

START



National Consortium for the
Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY BASED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Press Release

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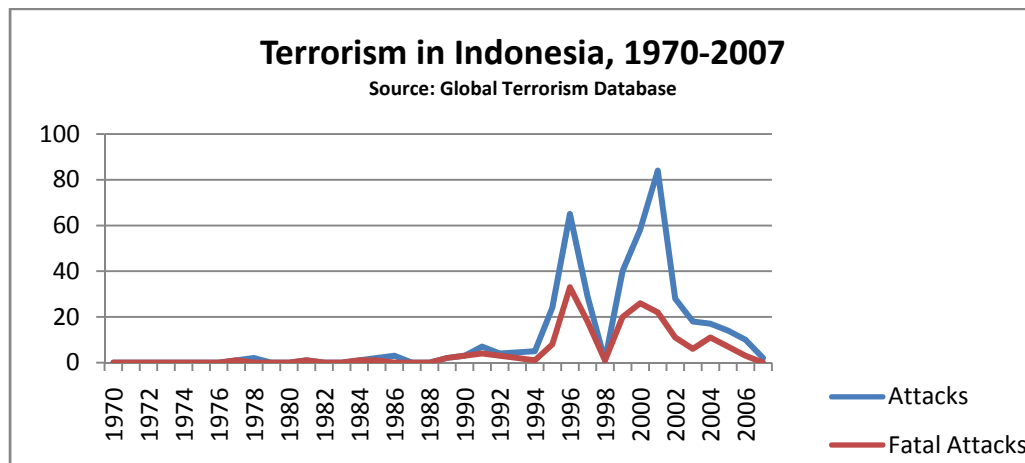
Contact: 301.405.6600
kjsmarick@start.umd.edu

Background on Terrorism and Public Opinion in Indonesia

In the wake of the coordinated bombings at the J.W. Marriott and the Ritz-Carlton in Jakarta, Indonesia, START has assembled below relevant background information on terrorism and views of terrorism in Indonesia, drawn from ongoing START research projects.

Terrorism Trends in Indonesia

- There were 421 terrorist attacks in Indonesia between 1970 and 2007: The vast majority (92%) of the terrorist activity in Indonesia has happened since 1994. From 1995 to 2007, there has been an average of 30 events per year, although the frequency of attacks has been declining since 2000.



- Almost one-third of Indonesian terrorist attacks were carried out as part of multiple or coordinated attacks. This is considerably higher than the prevalence of coordinated attacks globally, which is 12.5%
- Nine of the 421 attacks (2.1%) in Indonesia between 1970 and 2007 were suicide attacks. This prevalence is slightly higher than that of suicide attacks globally, which is 1.5%.
- In Indonesia, the most common attack type is bombing (33%), the most common weapon type is Explosives (37%), and the most common target type is Private Citizens & Property (23%). Businesses are targeted in 10% of terrorist attacks in Indonesia.
- Among those incidents in Indonesia for which the perpetrator is known, the most active has been Free Aceh Movement (GAM), responsible for 113 terrorist attacks in the country. GAM was most active in 2001, taking responsibility for 58 incidents that killed 65 people in that year alone. GAM signed a peace accord with the Indonesian government in 2005 and has not

engaged in reported terrorist activity since then. More information on GAM is available at http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data/tops/terrorist_organization_profile.asp?id=3600

- The leading perpetrator of fatal terrorism in Indonesia this decade is Jemaah Islamiya (JI). JI is responsible for 11 terrorist attacks in the cities of Jakarta, Kuta, Tentena, Jimbaran, and Denpasar, which--together--have resulted in the deaths of 273 people. Notably, JI was responsible for a Bali nightclub attack in 2002 that resulted in 202 deaths and 150 wounded (see <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/IncidentSummary.aspx?gtdid=200210120005>), as well as the previous attack on the JW Marriott in Jakarta in 2003 which resulted in 15 deaths and 149 wounded (see <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/IncidentSummary.aspx?gtdid=200308050001>).

Public Opinion in Indonesia

With funding from START, the Program on International Policy Attitudes conducted surveys in with 1000 respondents in Indonesia in 2007 and in 2008 to gain insights into perspectives towards terrorism as well as towards the United States.

- 72% of respondents in Indonesia indicated that terrorism is a “very big problem” in their country.
- In 2007, only 3% of Indonesian respondents indicated that they approved of violent attacks on U.S. civilians working in Islamic countries. By 2008, support for this sentiment had doubled to 6%.
- This trend is also reflected in questions regarding attacks on U.S. troops around the world: Opposition to attacks in Iraq dropped 19 points (from 61 to 42%) while approval rose nine points (from 17 to 26%) between 2007 and 2008. For U.S. troops in Afghanistan, Indonesian disapproval of attacks dropped from 58 to 42 percent and, for troops in the Persian Gulf, disapproval dropped from 55 to 40 percent.
- When asked “Thinking about groups in the Muslim world that attack Americans, would you say you disapprove of all these groups, approve of some but disapprove of others, or approve of all or most of these groups?”, disapproval of such groups among Indonesians dropped from 52% to 27%, with 33% indicating support for some violent anti-U.S. groups.
- Only 8% of Indonesians believed that the United States mostly shows respect to the Islamic world, while 30% stated that the United States purposely tries to humiliate the Islamic world.

A full report on these findings is available at

http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/feb09/STARTII_Feb09_rpt.pdf. And, a research brief on views toward the Caliphate in Indonesia, by Douglas McLeod and Frank Hairgrove, as available at http://www.start.umd.edu/start/publications/research_briefs/20080131_Caliphate_and_Radicalization.pdf.



The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence based at the University of Maryland. START uses state-of-the-art theories, methods, and data from the social and behavioral sciences to improve understanding of the origins, dynamics, and social and psychological impacts of terrorism. Additional information on START is available at: www.start.umd.edu.



The GTD is an open-source database including information on terrorist events around the world from 1970-2007. Unlike many other event databases, the GTD includes systematic data on domestic as well as transnational and international terrorist incidents that have occurred during this time period. For each GTD incident, information is available on the date and location of the incident, the weapons used and nature of the target, the number of casualties, and—when identifiable—the perpetrator. The GTD’s web interface is available at www.start.umd.edu/gtd.