in Myanmar, in fact, most of those were unsuccessful and the vast majority as I say has

been aimed at domestic targets.

So one of the issues is how could targeting change? How could the fact that we have hundreds of Southeast Asians in Syria and Iraq now -- could that change targeting toward Western targets again? And I think it's still a big question mark.

Also, we're seeing for the first time just in the last six months or so the beginnings of an appeal of ISIS that goes beyond the existing radical networks. Up till now most of the people recruited from Indonesia -- it's a slightly different story in Malaysia -- have come from existing radical networks. But for the first time we're seeing the appeal of this great Islamic experiment and the application of Islamic law in what they are calling its purest form attracting middle-class Indonesians who have not had affiliations before, affiliations with radical organizations before.

So if we look at the motivations of why people are going, most of these motivations would be the same for people in Europe or central Asia or other areas, but it's changed a little bit over time. If we look at 2012, 2013, when we first began to see people from Southeast Asia going to Syria, it was overwhelmingly a humanitarian motivation to help people being bombed, people being under attack by the Assad government in particular. Closely linked to that was the idea that people were going to defend oppressed Muslims, particularly oppressed Sunnis. There was a strong anti-Shia component from some of the groups, but not all who were going. And I think it's important to note that in addition to the Salafi jihadists who were going from Indonesia and Malaysia, we also had pure Salafis, people who didn't have a jihadist background motivated largely by the anti-Shia rhetoric.

We've also had people being attracted by the idea that the final battle at the end of

time, Islam's Armageddon, will take place in Sham, the word for Greater Syria. The battle is known as al-Malhamah al-Kubra and there's been for a long time a fascination with this in Indonesia. There's a whole publishing industry that grew up around this. So long before the Syrian conflict grew up, this fascination with end-of-time prophecies was something that you could pick up in almost any Muslim bookstore. My favorite was a book that was published by a JI publisher that was listing the various indications that the end of time was drawing near and one of them was the appearance of Britney Spears on the pop scene.

Another factor has been the economic motivations. We've had people calling the Syrian conflict the five-star jihad partly because of the stipends that have been given to foreign fighters. Now, the problem is that the rumors about the generosity of the stipends far exceed what people are actually given. So on Twitter, on Facebook, and so on there are rumors that you get between \$500 and \$1,000 U.S. dollars a month. In fact, the average stipend for an adult is \$50 and \$25 for a child. But for some families that's still an incentive, particularly families from East Java where we've seen probably more people go for economic reasons than others more recently and that's a relatively recent motivation.

We have some people who are just interested in fighting a jihad regardless of where it is and it happens to be easier to get to Syria than to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, or other places. And since the caliphate was announced on the first of Ramadan, first of the fasting month in 2014, we've had this idea that there's a call to all Muslims to move to the Islamic state, the hijrah, to Syria and Iraq and that people should be obedient to the call of the new caliph to move accordingly.

The first people who were going to Syria for humanitarian purposes were linked

mostly to Jemaah Islamiyah. So it's important to remember that Jemaah Islamiyah, which was the big bear in the room from up till 2001 and up till the Bali bombs, went on a steady period of decline thereafter. And from 2007 in Indonesia has not used violence in any form and has argued to its members that violence is counterproductive for the moment. But they saw an opportunity in some ways to burnish their jihadist credentials and regain some of their credibility by sending humanitarian delegations to Syria, and this coincided with a new period of recruitment in Indonesia so that JI now is rebuilding its organization, but it is very anti-ISIS. So this organization is the leader of the anti-ISIS radicals now in Indonesia.

We've also had Malaysians going and if anybody wants to see a very compelling video, there's this *New York Times* video called "Jihadists in Our Family" that interviews the family of Ustad Lotfi who trained with Indonesians in Afghanistan in that period in the late 1980s, early nineties, and recently died. He's widely acknowledged as a martyr in the fighting in Syria. But he's an example of somebody who went from humanitarian motives largely to Malaysia, joined the fighting, but with an organization that was one of the anti-ISIS groups. So one of the things that I regret a little bit that wasn't brought out more clearly in the video was that he, in fact, went not to fight ISIS. And we've seen a couple of people who have gone to fight out of humanitarian motives who, when asked to kill someone from a rival organization of ISIS, have turned around and come back, although it's increasingly difficult actually to leave ISIS once you've joined.

Indonesians first started going to fight around mid-2013. The first people we know actually left from Islamabad. They were students at the International Islamic University in Islamabad and left to join the fighting, I think initially joined Ajnad al-Sham, one of the militias,

and eventually turned to ISIS.

This is a clip from the video that just really shocked the Indonesian government I think. It was posted in July 2014. This man in the middle, a man named BahrumSyah, had led a pro-ISIS demonstration in the Hotel Indonesia traffic circle in the center of Jakarta in March of 2014 and he left about two months later for Syria. What shocked the Indonesians was that he was appealing to Indonesians basically to drop their loyalty as Indonesians and join a new political entity. So the violence of ISIS wasn't what shocked people. The idea that people were joining a foreign organization wasn't what shocked people. It was the appeal of loyalty against the Indonesian state basically and the idea that people could drop their Indonesian identity and join with ISIS that really generated a move toward trying to take steps against the organization.

Some people in Indonesia and Malaysia, but more in Indonesia, were attracted by the idea of a caliphate even before a formal caliphate was announced. And these were people who had identified with an organization that was London-based called Al-Muhajiroun. Omar Bakri was based in Britain for a long time, was expelled in 2008. He had a kind of sidekick, Anjem Choudary, who also came to Indonesia and gave lectures. And the people who gathered around these two figures ended up forming the first pro-ISIS website in Indonesia that became a very important organizing tool. And you'll see this is dated April 2013, BahrumSyah appears in that video, was the moderator and the three people listed on top became the people arranging logistics to go to Syria from early 2014 onwards.

The interesting thing about this program is that this would not have been possible to have in Malaysia. The controls would have been too strict and Omar Bakri never would have been able to come. So the issue for Indonesia up until this day is how do you actually control

extremist preachings without encroaching on civil liberties and raising all sorts of protests from political parties and human rights organizations? But we have ongoing radical lectures in Indonesia that serve as a forum for pledges of loyalty to ISIS.

As of late May -- now this is where the numbers get interesting -- as of late May we had between, I think, 250 to 300 Indonesians fighting in Syria and Iraq. So the figures don't distinguish between who's fighting with ISIS and who's fighting with rival groups. The figures that the National Counterterrorism Agency gives are 500 and above, sometimes as high as 700, but in a moment I'll explain why that's not particularly valid. We've had between 80 and 100 Malaysians going and no accurate data from the Philippines, but we don't think very many are there. We also don't think many Thais are there, although there may be a few. But anytime you see numbers, you've got to ask who is being counted. The problem with the higher figures is that they are including people who have gone back and forth on humanitarian delegations, but have not stayed to fight. And you can't give a number on foreign fighters if you're going to include everybody who's just traveling back and forth to Syria.

So I think if you look at the most accurate data in Indonesia, it's from Detachment 88. They've got 202 names of adults. That includes women who have joined their husbands there. But you build on that as the base and I think it's more than that. I think they're not counting everybody. They know they're not counting everybody. But it doesn't get you to the higher figures of 350, 400, or 500.

Most of the Indonesians who have joined thus far have come from existing radical networks, but the people who have joined ISIS have come from organizations that are not Jemaah Islamiyah and have been opposed to Jemaah Islamiyah and have argued that JI has

abandoned jihad. So most of them are from either other Darul Islam factions, factions of the parent organization that gave birth to JI; they're from KOMPAK, which was another organization that fought in the two big communal conflicts in Indonesia in the late nineties, 2000, 2001, in Ambon and Poso; they're from JAT, which is an organization founded by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir in 2008 or they were once members of JAT; or they are from followers of this man, Ahmad Abdul Rahman, who remains the most radical and the most dangerous ideologue in Indonesia. He's far more dangerous than Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, but it is his followers that constitute the bulk of the ISIS members in Indonesia. This is the man who was supporting Omar Bakri and the Al-Muhajiroun people. He was arrested in early May and it's interesting that once he was arrested, the departures for Syria dropped off at least from the Jakarta-West Java area because he and his friends were playing such a key logistical role. I think that may be temporary. It doesn't mean that we've got a linear trend toward people who have stopped going, but it was his organizational skills that helped get many people to Syria.

I'll just show this -- this is too complicated, but I'll show it to you briefly because it gives you a sense of what's happened to the radical movements in Indonesia. From 2001 to 2010 we've basically seen JI shrink. In 2008 is when JAT was formed. Initially people could be members of both JAT and JI. Shortly thereafter, though, it split and each organization forbade the other for being a member. But we also saw Ahmad Abdul Rahman appear on the scene in 2008 as an important figure that many people were following. He had been imprisoned once. He was released in 2008 and had two years of freedom before he was arrested again for that Aceh training camp. He joined an alliance with KOMPAK, Darul Islam, and JAT to set up that camp in Aceh, whereas JI rejected that and there was some other splintering that took place.

So the period from 2001 to 2010 is a period of JI shrinking, but also the fracturing of the movement. And if we look at today, it's even more fractured, but we also have the community divided very clearly between the pro-ISIS and the anti-ISIS. So the pro-ISIS includes most of the people except for JI and JI attaching itself to Jabhat al-Nusra. But there's an interesting difference here. The people that are pro-ISIS are also supportive of violence in Indonesia and Malaysia. The people who are anti-ISIS and pro-Jabhat al-Nusra are saying for the moment violence at home is counterproductive, but there's a difference. These people are deliberately sending fighters to Syria to build their capacity to strengthen organizations at home. These people don't have any intention of coming back at the moment. They're violent, but they don't have any intention of coming back. The problem is what happens when the situation in the Middle East changes and they do come back because they are supportive of violence.

Everybody going to Syria has to be vetted. You have to have a recommendation from someone who's already in Syria. But the difference is it's slightly easier to go via the ISIS channels than it is by the channels that are controlled by JI. There's one channel to Jabhat al-Nusra controlled by JI and one controlled by an organization that has links to JI called MMI. Those two are very tightly controlled. Only members can go. You have to go through indoctrination. You have to go through training and so on. For ISIS you just have to know somebody. So we're seeing a lot of friends of friends, family members, sons-in-law, brothers-in-law, and so on, get to ISIS without having any particular knowledge or membership in anything.

We're also seeing many women going. The attraction is partly because this notion that you can take part in this Islamic experiment, but there are also specific roles for women that are being encouraged by ISIS as teachers and as people taking part in the

propaganda networks over social media. So the person who runs the propaganda effort for the Indonesian-Malaysian unit (Katibah Nusantara) is a woman whose husband we just learned was killed a couple of months ago.

Prison networks are also extremely important. They come up in the Philippines as well as in Indonesia, but in the Philippines the difference is that people take oaths of allegiance to ISIS, but never get there. In Indonesia we've got prisoners that are taking oaths of allegiance to ISIS and they are becoming important nodes of contact for people who want to go to Syria. So somebody who wants to try to figure out who you contact to get to Syria goes and visits the person who is the field coordinator for the Australian Embassy bombing in 2004 and he provides the first set of contacts and becomes a critical link in the chain. We also have somebody in a prison in Malang who is playing that same role for people from Makassar. And we had this extraordinary ceremony in the super maximum-security prison in Indonesia where 23 people swore an oath of allegiance to ISIS and the prison authorities had no idea that it was taking place. And after this picture came out and someone asked the head of the prison, how could this happen? He said that there were certain places in the prison that were off limits to the prison guards and one of them was the prayer room. So this took place in the prayer room and the prison authorities have been so intimidated by the prisoners that they could actually in a super maximum-security prison have rooms that were off limits to the prison guards.

We've had several prisoners who have left for Syria immediately after their release, which shows how good the networks inside the prisons are. I think we've got about ten so far. The last group of people to be stopped leaving for Syria was the extended family of this one man who was released in 2012 from Makassar. At least 150 people are due out of prison in

Indonesia before the end of 2016. And I think we have to be prepared for the fact that some of those are going to go back into violent activity and that ISIS will be an attractive option, especially if there are no jobs for some of those people out. That said, the recidivism rate remains fairly low and it's not the case that everybody who gets out will immediately seek to go back. But I just think it's important to underscore because there's no capacity in Indonesia for monitoring people after they're released.

As I mentioned we've had these heavy casualties in the last two months. Most of it has been fighting the Kurds, but in the last two weeks or so we've seen a number of people killed by coalition airstrikes in and around Aleppo, including those first four Indonesians who left from Islamabad. All of them I think now have been killed in airstrikes just in the last few weeks.

Then we have the issue of in some ways Indonesia's most wanted man, a man named Santoso, who set up the Mujahideen-Indonesia team war and managed to use social media to build himself up into something that attracted the attention even of people beyond Indonesia. In fact, he has about 20 to 30 armed men, not more than that. He has been under enormous pressure and just recently operations have pushed him out of his camp in Poso in central Sulawesi.

In September we had four Uyghurs arrested en route to his camp in Poso, and it turned out that three others had already reached there and were fighting with Santoso. It turned out that there was a link in Turkey where Indonesians in Syria decided that they needed to strengthen Santoso and one way to do it would be by adding additional foreign fighters to his operations in Poso. We still don't know how they decided on Uyghurs, but the contact with

Uyghur groups was made either in Turkey or in Syria. We had a Uyghur in Malaysia and a Uyghur who came from Turkey meeting there and basically organizing the group to go into Poso. And the Indonesians, once they arrested them, had this terrible time finding anybody who could interpret for them. So I don't know how they communicated when they were actually there. But they came, all of the seven, and there were actually two others who we think fled back to Malaysia. All of them came through other parts of Southeast Asia, so we've had about 5,000 Uyghurs come through Malaysia, but via Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and other places. We think that none of them knew each other before they actually met in Malaysia, and it was in Malaysia that they were -- they may have been duped -- but they were convinced to try to come to Indonesia and join the fighting there. And when three of them were captured, they found on their cell phones pictures of some of the others who were already there, clearly having a good time in Poso.

Now the other regional issue, which could be a problem for Indonesia and Malaysia and other countries, is the outrage over the Rohingya because we've now seen the ISIS propaganda units building up the issue of the Rohingya in a way that right now is focused on the obligation of all Muslims to help the Rohingya rather than to wage war against their persecutors, but it could change to an instruction to wage war against the persecutors. And we've had acts of violence in both Malaysia and Indonesia already, fortunately with low casualties, that are motivated by a desire to avenge deaths of Muslims in Myanmar.

Is there an IS structure in Indonesia or in Southeast Asia? So far I think the answer is no. I think in order for any part of Southeast Asia to join ISIS physically, they would have to control territory and there's simply no place in Southeast Asia where any extremist group

controls territory. That said, I think there is a desire on the part of ISIS to extend its reach as far as possible. If you look at ISIS websites, they actually list the Philippines -- not Indonesia or Malaysia -- as one of their areas. But as I say, there's no control of territory thus far and I don't think it's likely to happen.

We should think about aspects of the potential threat. Right now the capacity of terrorists in Indonesia is extremely low, but there's a concern that if people come back from Syria they're going to have new skills, a new ideological commitment, and new international connections. We also see JI fighters coming back and we have to keep in mind that even though JI has foresworn violence for the moment, we don't know what would change that calculus, especially since they are deliberately trying to acquire new skills. We could have ISIS order and attack from among its supporters in Southeast Asia just to prove its presence there. We could see fighters who've been stopped from going try to undertake some kind of attack out of frustration. And we could see radicalization of other groups. We've had some instances of religious thugs crossing over into pro-ISIS groups.

The Indonesian government and the Malaysian government have actually made several important steps to try to address the problem. It's much more difficult in Indonesia than Malaysia in part because of the level of corruption, in part just because of the sheer size. We're seeing some creative legal tools being applied so that now Indonesians coming back from Syria are being charged under a very ancient provision of the criminal code, which punishes joining a rebellion against a friendly state. So on the idea that the Assad regime has a diplomatic relationship with Indonesia and is a friendly state, this provision is being used. You have to give them points for creativity. They're also trying to strengthen the antiterrorism law. I think

they're going to have political problems doing that. They are in the process of sharing information with other countries. I think the Foreign Ministry has been very concerned about foreign fighters, but their priorities are still protection of all the migrant workers in the Middle East and the Indonesians on death row in Saudi Arabia in particular. So the capacity is limited even though the political will to address the issue is there.

I'll just go through these last ones quickly. I think there are a number of interesting community initiatives that need to be understood better because there actually are a number of cases where communities have taken back mosques and schools from extremists, but nobody has bothered to collect those lessons and understand what made those work.

I think the current political situation is a problem on this front because we have real deep and increasing competition between the police and the military, which is using counterterrorism as one of its battlegrounds. Basically the military is on a roll to try and take back some internal security functions from the police. They are trying to portray the police as having failed on the counterterrorism front and want to basically get a share of the action and the funds for itself. So this is not a healthy development in Indonesia.

All of this notwithstanding, neither ISIS specifically nor terrorism more generally is of a caliber at the moment to cause any serious risks to the political stability of any country in Southeast Asia. Thank you.

MR. LIOW: Thank you, Sidney. I think this room is small enough that we don't need the mics. We've got a lot to chew on and I'm sure you all have a lot of questions. I have some, so I'm going to use my role as the moderator to kick off with two questions.

The first is, can you talk a little bit about the role of pesantren in the sense that

remember the earlier sort of struggles against the JI, the role of sort of radical extremist pesantrens, to what extent do you see that being a factor in terms of recruitment?

And the second question is on the sectarian issue between the Shia and the Sunni, which you said is one of the triggers. We know that in Indonesia, certainly in Malaysia, there's a very -- well, even in the case of Malaysia it's not even a subtext, it was a very blatant anti-Shia frame of rhetoric. I was looking at some of the Jakim sermons and you'd be shocked at the visceral text on Shia Islam. But now that this ISIS problem has surfaced, do you see in the broader Muslim society in both countries sort of a scaling back on this anti-Shia type of rhetoric given that it might feed into this ISIS situation?

DR. JONES: First on the pesantrens, we saw a shift after JI began to decline. So for a while most of the people being arrested for terrorism in Indonesia were coming out of a network of about 40 JI schools that were directly affiliated with JI, but they were attracting the kids, not just the JI members, but basically all radical organizations. If you wanted your kid to get a radical education, you sent him or her to one of these 40 schools.

And then as we began to see the fracturing of the extremist movement more generally and these new cells emerging, more and more people were coming out of the ordinary state school system. So for the last five years I would say the overwhelming majority of the people who've been arrested have come from ordinary school backgrounds who were radicalized sometimes in Islamic study groups in school, sometimes just by extracurricular activities of various kinds.

More recently when we're looking at the people who have gone to ISIS, there is a strong representation of people who again are graduates or their parents were graduates of the JI

schools and they are not members of JI. In some cases parents were members of JI. In some cases people were from JI families, but decided that JI had gone too soft and became more militant. So we're seeing more representation of people from JI schools, but it's not just any pesantren. We're seeing nobody, for example, come out of the Nahdlatul Ulama pesantren in East Java.

And on the Sunni-Shia issue, I think it's very interesting to try and date when we began to see the rise in anti-Shia propaganda in Indonesia because it's striking how fast and intense the anti-Shia propaganda was and it predates Syria by many years. I think it took off after the war in Lebanon when Hezbollah and Nasrallah were portrayed all over Indonesia as heroes and that's when I think Saudi funding began coming in for anti-Shia activities. One of the most radical anti-Shia preachers is someone who's extremely close to the Saudi Arabian Embassy, for example.

So we had three things basically converge. We had the propaganda campaign that was unrelated to the conflict in Syria. We had some episodes of violence in East Java, which were completely local in nature, but were put by Sunni Muslims into a framework that had been set by this propaganda. And then we had the conflict in Syria blow up, which was portrayed as Shia massacring Sunnis. And the three of them converged to put more negative focus on the Shia than we have ever seen in Indonesia at any time before.

Interestingly, however, the Shia community in Indonesia is split between the pro-Iran, pro-Lebanon, and pro-Iraq and they're not always in sync. And we've had some recent converts, Shia converts, for the first time engage in a kind of effort to fight back, tearing down anti-Shia banners from schools and stuff. So the potential for a clash is actually increasing I

think.

MR. LIOW: Thanks. Questions? I think Catharin first, then Vikram. We'll take a few rounds.

MS. DALPINO: Sidney, one of your bullet points was about increased information sharing and I remember in the early 2000s sometimes there was so much distrust between Southeast Asian countries that external powers like the United States and Australia had to act almost as a turnstile, you know, that one country would give the information to Australia and Australia would give it to the neighboring country. Can you flesh out your bullet point and tell us a little bit more what the information-sharing climate is like?

DR. JONES: There's still some distrust among countries in the region. I think the Indonesians and Malaysians, despite the distrust that occurs more generally between the two governments, actually have a very good information-sharing relationship on counterterrorism issues. I think it's pretty good with Singapore as well, although the Singaporeans are convinced that anything they give to Indonesia will leak, and everybody has contempt for the Philippines.

But what the Indonesians and Malaysians are really making an effort to do now is try and understand what other countries are doing about their foreign fighters. So there are all sorts of seminars all the time trying to understand what the Dutch, the Danes, the Norwegians, and others are doing about their problem at home because there's a realization that it is a shared problem. Even if the motivations may be different for why people are going, everybody's going to have to deal with it. And the Indonesians are actually more open than I've ever seen them to trying to figure out whether there's anything that any of these other countries have done that may be applicable at home.

MR. LIOW: Vikram.

MR. NEHRU: First of all, thank you very much for a terrific talk and I hope we'll be able to get access to these slides, which I couldn't write down quickly enough the information on them.

Now, there was one item on one of the slides which talked about the radicalization of the FPI, but you didn't talk about it. So I'd like you to elaborate on that.

And the second point is that many of the motivating factors, what I would call pull factors, you know, attraction for various concepts underlying the struggle that's taking place, but what about push factors? You talked about the attraction of salaries, so clearly there's a poverty dimension perhaps to this. But are there other push factors in Indonesia, things like access to justice, things like loss of sense of being part of the growth process in Indonesia, rising inequality, that sort of stuff? Is that a major factor in your view? Thanks.

DR. JONES: First on the FPI. For those of you who don't know, the FPI stands for Front Pembela Islam or the Islamic Defenders Front, which is a group of mostly thugs with an educated religious veneer at the top. They are engaged in anti-vice campaigns. They're the people that see themselves as defenders of morality. They have had a long association with the Indonesian Police, working with them on protection rackets, for example, particularly in entertainment areas. They have been engaged in violence against religious minorities, often with the complicity of the police at least in some areas.

They have never been terrorists in the sense that they always use bricks or pipes or something like that, never bombs or guns. They have never been interested in trying to fight for an Islamic state. They are pro-Sharia, but most of them come from a Nahdlatul Ulama

background. So the idea that you could have crossover from FPI to extremist organizations, particularly of a pro-ISIS nature, is very strange.

But one of the things that we're seeing is that some of the followers of Ahmad Abdul Rahman, this cleric, have specifically targeted FPI groups building on their interest in application of Sharia to advocate support for this Islamic state that exists now in Syria. And in areas where FPI does not have a strong religious leadership of its own, we have seen wholesale groups go over to pro-ISIS groups. So Lamongan in East Java, Makassar, Bukittinggi of all places; this is an area of West Sumatra that's never even had a very strong radical tradition. But in each of these areas we've seen the FPI groups go over en masse to a powerful, persuasive pro-ISIS supporter using the teachings of Ahmad Abdul Rahman as the vehicle for doing so.

And I'm sorry, what was the second part?

MR. NEHRU: The push?

DR. JONES: Oh, the push, of course. There are very few push factors in Indonesia. As I said, we're not dealing with a country that's under attack or that's producing a lot of grievances or that has a repressive political system. And even the people that are going or are attracted by stipends are attracted by some of the other factors in ISIS as well. So it isn't even the case that we're getting people only pushed by the attraction of getting a stipend. They're usually from radical families to begin with and this is an additional incentive to go. But this is the first time I know of where local factors are not so much the issue and it's very much the international factors at play that are pulling people into participation.

MR. LIOW: Bill.

MR. WISE: I want to ask you a set of questions about the counterterrorism effort,

beginning with the intelligence side and then with the operations side.

On the intelligence side, is there still a struggle between BIN and Detachment 88 and the counterterrorism intelligence guys? Is that problem unresolved? Are they effective? Is one more effective than the other? Are they battling for who gets the domestic as well as the external?

DR. JONES: Not only is there still a battle between BIN and the police -- BIN is the National Intelligence Agency -- the police and the military intelligence agency, there is a battle between the regular police intelligence agency and the counterterrorism intelligence unit, and within the counterterrorism intelligence unit there is a battle between two factions. So there is this constant competition, which is counterproductive to the overall effort. That said BIN has been focusing more closely on the threat overseas, so they are trying to do a better job of monitoring Indonesian student recruitment and things like that. From what I hear, I'm not sure that it's yet of a very high quality. But I think there's recognition even within the counterterrorism unit and Detachment 88 that that capacity is necessary and that they need to work with BIN at least on that role. But domestically, BIN is as it always was.

MR. WISE: On the operational side, setting the intelligence apart for a moment, is it now Detachment 88 versus Kopassus or are there other elements in competition?

DR. JONES: On the operational side it's still very much Detachment 88, but Kopassus wants a piece of the action. And there's been recently the formation of a kind of new counterterrorism unit of all of the military Special Forces, so Kopassus and the Navy unit and the Air Force unit coming together. And I think for the first time the military side really sees an opportunity because all of the advisors, the close advisors on security to Jokowi, the President,

are coming out of a military background and they share the resentment against the police for having captured so much of the action in the past. So I think it would actually take one violent incident in Indonesia to turn over or turn back some of the operational authority to the military.

MR. WISE: That was going to be the third part of my question, so thank you very much for that. But lastly in Singapore and Malaysia, do any of these problems that have beset intelligence and operational agencies occur as well or are they on pretty firm ground?

DR. JONES: I don't know because I don't have as much access on the Singapore and Malaysian side. I don't know, Joseph, can you answer that?

MR. LIOW: No comment. Lynn and then Jim and then you, sir, and then behind.

MS. KUOK: Thank you very much. I was wondering whether you would be able to comment on how the rise of extremist terrorism in countries like Malaysia and Indonesia has affected broader communal relations in these countries. So how has it affected relations between moderate Muslims and non-Muslims in these countries?

DR. JONES: I think there's a separate issue of religious tolerance and communal relations more generally. And in some ways everything that takes place on the violent extremist side is a bit separate from that. There is a connection in a sense in that some of this crossover from anti-vice campaigns and attacks on religious minorities in some cases carries over into or transforms itself into extremism. And the failure of the police to prosecute violence of a non-terrorist nature can be seen as giving a green light to other kinds of violence.

But the bigger issue I think is trying to figure out how to stop a trend toward giving the state a greater role in the definition of orthodoxy and in the enforcement of morality because I think that's where we find non-Muslims seeing themselves as increasingly second-

class citizens by a series of decisions taken by the government or by political parties trying to get legislation that would make gains in these two areas. That's apart from the developments and the trajectory of extremism per se.

MR. LIOW: Jim.

MR. CASTLE: Thank you. Sidney, recently there was a pretty nasty political battle over naming a new police chief. And one of the problems was that all the eligible candidates had serious corruption allegations. How does this affect their ability to run the counterterrorist activities, especially given the fact that in most surveys the military is one of the most respected organizations in Indonesia and the police are one of the least? How does this impact the antiterrorist activities?

DR. JONES: I think that it's important to note that the people running the counterterrorism activities of the police are a different faction of the police from the head of criminal investigation and the man who is now deputy chief of police who was notorious for his unusual wealth. I'll put it that way. So we have the police themselves split into several factions, and I think the counterterrorism police are horrified by the way in which these rogue, corrupt elements have pushed the image of the police even further into the ground. But what that decline in the public image, which was already rock bottom, of the police has done is to give support to the idea that the military should have a role not only on counterterrorism, but on many other aspects of internal security. So the military sees this whole scandal about the selection of the new police chief and the corruption swirling around the top ranks of the police as an opportunity to make its push for getting powers that it believes it lost with democratization in 1999.

MR. LE CORRE: I'm Philippe Le Corre at Brookings. Just a question about

Omar Bakri. I mean this man has been around a long time. He was in London running a mosque I think and part of the most radical preachers. How come the Indonesian government let him come to Indonesia and give lectures and speeches? I mean he's surely banned in the U.K. now and many places, so I'm surprised at people with such long backgrounds of radicalism would be allowed to express themselves.

DR. JONES: Actually Omar Bakri in that lecture came in by video speaker, but Anjem Choudary came in directly. So Anjem Choudary has been working with Omar Bakri and the question is still the same. Why didn't the Indonesians know that Anjem Choudary as well was someone who had a reputation for radical preaching because it would have been very easy to deny him a visa?

But as far as I know, nowhere in the Indonesian machinery -- immigration or intelligence or anywhere else -- is there a list of problematic speakers where they could take steps to prevent them from coming in. Now, when you bring them in over speaker phone or by video conferencing, it's harder to keep that out. And the Indonesians if nothing else are highly technologically proficient. We had people detained in that super maximum-security prison giving religious lectures to their followers on the outside via speaker phone. And we've had prisoners communicating between prisons using their cell phones and so on, and we've had marriages take place between detained prisoners and women on the outside using video phones and proxies and so on. So there's a lot that can be done just with a cell phone.

QUESTIONER: Thanks. It was a great presentation, Sidney, thank you. I'm wondering if you can talk a bit about how Indonesian civil society, leadership in Muhammadiyah, you, and how the state is thinking about counter radicalization efforts, if they're

rethinking some of the rehabilitation programs that were put in place to combat JI and if there's been any effectiveness there.

DR. JONES: The problem with the government program has been that basically the government program is run by the section of the National Counterterrorism Agency responsible for prevention and deradicalization and it is run by a military officer, whereas the operations part of the National Counterterrorism Agency is run by a police officer. That automatically builds in a bifurcation so that the people that have all of the information on where, how, and why people got radicalized, they don't communicate very well with the people that are designing the counter radicalization programs. And the only way you're going to get even a hope of effective programs is if you build targeted programs based on very clear detailed knowledge about where radicalization took place in the first place and that's not happening.

So you get the prevention program being designed to have programs for imams across Indonesia, education programs about the dangers of terrorism. You have these forums for the prevention of terrorism being formed in all of these communities and they get T-shirts or jackets with the initials on them, but it's not targeted. You don't even have a definition of extremism that is narrow enough to be able to develop targeted programs because there's an idea that extremists include everybody, for example, from PKS, the political party, to Hizbut Tahrir. So it includes a lot of people who don't use violence at all and unless you narrow it down to people who actually do use violence, you're not going to be able to get an effective counter radicalization program underway.

Now within Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, you've got a lot of interest in trying to immunize their communities. The problem is that Nahdlatul Ulama has got a lot of

interest and enthusiasm, but their community is not the problem. There are very few people from NU that get pulled into extremist activities. Muhammadiyah is the problem because many of the people who are going into extremist activities do come out of a generally modernist Muhammadiyah background. It has to do with the way those two organizations developed, and we just had one guy arrested on the Turk-Assyrian border who's on the executive committee of Muhammadiyah, bringing so-called humanitarian aid into Syria, but his associations are not just humanitarian.

And there are people in the progressive wing of Muhammadiyah that are worried about where their organization is going and about the need to inculcate a broader sense of pluralism into the organization. But in some cases they can't even get in the front door of their own communities that are already deeply conservative. So there's a real problem in the pushback within Muslim social organizations about anything that is seen as stigmatizing Islam more generally.

I think there are some interesting experiments going on in Muhammadiyah, and I'm very optimistic actually that they will find some programs that are useful in the long run. But it's been a long hard struggle to get to the point where you could even see extremism as something negative.

QUESTIONER: Could you say something about the funding? Where's the money coming from now? Is it increasing, decreasing? How much is coming out of the Gulf or Saudi Arabia? How much is there locally generated? Is there money coming out of Pondok Indah? Where's the financing coming from?

DR. JONES: All the funding so far, as far as we know, is local. If we're talking

about the pro-ISIS groups and we're talking about departures to Syria and so on, all of the money for organizing travel and organizing ceremonies and activities more generally, all of that is local. And you do have local donors providing funding for individuals who can't afford it. For example, recently released prisoners just out of prison don't have the money to go to Syria. A local donor comes along and provides the funding. Especially in the Jakarta-Bekasi area, there were a number of businessmen attracted by -- could be businesswomen as well -- attracted by the idea of ISIS who were willing to provide support for some of these people, also willing to provide support for families of individuals where the breadwinner had gone to Syria.

MR. LIOW: I'll take two questions, the lady over here and then here.

MS. BUSCHBACHER: Hi. My name is Kerri. I'm from the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications at the Department of State. My question would be if you could talk a little bit more about the role of social media in terms of recruitment strategies in Indonesia and Malaysia, specifically if you feel that that would be -- I don't want to say a good way -- but a good way for something like a U.S. government initiative to counter radicalization and prevent radicalization in Malaysia and Indonesia. Is that an effective strategy? Should it be something that comes from the USG or something that's messaged out by credible voices in Indonesia and Malaysia?

DR. JONES: You won't get anywhere with it having a USG label on it, nowhere. It's interesting to see what a different role social media has played in Indonesia and Malaysia because it's been very important in Malaysia for recruitment and for individuals interested in ISIS meeting one another. And it's in part because it's much harder to actually meet face to face in meetings of extremist groups in Malaysia. There's much greater vigilance and surveillance on

the part of the police.

In Indonesia Facebook and Google Plus and Twitter have become very important for conveying messages back about what it's like in Syria and Iraq -- what it's like living there, what the glories of taking part in battle are and so on -- and that's been a very important role and probably has served to attract other people.

Now, you have an number of people who've become effective counter messengers just on their own, who have just taken it upon themselves to every time there's a piece of ISIS propaganda or a new Tweet in Malay or Indonesia. One of these people will come back with a kind of humorous, but informed counter message and he has two things going for him. One is that he makes a lot of use of cartoons in a way that makes his stuff fun to read and he's very anti the U.S., very anti-West more generally, which gives him at least on social media a credibility among some of the people reading his material.

So I think there's actually scope for doing more kind of crowd-sourced responses to social media, but it's got to come from people that do have credibility within the movement or who have aspects to their messaging that gives them the credibility to people who will read it.

MR. LIOW: Ardian.

MR. WICAKSONO: Yes, my name is Ardian from the Indonesian Embassy. Thank you very much for a very comprehensive presentation. It may be related to the CVE Summit last February and then also with our government approach. Maybe one message that I'd like to say here is about moderate Islam because last April I accompanied the U.S. Muslim delegates to Indonesia, met the young generation and pesantren, and also with other religious leaders in Indonesia. And the message is U.S. needs more voice from Indonesia about moderate

Islam. I just want to relate this to the counter extremism efforts in Indonesia because the target -- because we're dealing not with terrorists ideologically, but also the technology, IT, and also social media as well. The target is the young generation and I know there are a lot of young Indonesians has been like a magnet going to ISIS to fight in ISIS.

But the most important, what do you think about our prevention about the young generation, not to be influenced by the propaganda of ISIS because it's very important for us in universities and also in the pesantrens. Thank you very much.

DR. JONES: I think there are some useful initiatives that have been undertaken. For example, bringing victims of bombings to schools to talk about what they've actually endured and to show people what the actual impact of violence is. I think that has been effective.

I think that there are ways that you could use images, for example, that video. I just showed you a still from it, but the video of the kids training with guns at age 8 and 9 in Syria is a real shocker for Indonesians. And I think if carefully used by some of the counterterrorism initiatives, showing that video to certain audiences could be very effective. This is where you're going to end up with these kids using guns. Now, at the end of that video the teacher asks a young Indonesian child, what do you want to be when you grow up? And he says a killer. That's the kind of thing -- and I've seen Indonesian audiences shown that ISIS video and they're just appalled. So I think finding the right material and the right audiences could be quite effective.

MR. LIOW: Maybe I'll take this opportunity to respond to Bill's question since Sidney prompted me. In the case of Singapore two events at the turn of the century: The first is, of course, the uncovering of the JI plot and the second is SARS. These two events basically

alerted the Singapore government to the fact that it's a false distinction in terms of internal-, external-type of threats and it overlaps, cuts across agencies. So in other words, there's no choice but to basically enforce cooperation among agencies.

This was undertaken under the rubric of what they call the all-of-government approach where basically channels were created for various -- not just security agencies, but broader ministries -- to talk to each other and in that context to sort of familiarize each other with their particular aspect of prevention in terms of the threat. So I think it's worked pretty well in the case of Singapore.

In the case of Malaysia I would say that there is probably healthy competition between, for example, the special branch and on the other hand the Prime Minister's department, the research department of the Prime Minister's office. Both are very accomplished security agencies. But I think the problem in Malaysia was that they were really alerted to the threat very late, certainly compared to Singapore and Indonesia. Mind you, in June and July 2013, the Malaysian Prime Minister publicly lauded ISIS as an organization, as a good example of how a small group of people can triumph over a larger group, i.e., the Iraqi military. It's on YouTube; it was an UMNO event. So obviously there was a political impetus to it, but nevertheless, it's out there. I'm sure he regrets it, but that was I think demonstrative of the fact that the Malaysians were not alerted to the threat until number one Lotfi, Lotfi's case surfaced.

And then there was this bizarre report of 70, 80 military officers or military personnel who were allegedly involved in ISIS. I'm curious where that particular journalist got the information from. I think that's overblown, but nevertheless, that got the attention of the Malaysian government. So I think over the last few months you've seen a top-down

enforcement of a more conscious effort to counter the threat from ISIS.

Any other questions before we wrap up? Yes, Sheryl?

MS. SHUM: Hi. I'm Sheryl from the Singapore Embassy. I'm just wondering how would you suggest the regional countries start looking at developing regional solutions to the issue of foreign fighters, or is there a regional solution to be had for this issue?

DR. JONES: I think there needs to be a regional solution because I think it is going to be a regional problem. I think particularly Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia need to work together on this. But as you know there's sometimes resentment against Singapore in the mix, so I think maybe the thing to do is to try to focus on the technical issue like how many people are actually there? What data is being used? And how are we going to monitor these people when they come back because we're seeing a lot of Indonesians leave through Malaysia? We're seeing a lot of Malaysians -- not a lot, but we've had a couple go through Indonesia because they figure that that route, Indonesia-Malaysia, is so commonly traveled that nobody's going to pay attention to that in particular. And then you leave for Turkey or Qatar from the other country. So I think there's a lot on the travel and immigration side that could provide the focus for looking at setting up monitoring systems more broadly.

MR. LIOW: Any final questions? If not, it's 11:25, but I think with 5 minutes to spare I've been vindicated, proven right. I think it was an excellent session, very illuminating, and gives us a lot to think about in terms of this— I suppose— looming threat that the region faces.

So can I please invite you to join me in thanking Sidney?

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