

## POLITICAL STANCE OF EX COMBATANTS OF THE ACEH FREE MOVEMENT POST HELSINKI PEACE AGREEMENT

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**Abstract:** The peace agreement between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, GAM) in 2005 still leaves problem. Although former GAM elite led Aceh three times as Governor in a democratic local election process, GAM's political stance remains the same. They see Indonesian government as potential threat and opponent up to this day, even after twelve years of peace agreement. The situation certainly makes uneasy relationship between Jakarta and Banda Aceh, the capital of Aceh province. Hope from Jakarta to integrate Aceh in the scheme of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia is not in an easy position as there are various obstacles that makes relationship not smooth and run well. This article discusses the political stance of former GAM in post-Helsinki Treaty era. This article also asserted that the former political stance of GAM elites has influenced the Indonesian government's perspective of integrating Aceh into the Unitary State of Indonesia (*Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia*—NKRI) scheme. In this context, the interesting view of this article is that there is an increase understanding of former GAM elites on democratic system and perspective to build Aceh in peaceful ways. This is confirmed by the political awareness of former GAM elites who takes part in politic through a number of local and national parties who contested in local elections.

**Keywords:** Political Stance, GAM, Conflict, Peace, Helsinki Agreement.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This article aims to elaborate the political stance of ex-GAM combatants in the post-Helsinki Peace Accords era. The tide of the Aceh conflict that lasted for 30 years resulted in significant losses on both sides and the people of Aceh itself. Even the security approach taken during that period only increased the number of GAM combatants and raised vengeful generation against Indonesia (Stange and Patock, 2010). The central government's approach was unsuccessful in resolving the conflict until it remained prolonged and was one of the strongest reasons for putting forward a peaceful way of resolving conflicts. The peace talks in Helsinki in 2005 became a learning history for both sides that separatism would not last in conflict, as the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding proved that talks have become

milestone of peace for Aceh people. Now, after twelve years of implementing peace agreement as a mechanism for conflict resolution between Indonesia and GAM, the situation can be interpreted as a dynamic process of political transformation.

Some facts of why it is important to elaborate ex-combatant stance in the post-Helsinki Compliance Agreement's era are as follows:

1. There are many GAM elites practices political activities using symbols and ethnic-nationalist sentiments;
2. The use of some terms still reflects the entity of a nation/state such as the Acehnese people is called Aceh Nation, which against the idea of Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia;

3. There are some GAM elites with political stances and policies that indicate arrogance and uses separatist ideas including conflict identities such as the name of Aceh Local Administration is called as Aceh Government and the name of Western Indonesia Time (*Waktu Indonesia Barat—WIB*) is changed into Aceh Time (*Waktu Aceh—WA*).

The rejection of central government in addressing a government policy in Aceh raised the demand from the people who wanted a referendum. The establishment of the *Wali Nanggroe* institution and the strength of GAM and the ASNLF (Atjè Sumatra National Liberation Front) symbols have risen strong prejudice of separation from the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. The evaluation of effectiveness of peace agreement emerged after the latest report of the CMI (Crisis Management Initiative) on the Follow Up of the Aceh Peace Process (2012) stating that the reintegration phase for GAM members in order to foster the spirit of reconciliation was slow.

The issue of ineffective peace agreement, if left unchecked, will revive potential hostility among the conflicting parties. The MoU of Helsinki (peace agreement) mandates Aceh remains as part of Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and other agreements such as improving welfare and political opportunity through the formation of local parties agreed by the Government of Indonesia where GAM must be obeyed and the agreement shall be implemented by both parties. Even more specifically in the MoU of Helsinki (Article 1.1.2 letter a) firmly divided the power of the Government of Indonesia and power of the Government of Aceh. Since Aceh already had power and authority, the level of political satisfaction and maturity of GAM elites in its stance toward any change of turmoil should be more moderate. Moderate political stance, according to Baradat (1999), will refer to a sense of satisfaction with the condition of society and the approval and support of gradual changes. The presence of vulnerability nodes during observation as researcher mentioned above should be well managed and can be completed. If this problem is left behind, it would have impact on the effectiveness of the peace agreement itself and this will disrupt the stability of state security.

Researcher tried to find link on the effectiveness of a peace agreement that might influence, namely, the political stances of former combatants in province of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD). According to field observers, former combatants still showed their true identity as center of political power for GAM because the military wing of GAM still existed in the *Komite Peralihan Aceh—KPA* (Aceh Transitional Committee) organization. KPA was an organization that oversees former *Tentara Neugara Aceh—TNA* (Army of Nanggroe Aceh). This was in line with the stance taken by GAM by not disbanding themselves after the peace agreement. As an organization, the stance is certainly bound to GAM members. Salaman and Asch (2003) mentioned the definition of organization as a level of a group of people sharing a belief, values, and assumptions that encourage them to reinforce the interpretation of their own and others' stances.

The focus of this research is on Political Stance of former GAM combatants on the *Pilkada* (local election) event after the Helsinki Peace Agreement using Political Stances Theory approach, the Concept of Effectiveness, and the Peace Agreement that lead to the strengthening of being a part of NKRI. To distinguish the previous research with current research, some previous researches are stipulated as follow:

1. Research on the role of decentralized policy and soft power approach in conflict resolution efforts in Aceh, with a book titled "*Soft Power untuk Aceh: Resolusi Konflik dan Politik Desentralisasi?*" (2013) by Darmasjah Djumala;
2. Research on the irony that violence conducted by former GAM combatant occurred in the midst of post-conflict democratic era by activist Adi Patria (2012) entitled: "*Kekerasan sebagai Sumber Daya GAM Pasca Konflik (Studi Tentang Keberlangsungan Kekerasan Mantan Kombatant GAM pasca MoU Helsinki Hingga Pemilu Legislatif 2009 di Kabupaten Aceh Utara, Kabupaten Bireuen, dan Kota Lhokseumawe)*".
3. Research conducted by LIPI (2008) entitled "*Transformasi Politik Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, Pasca MoU Helsinki?*" on the form of political transformation conducted by GAM groups following the MoU Helsinki, the relation of

former GAM elites with their external political power and the impact of transformation implemented for former GAM combatants. The research also discussed the changing nature of violent (armed) conflict into a political struggle, which cannot be solved solely by disarming the main actors of the conflict (former GAM combatants).

So it is appropriate to examine the extent to which the agreement in the Helsinki Peace Agreement is effectively implemented as well as a conflict resolution. The phenomenon of Aceh Utara as the center of gravity of the GAM resistance movement has prompted researchers to examine the influence of GAM's former combatant's stance toward the effectiveness of the peace agreement.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Political Stance

In this research, the key issue is the political stance of ex-combatants of GAM who after the peace agreement with the Government of Indonesia. The longevity of this condusive condition was interpreted as an effective conflict resolution. Political stance according to J.P Chaplin (1986) is a relatively stable and continuous tendency to behave or to react in a certain way to other parties, objects, institutions or issues.

Simpson (1998) stated that stance will typically include a tendency to classify or categorize. In the theory of political stance proposed by O'Neil (1966) and Baradat (1999), stance has emphasis on the speed and methods of political change. O'Neil shares political stances into four categories: radical, liberal, conservative and reactionary. Meanwhile, Baradat divided political stance into five categories, namely radical, liberal, moderate, conservative and reactionary. The moderate stance was inserted by Baradat to further explain about positioning itself amid the spectrum of prevailing stances. Where moderate stances indicate that they are satisfied with the current conditions and support every step of change mutually agreed upon. Baradat illustrated categories of political stances can be measured and move in the image as follows:

### 2.2. Effectiveness

The peace treaty is seen as a program or policy that has a specific purpose and ultimately can be observed on the end result. Therefore, the concept of relevant effectiveness was used because as in the substance of the peace agreement, researcher see the purpose of peace agreement was to build mutual trust, peace and, most importantly, a complete nationalism within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). The existence of clarity of objective will be able to show how far the government can capture the aspirations and interpret the demands of former GAM combatants after the peace agreement.

As for Budiani (in Satries, 2011) stated that to measure the effectiveness of a program or policy can be done using the following variables:

- (a) **Target accuracy:** This is to see how far the participants' responses to the achievement of the predetermined targets.
- (b) **Socialization:** To see the organizers' ability to socialize so that information about the implementation of the program can be communicated to the public in general and especially to the main actors who become the main target.
- (c) **Aim:** To see how far the match between the results of implementation with the goals set previously.
- (d) **Monitoring:** Namely various activities undertaken after the implementation of a program or policy as a form of attention to participants.

### 2.3. The Peace Agreement

A peace deal may be considered an episode in the de-escalation of the conflict. His nature is "not enough to calm down" and does not necessarily promise that the conflict is over. The philosopher Kant (in Hadiwinata, 2010: 212) stated, "There should be no legitimate peace treaty if it contains a hidden intention to prepare for the war in the future." This was due to the fact that the peace agreement between RI and GAM has no clear clauses on

the dissolution of GAM and the revocation of freedom demands (Syamsul Hadi et. al., 2007: 89; Sukma, 2013: 271).

The potential for recurrence after the peace agreement was reinforced by the arguments/theories of Ted Robert Gurr (1970), Charles Tilly (1978) and Moore (1997) on why humans rebelled. There are 4 (four) stages to explain the emergence of conflict or rebellion. First, deprivation or abbreviated RD, namely the feeling of marginalization due to the lack of compatibility between existing expectations and abilities (Gurr, 1970: 13); second, political discontent; third, organizational mobilization, namely the mobilization of the masses by the elite leader; and last is the declaration (action formalization). These stages will recur if RD factors still exist and generating conflict. RD will be latent when elite and mass do not mobilize and declare action, as the Tilly (1978) concept of a rebellion where it would grow and supported by mass mobilization.

Memorandum of Understanding of the Helsinki-related conflict between RI and GAM (Depkominfo, 2005) contain several issues such as:

- (a) Governance in Aceh;
- (b) Human Rights (HAM);
- (c) Amnesty and reintegration into society;
- (d) Security settings;
- (e) Establishment of Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM); and
- (f) Dispute resolution.

The same situation was the agreement on the cessation of conflict between the Colombian government and the FARC rebels (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army*) in May 2013 ([http://www.wola.org/commentary/colombias\\_peace\\_talks\\_take\\_a\\_big\\_step\\_forward](http://www.wola.org/commentary/colombias_peace_talks_take_a_big_step_forward)), where the initial draft of the peace contained about the role of rebel organization to be involved or participate in politics as opposition. Political involvement for the opposing parties within a country (internal) has become a model in suppressing the intensity of the desire for independence or self-government (Gani, 2009; Arifin, 2011). It will be seen that case studies in

Aceh and Colombia in a peace agreement included the enactment of political participation for ex-rebels through the formation of the Local Party, the conflict-ending program and the handling of conflict victims to the extent of providing autonomy as in the case MILF and MNLF in the Philippines (Surwandono, 2013).

Based on description of various theories above researcher concluded that the occurrence of a peace agreement between two conflicting sides will ultimately be seen from the achievement of completion of the initial issues, especially from the side of the rebels who was considered as trigger of conflict. The measure of success against the peace agreement itself can be measured from the perceptions, values and assumptions of former combatants, especially on former combatants who acted as liaison between elites in the rebel group and supporters and sympathizers of the rebel movement.

### 3. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is a stage that is done in conducting a study. This research emphasizes on the political stance aspect of former GAM combatants, so researcher uses quantitative approaches to facilitate qualitative result. The researcher will explore the perceptions of former GAM combatants against the peace agreement using two variables: independent variable exogenous and endogenous dependent variable. These variables will elaborate political stance of ex-GAM combatants who are exogenous independent variables on the effectiveness of the peace agreement as endogenous dependent variables. Researcher will examine in particular the result built through the MoU Helsinki in the period between 2013 and 2017 by collecting the necessary data. To achieve the objectives, researcher sought to obtain data by exploring the political stances of former GAM combatants against the peace agreement through their level of satisfaction with the current state of society and the approval of gradual changes. The issue of violence, desired political system, desire for prevailing systems and values will be additional important factor to explore by other sources related to the rise of subsequent conflict activity. Through this design, researcher uses it to know the influence between variables and test the variable in accordance with the hypothesis that has been formulated.



## 4. DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Introduction

The focus of this research is former GAM combatants, group of separatist movements in North Aceh region known as Pasé, located in the northern part of Aceh Province, Indonesia. Researcher take this region as a focus because this region had dominant conflict report during the uprising era (before the MoU Helsinki) as base for violent GAM combatants (ICG, 2001) and also in post MoU Helsinki era especially during Election in Aceh (Patria, 2012).

The transformation of GAM from an armed uprising movement to a political movement was marked by the dissolution of its military wing, TNA (interview with Sofyan Dawood/former spokesman of GAM Central Command, 14 January 2014) and established a civil organization to host former combatants named Committee of Aceh Transition (KPA). According to Mitchell (2008), former combatants play important roles in mediation with their prominent figures, supporters and sympathizers (communities). This underlines the preservation of earlier organizational structure of GAM as a resistance organization for guerilla in the establishment of the KPA on the political arena (Serambi Indonesia, 19 April 2008). In addition, the organization was intended to keep former combatants in control and data sources for former GAM combatants. In the context of reintegration, it was expected that data provided by KPA helped informing former GAM combatants who needed to get compensation (Nurhasim, 2008: 91).

KPA is led by Muzakir Manaf (current deputy governor of Aceh) with its branches spread across 18 regions based on structures of TNA organizations, starting from the Commander of GAM to Commander of *Sagoe* and to the lowest level of the *gampong*, *mukim* and *sagoe* of the region. Looking at the structures managed currently, KPA can be regarded as a social organization located in Aceh with a focus on accommodating GAM's interests especially for GAM members who are directly involved in the conflict. In the KPA, former GAM combatants dominate the structure. In the previous GAM structures they were divided into three groups as follow: combatants, in this case personnel holding weapons,

GAM police serving as security order; and civilian GAM who served as collectors of information and logistics (interview, August 2, 2017).

### 4.2. Political Stance

In this research, Political stance variable is based on moderate stance and divided into 2 (two) sub variables or dimension that is Satisfaction (to society condition) which consisted of indicator of poverty/welfare, job and other welfare issues; Arrangement of authority from the Central Government; and Security. This dimension was measured by four categories: very unsatisfied, unsatisfied, satisfied, and very satisfied. The gradual change dimension used indicators for approval of gradual changes, approval of the use of force and the level of patience with the MoU Helsinki polemic. Each dimension was measured by a four-category scale: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree.

#### 4.2.1. Dimensions of Satisfaction Level (X1)

##### 4.2.1.1. Indicators of Poverty, Employment and Welfare

The high level of dissatisfaction of respondents on welfare issue was supported by field data, among others, the existence of bad practices in the implementation of economic activities. The phenomenon of deteriorating welfare of former GAM combatants was an actual portrait of the economic condition of marginalized Acehnese, due to monopolistic practices perpetuated by GAM elites who controlled the Acehnese executive and legislative branches and the poor performance of BRA (*Badan Reintegrasi Aceh*) in implementing program to enhance the skills of former GAM combatants.

This condition was supported by the low frequency of respondents' answers on satisfaction level concerning the provision of access to work by 148. This was when compared with the other two items of welfare conditions by 211 and the effect of agreement to the respondents in daily life by 266 (see Table 1 & 2).

However, there were still good assessment parameters on the implementation of peace agreement. It was based on respondent statement about the effect of peace agreement that has been made for the life of respondents today, where 11.6% respondents stated

**Table 1**  
**Research Result on Respondent's Answer**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Not Satisfied</i>	<i>Very Not Satisfied</i>	<i>Value</i>				
Satisfactory Dimension (X1)										
4.2.1. 1 Poverty, Employment and Welfare Indicator										
Indicator	1. Current welfare of personal and family	–	–	43	50	39	45.3	4	4.7	211
	2. Employment access from government to respondent	–	–	3	3.5	56	65.1	27	31.4	148
	3. Impact of peace agreement to daily life	10	11.6	74	86	2	2.3	–	–	266
	Total	10	3.86	120	55.1	97	44.2	31	12	625
4.2.1.2 Authority of Central Government Indicator										
Indicator	1. Result in public security and order	15	17.4	68	79.1	3	3.5	–	–	270
	2. Autonomy based on Law of Governing Aceh	4	4.7	43	50	34	39.5	3	3.5	247
	3. Cooperation of Central Government and Aceh Administration (GAM/PA) to solve problem in MoU	1	1.2	34	39.5	43	50	7	8.1	199
	4. Political participation post-MoU era	23	26.7	60	69.8	3	3.5	–	–	258
	5. Ability of Aceh Administration to elaborate MoU	3	3.5	74	86	8	9.3	–	–	250
	Total	46	10.7	279	64.9	91	21.2	10	5.8	1213
4.2.1.3. Security Indicator										
Indicator	1. Peace condition	17	19.8	55	64	11	12.8	3	3.5	258
	2. Current security condition	8	9.3	78	90.7	–	–	–	–	266
	3. Handling of violent and conflict cases	9	10.5	72	83.7	5	5.8	–	–	262
	Total	34	13.2	205	79.5	5	6.2	3	3.5	761
4.2.2. Gradual Changes Dimension (X2)										
Indicator	1. Implementing articles of MoU gradually	43	50	40	46.5	2	2.3	1	1.2	297
	2. Implementation of MoU as expectation	1	1.2	29	33.7	51	59.3	5	5.8	198
	3. Violence is not option if MoU fail	–	–	2	2.3	37	43	47	54.7	127
	4. Patience to effort made by Central Government to elaborate MoU	9	10.5	64	74.4	13	15.1	–	–	254
	Total	53	15.4	135	39.2	103	29	54	15.4	877
4.3 Description of Research Data on Variable Y based on Dimension										
4.3.1 Target Accuracy Dimension										
Indicator	1. The MoU stipulates the ideals	75	87.2	11	12.8	–	–	–	–	333
	2. No mistake in database of those who have right to receive reintegration aid	–	–	–	–	32	37.2	54	62.8	118
	3. Continuous program, of reintegration of ex GAM combatant	77	89.5	9	10.5	–	–	–	–	335
	4. Priority of peace agreement implementation is for ex GAM combatant	10	11.6	29	33.7	43	50	4	4.7	217
	5. Reintegration program is useful for the people	–	–	54	62.8	29	33.7	3	3.5	223
	Total	162	47.1	103	21.4	104	24.1	61	14.2	1226

(Contd..)

*Political Stance of Ex Combatants of the Aceh Free Movement Post Helsinki Peace Agreement*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Not Satisfied</i>	<i>Very Not Satisfied</i>	<i>Value</i>
4.3.2 Socialization Dimension						
Indicator	1. Involvement of ex GAM combatant to elaborate MoU to people	25	29.2	59	68.6	278
	2. Ex-Combatant brings changes to Aceh	43	50	42	48.8	298
	3. Socialization of implementation of MoU by Government	18	20.9	62	72.1	266
	4. Ex-Combatant take part in socialization by GAM/KPA	66	76.7	20	23.3	324
	Total	152	44.2	183	53.2	1166
4.3.3 Purpose Dimension						
4.3.3.1 Trust Building Indicator						
Indicator	1. Peace agreement can solve problem in Aceh until now	21	24.4	51	59.3	264
	2. The importance of peace agreement	77	89.5	9	10.5	335
	3. GAM consider purpose of MoU is peace	20	23.3	53	61.6	259
	4. MoU is useful for the future	42	48.8	37	43	290
	5. Central government trust ex-GAM combatant	8	9.3	3	3.5	142
	6. Aceh does not have the right for self determination as it is part of NKRI	–	–	–	–	112
	Total	168	39.1	153	29.7	1416
4.3.3.2. Peace Building Indicator						
Indicator	1. Peace agreement should be fostered	27	31.4	55	64	280
	2. Freedom for people to support or against integration in nation problem	57	66.3	29	33.7	315
	3. MoU is a start for development in Aceh	59	68.6	27	31.4	317
	4. MoU gives hope for respected peace for Aceh people	67	77.9	18	20.9	323
	5. No violent conflict if MoU fail	–	–	6	7	113
	Total	277	48.8	135	31.4	1616
4.3.3.3 Building Unity and Integration Indicator						
Indicator	1. No worry on the dispersal of specific articles on Aceh	2	2.3	30	34.9	196
	2. Support on peace agreement through MoU Helsinki	81	94.2	5	5.8	339
	3. Trust the struggle of Aceh people in the hand of current Aceh government	64	74.4	22	25.6	322
	Total	147	56.9	57	22.1	867
4.3.4 Based on Supervision Dimension						
Indicator	1. Asking head of KPA on implementation of MoU	48	55.8	38	44.2	306
	2. Find alternative in resolving peace	6	7	51	59.3	216
	3. Leadership of ex-GAM combatant in politic represents the content of MoU	48	55.8	38	44.2	306
	4. Need improvement in articles of Law of Governing Aceh	29	33.7	44	51.2	267
	Total	131	38.1	171	49.7	1095

Source: Database Result in 2013.

**Table 2**  
**Respondent Answer to Indicators**

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Alternate Answer</i>	<i>Scale (S)</i>	<i>Frequency (F)</i>	<i>Score (SXF)</i>
4.2.1.1 Poverty, Employment and Welfare Indicator				
1	Very Not Satisfied	1	31	31
2	Not Satisfied	2	97	194
3	Satisfied	3	120	360
4	Very Satisfied	4	10	40
Jumlah			258	625
4.2.1.2 Authority of Central Government Indicator				
1	Very Not Satisfied	1	10	10
2	Not Satisfied	2	91	182
3	Satisfied	3	279	837
4	Very Satisfied	4	46	184
Jumlah			426	1213
4.2.1.3 Security Indicator				
1	Very Not Satisfied	1	–	–
2	Not Satisfied	2	5	10
3	Satisfied	3	205	615
4	Very Satisfied	4	34	136
Jumlah			244	761
4.2.2 Gradual Changes Dimension (X2)				
1	Very Not Agree	1	54	54
2	Not Agree	2	103	206
3	Agree	3	135	405
4	Very Agree	4	53	212
Jumlah			345	877
4.2.2 Description of Research Data on Variable Y based on Dimension				
1	Very Not Agree	1	54	54
2	Not Agree	2	103	206
3	Agree	3	135	405
4	Very Agree	4	53	212
Jumlah			345	877
4.3.1 Target Accuracy Dimension				
1	Very Not Agree	1	61	61
2	Not Agree	2	104	208
3	Agree	3	103	309
4	Very Agree	4	162	648
Jumlah			419	1226
4.3.2 Socialization Dimension				
1	Very Not Agree	1	3	3
2	Not Agree	2	3	6
3	Agree	3	183	549
4	Very Agree	4	152	608
Jumlah			341	1166

(Contd..)



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<i>S.No</i>	<i>Alternate Answer</i>	<i>Scale (S)</i>	<i>Frequency (F)</i>	<i>Score (SXF)</i>
4.3.3 Purpose Dimension				
4.3.3.1 Trust Building Indicator				
1	Very Not Agree	1	119	119
2	Not Agree	2	83	166
3	Agree	3	153	459
4	Very Agree	4	168	672
Jumlah			523	1416
4.3.3.2 Peace Building Indicator				
1	Very Not Satisfied	1	67	67
2	Not Satisfied	2	18	36
3	Satisfied	3	135	405
4	Very Satisfied	4	277	1108
Jumlah			497	1616
4.3.3.3 Building Unity and Integration Indicator				
1	Very Not Satisfied	1	10	20
2	Not Satisfied	2	44	88
3	Satisfied	3	57	171
4	Very Satisfied	4	147	588
Jumlah			258	867
4.3.4 Based on Supervision Dimension				
1	Very Not Satisfied	1	26	26
2	Not Satisfied	2	16	32
3	Satisfied	3	171	513
4	Very Satisfied	4	131	524
Jumlah			344	1095

very satisfied, 86% responders stated satisfied, and 2.3% responder stated dissatisfied with the effect of peace agreement made for the life of respondents today. Observing respondents' stances that generally agree that peace agreement influenced the lives of respondent was based on several factors as follows: (1) the peace situation has given space for ex-combatants to return to normal life. It was said that a normal condition is a situation where they are no longer afraid to travel or work in plantation, forest and rice field. The most feared situation in time of conflict was to travel individually, related to the threat from security personnel (TNI/Polri) who pursued them; (2) the peaceful situation has raised the social status of GAM as a new middle class in Aceh (interview, 9 October 2013); and (3) peace has opened corridor for GAM to "seize" Aceh's political and governmental power. This was supported by the fact that former GAM combatants who controlled the government in urban districts are 11

regions from 23 districts/municipalities in Aceh Province (KIP, 2012).

*4.2.1.2. Central Government Authority Arrangement Indicators*

Political participation is a powerful magnet in maintaining the stability of the peace accord, in the term of MoU text is raised. The establishment of local parties and the management of local regulations (*qanun*) are the influence of the authority granted by the Central Government to the Aceh government. However, in the course of rights for political participation there is a misinterpretation of the substance of MoU Helsinki and *Undang-Undang Pemerintahan Aceh—UUPA* (Law on the Governing of Aceh—LoGA). It was based on the high number of dissatisfied' respondents on the "Execution of Autonomy under the LoGA" 39.5% (See Table 1) for the GAM combatant group's perspective where UUPA was a

product not involving GAM in its discussion. Therefore they declare that UUPA needs to be reformed (revised). Even from the interview results obtained their wish to be realized is the government's approval of the specificity of Aceh as contained in *Qanun Wali Nanggroe* and the symbols of Aceh. The quite high number of respondents who declared disagreement was influenced by the existence of "self-government" propaganda as often campaigned by the GAM elite. This was due to the slow socialization of the MoU Helsinki and the LoGA (as the findings of CMI's report 2012) and the socialization of GAM members on the recommendation of the Acehese Government that is inclined to indoctrinate ethnic nationalism.

Importantly, the focus was on the low level of satisfaction with "Central and Local Government Cooperation (dominated by GAM/PA) in MoU implementation problems" of 50% (see Table 1). This is evidence of their reactive action when the central government postponed the agreement on *Qanun Wali Nanggroe* and the Acehese Flags, in which former GAM combatants stepped forward as pioneer of protest against this central government policy that delayed to approve it. In addition to the cultural conflict among former GAM combatants, it has stimulated high suspicion of the Central Government to implement the MoU Helsinki comprehensively (interview, November 10, 2013).

#### 4.2.1.3. Security Situation Indicators

Security in Aceh has always been a central issue. The problem was part of its dynamic journey from time to time. It is understood then that security factor is a prerequisite for development. Through the research data (see Table 1), the three indicators used to address the security situation in Aceh after 8 years of MoU Helsinki took place in positive responses in high priority by GAM combatant respondents to security conditions, scattered through indicator items the current state of peace, the state of security, and the handling of violence cases.

#### 4.2.2. Approval on Gradual Changes Dimension (X2)

In general, MoU is considered gradually well implemented by 297 respondents, the implementation of the MoU is considered in line with the expectation by 198

respondents and approval/support against various dispute policies from the central government concerning the implementation of the Helsinki MoU by 258 respondents (see Table 2). Consistent stance in keeping peace agreement was stipulate in the process of political transformation. On the other hand, the data also showed acknowledged facts that the patience and approval of the peace process was gradually higher because of guidance and direction (*peunutob*) from their leaders (GAM elites, especially Muzakir Manaf or Mualem). He stated that former GAM combatants must be patient with current conditions and everything needs a process.

An important and interesting finding is related to the question of whether violence can be an option if the Indonesian Government looked to thwart the implementation of the MoU Helsinki. It appears that only 2.3% of respondents disagree, while 43% agree and 54.7% strongly agree with the use of violence. The result indicated that most respondents strongly agree with the use of violence if the Government tried to thwart the implementation of the MoU Helsinki.

### 4.3. Description of Research Data of Y Variables based on Dimension

Effectiveness result will relate to the extent where results and goals have been achieved. Based on the substance of the peace agreement, it refers to the goal of building peace, building trust, to build a complete nationalism within the framework of the Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). In the search for the effectiveness of the peace agreement, it refers to the four dimensions of targets as follow: focus on the perpetrator, socialization (delivery of information on implementation), objectives (conformity of implementation results with established goals), and monitoring conducted by all involved parties.

#### 4.3.1. The Dimension of the Peace Deal

We need to focus on two indicators: "There is no mistake in recording the rights of reintegration funds" and "Priority of the implementation of peace agreement is former GAM combatants" where both were responded negatively by respondents. The majority respondents stated that there has been a mistake in recording the right recipient of reintegration funds and disclosed the

need for reintegration and recapitalization programs for beneficiaries of government assistance programs, especially former GAM combatants. Based on the description above, the positive responds related to the implementation of the mandate in accordance with the peace agreement since 2005 only reached 118 respondents. This mean, former GAM combatants felt that they never registered by the BRA as extension of the central government in implementing the agreements.

Furthermore, majority respondents did not agree if the main priority for the implementation of the peace agreement was former GAM combatants. Based on the interview result on why they did not agree was that they considered the victim of the conflict are all of the people of Aceh; there was conflict in definition between former GAM combatants and victims of conflict which is Acehnese people who suffered physical and mental injuries; and GAM also was not representation of individual desires and/or a group; their struggle was accumulation of disappointment against the central government policy over Aceh. In the latter case, after several interviews with former combatants, they considered GAM's struggle was supported by the people of Aceh; as one former combatant expressed that GAM and the community are fish and water (interview with Halim/former TNA member, 6 October 2013); so reintegration needs to be done to the whole Aceh community as well. Further responses to the statement indicated that reintegration program implemented by the Government has been beneficial to the community. In further investigation of the program, it was found out that former GAM combatants know the program was limited to the provision of capital alone and does not know clearly about the purpose and meaning of reintegration in question.

#### **4.3.2. Socialization Dimension**

The result indicated that most respondents of this study strongly agreed that former GAM combatants have brought changes directly to Aceh, where former combatants are required to participate in the MoU Helsinki socialization organized by GAM/KPA. In further investigation, it was found that the central government was considered not present in the socialization of the implementation of the agreement and so far they got interpretation of the MoU from the GAM and KPA elites.

#### **4.3.3. Goal Dimensions**

##### **4.3.3.1. Indicator for Building Trust**

This result showed that most respondents strongly agreed that the peace agreement was crucial for the creation of Peace in Aceh. However, there were two statements that could disturb this dimension based on answers given by respondents related to statement of mutual trust and the right to self-determination for the people of Aceh. Based on the Table 1, respondent's distribution was 57% or 49 respondents strongly agree and 30.2% or 26 respondents agree that the government of RI did not trust the former GAM combatants. These results indicated that most respondents felt that the central government for the last 8 years since the signing of the MoU Helsinki has not yet maintain trust. As for the right to self-determination despite a binding agreement in the MoU Helsinki, the results showed that 69.8% of respondents strongly agree and 30.2% agree on that. These results indicated that most of the respondents of this study agree on the right to self-determination despite a binding agreement in the Helsinki MoU.

The indicator of central government on trust level over former GAM combatant and the right of self-determination for Aceh showed low respondents' answers (see Table 2). This implied that former combatants felt the Central Government does not trust them because basically the agreement on self-determination (through a referendum) is what the GAM struggle to achieve if the agreement failed to carry out.

##### **4.3.3.2. Indicators for Building a Spirit of Peace**

The result indicated that majority respondents agreed that peace agreement was made to be maintained as long as they needed. The result of interviews with ex-combatants of GAM regarding this explanation stated that the polemic of implementing MoU Helsinki was that the Central Government (Jakarta) did not support the elaboration of the agreement. This was well recorded in the minds of former GAM combatants that various *qanuns* concerning Aceh's specificity are always opposed. They gave an example to *qanun* Wali Nanggroe and regional symbol.

Yet there was also a perception of former GAM combatants who interfere with the value of peace itself.

Most of the former combatants agreed that the failure of the implementation of the peace agreement could make current peaceful situation returned back like the old conflict time. The result showed that 75.6% respondents strongly agreed, 17.4% respondents agreed and only 7.0% respondents did not agree with the above statement. The result showed that most respondents strongly agreed that the failure of the implementation of the peace agreement will turn current peaceful situation into old conflict time. In further investigation, former GAM combatants would refer to the continuity of the *Qalium Wali Nanggroe* and regional banners which have so far not been approved by the central government (Jakarta).

#### 4.3.3.3. Indicator for Building Unity and Integration

The result showed that respondent was not worried that within the next few years specific regulation about Aceh that exist today will disappear, where 2.3% respondents strongly agreed, 34.9% respondent agreed, 51.2% respondents disagreed and 11.6% respondent strongly disagree. The result indicated that most respondents are concerned that within the next few years the existing specific articles of Aceh Administration will lost due to the disapproval of the central government. Former combatants are well aware of the consequences of permanent choice on the legalization of *Qalium Wali Nanggroe* and regional flags as approved by the Aceh Parliament (DPRA) and submitted to the Central Government. Former combatant in the Alue Papeun region said that these two *qanuns* represented and symbolized their struggle (interview with Musliadi/former GAM combatant, 3 October 2013).

Based on the concern mentioned above, the majority of former combatants still supported a peace deal in the MoU Helsinki, 2005. There are 94.2% respondents strongly agree and 5.8% respondent agreed to support peace agreement through the MoU Helsinki.

Related to confidence of local government in supporting the struggle of Aceh people today, 74.4% respondents strongly agree and 25.6% respondents agree. These results indicated that most respondents strongly believed that the struggle of the Acehnese people is being supported by the current Government of Aceh (Zaini Abdullah and Muzakir Manaf). The high percentage was supported by the high level of distrust of GAM

combatants against the central government by 57%. In a further research, most former GAM combatants often referred to Muzakir Manaf than his governor Zaini Abdullah, although both of them are from GAM (interview with Adnan/former TNA member Babah Krueng, 6 October 2013). This belief was so strong that if conflict occurs sometime in the future, it will be determined by command from the head of KPA (interview with Hasballah/former members of TNA, October 6th, 2013).

#### 4.3.4. Based on Monitoring Dimensions

The results showed that 55.8% of respondents strongly agreed and 44.2% respondents agreed that former GAM combatants should always ask about the implementation of RI Government policy regarding development agenda to their leaders in GAM/KPA. In addition, former GAM combatant largely agreed that they sought other alternatives to help bring about the present peace. This result can be seen from the respondent's distribution that 7.0% strongly agreed, 59.3% agreed, 11.6% disagreed and 22.1% strongly disagreed. In further investigation of *Sagoe* Commander in the Darussalam region, it was found that other alternatives should be an option, even if it would lead them into a violent conflict like the past. However, support for conflict resolution alternatives is highly dependent on the KPA's command decision (interview with Liauddin/former TNA Operations Commander, 3 October 2013).

Based on the assessment of leadership capabilities of former GAM combatants in the executive and legislative administration of Aceh, it was found that 55.8% respondents said they were very confident and 44.2% believed in the leadership capabilities of former GAM combatants in Aceh's executive and legislative. The result indicated that most respondents strongly agree that leadership capabilities of former GAM combatants in Aceh's administration have been well demonstrated in elaborating the peace program mandated by the MoU Helsinki. Former GAM combatants believed in the courage of Zaini Abdullah and Muzakir Manaf who proposed regional symbol which is identical to GAM symbol and also *Qanun Wali Nanggroe*.

While the response about the LoGA, most respondents stated that it is necessary to reform the



articles of UUPA. It is based on 33.7% respondent strongly agree, 51.2% respondent agree, 7.0% respondent disagree and 8.1% respondent strongly disagree. These results indicated that most respondents strongly agree on the need to reform articles in the UUPA. A further search for responses from respondents to this statement is that former combatants said the LoGA does not include the full content of the 2005 MoU Helsinki.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1. Conclusion**

The concept of political stance has given specific meaning to the implementation of the peace agreement between the Government of Indonesia and the ex-combatant of GAM which has lasted for 8 (eight) years. This study has been able to prove that political stance was measured by the level of satisfaction and approval of gradual change (Baradat, 1999) with the effectiveness of peace agreement. The level of satisfaction and gradual change both affected the effectiveness of peace agreement. The influence of GAM combatant on the effectiveness of peace agreement reached 81.4%. The effect of the agreement on gradual changes to the effectiveness of the peace agreement reached 18.4%. Based on the result, the level of satisfaction with the existing condition in the community was dominated by the effectiveness of peace agreement compared to the approval of gradual change. The political stance of former GAM combatants in the Pasé region (Lhokseumawe and North Aceh) has proven to explain the effectiveness of a peace agreement.

After exploring various parameters, several important findings are useful for predicting the future of MoU Helsinki, especially the resolution of conflict in Aceh. First, the peace agreement has not been able to eliminate the cultural conflict among GAM combatants. This phenomenon was reflected in ex-combatant's political behavior which tended to use separatist jargon and confrontation policy with central government policy over Aceh (case of *qanun* and regional symbols). However, the role of GAM elites in managing conflict by promoting cultural approaches such as *peukanutob* norms, has reduced destructive behavior of ex-combatants that may threaten the peace process. The context of *peunutob* reflected strong "Command Line" of GAM until now.

Second, the change in political stance (O'Neil, 1966, Baradat, 1999) of former GAM combatants according to researcher assessment was on moderate political stance, confirmed by the high level of satisfaction of respondents to peace agreements. However, there are some parameters that do not support (contradictive) moderate political stance and may turn to conservative and reactionary political stance; namely deviation from peace agreement, the dissatisfaction with current condition of the society and the impatience of 15.1% respondent (the rest chose to be patient on the grounds because of the *peukanutob* of the GAM elite) and the high percentage of support in the use of violence when the peace agreement failed to be fully implemented i.e. 97.7% respondents (see Table 1).

Third, it appears that former combatants are still struggling to keep their conflict transformation works. The successful political transformation of the peace agreement is not only determined by GAM combatants, the responsive and appreciative stance of the central government is needed so that mutual understanding can be achieved between the two parties. The existence of strata of political influence and the existence of a level of social acceptance increases the pressure on former combatants to create conditions to participate in this transformation. The process of political transformation sometimes does not go smoothly, the absence of a counterweight for KPA, ultimately poses the greatest threat to the process itself. Even as long as they continue to maintain the bonds of GAM loyalists with their dreams of self-government or independence, so long as "time bomb" is still embedded in Aceh.

Fourth, the growing understanding of democracy among GAM loyalists proved to make both perceptions of the importance of sustainable peace in Aceh by opening up opportunities for ex-rebels such as GAM to be directly involved in the post-12 development processes of the Helsinki MoU. However, it should be noted here that the continuity of the development of democratic values in question is hampered because there is still a *peukanutob* system that is firmly attached and cannot be negotiated. Maintaining relations between GAM loyalists using this *peunutob* system can be an impediment to the development of democratic values and the lessons that can be drawn here is that in time *peunutob* can become a medium of coercion that plays a major role in politics and is assumed



to be true in order to hinder the peace agreement that has taken place. Therefore, without a common consensus foundation, the values that have been built for 8 years will return to zero. Especially in their minds believe that conflicts can re-occur if the implementation of the MoU is not implemented in full.

## 5.2. Recommendations

The overall implementation of the MoU is an urgent need. The government should no longer be ambiguous towards polemical policies, because it would harm the goal of a peace agreement. So in the short term the Government of Indonesia should immediately ratify the *Wali Nanggroe Qanun* with the note that the *Wali Nanggroe* remains proportional as traditional institution and its authority does not conflict with existing laws and regulations. Then validate the flags and symbols of the region with modifications to the existing symbol or flag.

Second, the socialization of MoU by the Government directly, to counter socialization conducted by GAM/KPA with different interpretation. The direct socialization by the government coupled with the presence of counter-radicalism specialists or lobbyists who can change the stance and behavior of the people of Aceh, is expected to be able to make the interpretation balance that has been made by GAM/KPA so far.

Third, community welfare improvements that are accompanied by building trust are emerging from development programs that benefit all, and can be implemented in the form of collaboration with former GAM combatants through their structures and networks.

Fourth, law enforcement is bold and firm. Because of the characteristic of law enforcement supremacy in post-peace Aceh, it is heavily influenced by the dual standard approach which is very beneficial to GAM, given the omission of criminal cases involving GAM.

Last but not least is to decrease the mobilization carried out by GAM/KPA on an ongoing basis. Because the *peunutob* system made their network grow stronger even at lower level society. BRA's reintegration program completed in December 2012 should be continued with new and mature strategies and planning with full control

of the central government; and holding GAM from regional, regional, *sagoe* to *mukim* levels to sit together with commitments will not pose a threat to social and political disturbances.

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