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**Morality and Immorality in Politics in Aceh Post 2005 MoU Helsinki
(A Case Study on the Relevance of Actions Compared with Peace Promises)**

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MORALITY AND IMMORALITY IN POLITICS IN ACEH POST 2005 MOU HELSINKI (A CASE STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF ACTIONS COMPARED WITH PEACE PROMISES)

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Abstract

This research analysed the morality of actions taken to implement promises made in Aceh post-2005 MoU Helsinki Peace Agreement. Consideration has been given to the current political conditions in Aceh. Morality is a product of a culture and differs between cultures: Differences between the morality of the Acehnese and that of the Javanese were a major cause of conflict between the Acehnese and the Government of Indonesia. The immorality of the Indonesian Government's actions has been a major cause of rebellion in Aceh in the past. Field research was done by recording participant observations, after which data analysis used the Miles et al. methods. Results showed that after nearly 2 decades of peace, not all the goals in the MoU have been realized. Yes, there were major improvements – there were no more security operations, and some special institutions have been set up: However, many Acehnese haven't felt the full morality of all the peace promises, and morality could be better amongst the elite in both Aceh and Jakarta.

Keywords: Peace; Aceh; Morality; Immorality; Politics.

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A. Introduction

The devastation of the 2004 tsunami provided the 'ripe moment' for Aceh freedom fighters, Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM), and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia (GRI) to negotiate a peace agreement (Zartman, 2001). In the MoU signed on 15th August 2005, in Helsinki, Finland, GAM promised to stop fighting and give up their weapons, and GRI promised to return troops to their barracks and grant the Acehnese power to carry out independent local politics plus a guaranteed major share of resources in Aceh (Kingsbury, 2006; Nur Wakhidah et al., 2024).

Now, two decades later, ex-GAM leaders dominate the District Representative Councils and the Provincial People's Representative Council, but since 2022 the Governor has been an ex-secret service officer appointed by GRI, so can GRI be trusted?

The right to establish local political parties in Aceh in MoU Article 1.2.1 has been allowed, this was important for GAM, who viewed this as necessary for moral politics. Historically, local political parties, like the Gerinda Party in Yogyakarta, participated in the 1955 elections (Kawilarang, 2010). Local political parties exist in other countries too, e.g.: the Scottish National Party, so, Aceh followed this path to democratic politics; though, concerns were expressed that this could promote separation from Indonesia (CR-3, 2005). More needs to be done: The peace-building process in Aceh still involves a struggle for power between elites in GRI and those in Aceh (Schulze, 2007; Iskandar et al., 2022).

The MoU states: *"The parties are determined to create conditions where the governance of the people of Aceh can be realized through a democratic and just process within the unitary state and the constitution of GRI"*. Note the words *'within the unitary state of GRI'*; therein lies one of the sources of conflict. The new law for government in Aceh (UUPA) does not give Aceh true self-government for matters of state concern (Manan et al., 2022). Unlike that which applies in Australia or the USA, laws passed by the Aceh Government (AG) still have to be approved by GRI.

As Kingsbury (2007) says the moral need to rebuild communities following the devastation of the Tsunami was the spirit of the peace agreement



in Aceh. Everyone wanted a negotiated and fair peace with the hope that it would enable better development and economic growth (Kingsbury, 2007).

Moral means virtuous, ethical, having integrity, even-handed, just, uncorrupted, helping the poor, weak, and defenseless (Merriam, 1989). Morality is wired into people from childhood, it binds them to their group and blinds them to different configurations of morality (Haidt, 2013). Muslims learn, from early childhood, the moral principles contained in the Qur'an and the stories about Muhammad Saw. These include speaking the truth and prohibiting murder and theft (Ghandar, 2019). Islamic morality also invites people to all sit at one table hence the willingness of the Acehnese to repeatedly try to get a moral peace. Nevertheless, the morality of the Acehnese is different from that of the Javanese: Acehnese has different roots than the Malay languages including Indonesian (Abas, 1987; Ismail et al., 2022).

Islam in Aceh differs from that in Java. Acehnese society is matrilineal, and Javanese patriarchal (Ali et al., 2022). Why compare with the Javanese, because the Javanese dominate GRI. Javanese morality stresses the Unity of Indonesia, one nation, one language whilst Acehnese morality stresses the uniqueness of the Acehnese, with their language and culture, a continuous history as a nation for over six centuries, the only area of Indonesia not fully colonized by the Dutch, recognized internationally as an independent nation up till the late 19th century (Reliefweb, 1999). Fortunately, there are many areas of overlap between the morality of the Acehnese and the Javanese, and many of these stem from the morality of Islam (Ghandar, 2019; Hidayah, 2023). However, we have to accept that people will only behave ethically if they are watched as Glaucon told Socrates (Haidt, 2013). This is why the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) was so important to keep the ball of peace rolling in the first months after the signing of the MoU.

The MoU was drafted and signed by both parties because it was the moral thing to do at the time to create peace in Aceh. The initial implementation of peace was watched over by the AMM, and it went well: GAM handed in their weapons, and GRI sent troops back to the barracks. The Aceh Rehabilitation Body (BRA) was set up in 2006 (Avonius, 2011) and



an NGO trained ex-combatants in democratic principles to reshape their command structure paradigms. However, immoral stalling and delays for many of the promises in the MoU still go on: The 3 most recent events were:

1. In 2016, GRI canceled the Aceh Flag and Coat of Arms Qanun (law).
2. In 2021 AG appointed a Team to Speed Up (Implementation of) the MoU under the Secretariat of the Wali Nanggroe (Traditional Leader) of Aceh because nearly all the powers of the AG are not special; all important AG decisions must be approved by GRI so GRI has not fulfilled its promise to give AG a true special autonomy and hence the Acehnese once more see that they cannot trust Jakarta (Matsyah & Aziz, 2021).
3. In 2022, GRI postponed Provincial and District Pilkada (elections) from 2022 to 2024 and appointed an ex-secret-service General as acting governor. As Matsyah has said, "The Aceh-Jakarta conflict took 60 years with four peace negotiations and four grants of special autonomy. The betrayal and dishonesty of governments in Jakarta is the root of Aceh-Jakarta conflicts so that relations are not yet as stable and harmonious as the Acehnese aspire to have".

Alas former combatants now in high positions also tend to be closed off and unable to satisfactorily resolve problems and challenges that arise. The continuation of the immoral negative peace in Aceh is increasingly showing the existence of "dirty hands" camouflaged in the name of "special autonomy" (Jemadu, 2007; Rismawati et al., 2023).

B. Method

This research used qualitative methods that emphasize an in-depth understanding of problems, especially interaction and communication with the subjects concerning the phenomena being studied (Manan, 2021). Hence, in-depth communication is prioritized (Herdiansyah, 2010). This study aims to describe and analyze events, activities, and perceptions of people, both individually and in groups. Data was collected from March 8th to July 14th, 2022, through interviews in four cities: Lhokseumawe, Idi, Meulaboh, and



Tapak Tuan, representing the North, East, West, and South regions of Aceh, respectively. Open-ended interviews were used since this technique allows people to express their thoughts and feelings more (Manan et al., 2021). The data was analyzed qualitatively, drawing on Miles et al. (2019). In theory, this reveals the views of the interviewees concerning the current political conditions and progress made to meet peace promises in the MoU.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Result

a. Political processes in Aceh post 2005 MoU Helsinki

Conditions in Aceh have generally been peaceful since the MoU ended nearly five decades of civil war. This was followed by regional elections held in 2006 based on GRI Law Number 11 of 2006 for the Government of Aceh.

A paradigm of international development is that conflict is caused by competition for natural resources. This was the case in Aceh where natural gas discoveries in North Aceh fueled extraordinary industrial development; fertilizer factories plus KKA, a factory making paper for cement bags were all controlled and staffed from Jakarta. Nepotism from Jakarta deprived the Acehnese of their natural resources: Family members and proteges of President Suharto were given controlling interests in Aceh's gas reserves, pine forests, and the KKA paper mill.

To ensure the safety of operations these industries & others paid security fees to TNI (the army) plus '*pajak pribumi*' or 'native people's tax' to GAM. TNI's funding depended on its businesses and security operations throughout Indonesia. After Suharto stepped down in 1988, Habibie followed with reform programs, then Gus Dur came to power and after he was dismissed Megawati became President.

Her advisers wanted to give a lesson to any other groups wanting to get freedom so the Army came down brutally on GAM and the Acehnese villagers to try and win by force. Megawati's advisers persuaded her to sell the gas to Japan cutting off major funding to both the Army and to GAM. The loss of low-cost energy caused the closure of KKN and the loss of much employment. The army took further steps to cut GAM funds by burning



down shops and factories as examples to stop other businesses from paying *Pajak Pribumi*. As a result, many local businesses in Aceh closed while some shifted to Medan, in North Sumatra, only 120 km from the Aceh border, with a very strong Acehnese business community.

Economic development is a necessary strategic step to mitigating the recurrence of conflict but stability is a prerequisite and conflict must be resolved first. However, the potential for conflict was still there because of problems with distributing aid and with holding elections for regional heads of *Pemilihan Kepala Daerah* (PILKADA) (Kimbal, 2016). Peace has been coveted since the outbreak of civil war which cost the Acehnese their lives, property, and security for 5 decades since WWII. The MoU started the break in the chain of violence in Aceh (Jemadu, 2007).

It was feared that the MoU would not be accepted by the GAM commanders so the GAM leaders had to make them believe that the MoU was a mutual agreement. One main problem that arose after it was signed was delays in implementing the MoU, especially in passing the Law for Government in Aceh namely *Undang-undang Pemerintah Aceh* (UUPA). Delays took many months to resolve and still the result was not fully in accord with the MoU.

Differences between the promises in the MoU and the actions following it were expressed by several informants, for example:

"I can say, after 2005, it's just that there was no more shooting but after that I didn't feel anything else. The difference was that there was no war. We only received one kind of aid, money, in 2005" (BM).

Politicians in Aceh are increasingly shirking their responsibilities because too much money is coming in. In my opinion, the peaceful condition in Aceh was born of many liars in the 2009 election, some parties promised to support people going on pilgrimages however until now no one has (J).

For people in Aceh today peace means independence (self-government). Acehnese politicians are side-tracked with ceremonial matters raised by GRI, Jakarta makes the Aceh elite forget the people by providing well-paid positions, so they elbow each other aside. The 2024 elections will be the last chance for local political parties to attract support and restore public confidence (RW).

Living in peace is better than hoping for it. Politicians always make promises to gain support for the moment. Peace in Aceh is a program of perfectly layered lies carried out continuously (Z).

The people want independence, and the politicians have created an atmosphere that Aceh is already independent, even though this is false. People no longer trust their politicians, there is an element of decay from within for peace in Aceh. Funds have been disbursed as a political trick. We have forgotten promises made by politicians are amoral. They don't show guilt for responsibilities they've neglected (S).

In the MoU, promises were made to give ex-combatants land for rehabilitation, this promise evaporated, and ex-combatants still have to struggle to survive. Human rights, women's rights, and environmental issues are also disappointing. This is the phenomenon of the Liberal Peace of Hypocrisy (D74, 2021).

Hypocrisy is part of politics. Runciman said that while politicians are generally uncomfortable, perhaps even hypocritical, if they want to remain active in politics they will inevitably have to lie. He added the practice of political lies is rife and unavoidable in countries that adhere to a democratic system. From there, he further explained that most people fall into the trap of criticizing hypocrisy. If someone only focuses on showing which politicians are lying, then they become a hypocrite too, because they do not want to admit that they live in a system of continuous political lies (Runciman, 2008). Throughout history, philosophers have argued that hypocrisy plays an important part in politics.

Machiavelli (1998) defended hypocrisy as an indispensable tool in a world where "a person who wants to do good in everything must be destroyed among so many unkind people". Shklar (1989) argues that hypocrisy is almost inevitable in a political system based on competitive elections, as candidates will use persuasive rhetoric that requires a certain degree of exaggeration (Shklar, 1989). Grant (1999), goes further, arguing that without plausible alternatives to achieve a comparable goal, hypocrisy in politics is a moral necessity.



Hypocrisy in politics can be seen in many forms, such as political boasting and the difference between words and deeds. Behind the masks are real people, their goal is to gain popularity and votes to get into power. Hypocrisy arises when it is said to be different and contradicts societal practices. The goal is for the person to be considered super-able, taking up various positions and roles (Weaver, 2008; Sukti et al., 2022).

b. Immoral negative peace continues

An Immoral Negative Peace refers to a formal peace with unfair conditions that are immoral. Thus, even though the armed conflict has ended with a peace agreement, the result may be perceived as negative, and not in accord with moral principles and justice. An Immoral Negative Peace refers to a formal peace with unfair conditions that are immoral. Thus, even though the armed conflict has ended with a peace agreement, the result may be perceived as negative, and not in accord with moral principles and justice.

- 1) Human Rights Violations: n.b. murder, torture, and rape have not been redressed.
- 2) Impunity: Lack of accountability for human rights violations and war crimes.
- 3) Socio-Economic Disparities: Economic development that neglects poor, landless, and homeless families with deep inequalities in education, health, and income.
- 4) Gender Disparities: Female combatants and mothers widowed by war were left out.

Post-2005 political processes in Aceh have been colored by political tensions and internal conflicts between different political groups, especially between ex-GAM and ex-TNI militia groups. The views of some informants are below:

"Today ex-GAM often do things that are detrimental to themselves and others because they haven't got what is theirs by rights. Today's GAM elite don't see this as something serious, it's not a priority of theirs (MY)."



“It’s hard for me to explain why this is still happening. Aceh is now peaceful. For the elite, not for those who lost family, property and houses. The elite used to be in the forest and then got everything in excess more than that I don’t see it or feel it (peace) (H)”.

Economic stability is the main requirement in the transition from negative peace to positive peace. The local economy was chaotic following Aceh getting peace: Such instability can cause continuing negative peace. Ex-GAM can be jealous and unable to get what they feel should be theirs by right of their former sacrifices and struggles especially as they may have no way to fight to get back up. The situation between Aceh and GRI is now an intra-national peace: Peace between a region and a central government. In international law, there is the first stage of peace: Thereafter, much must be done to reach the next stages of peace until peace becomes permanent.

c. Indicators of the success and morality of the peace

1) Reconstruction driven by residents

When wars end, affected areas are often left in ruins. There are a large number of victims, bereaved, injured, traumatized, and homeless. Reconstruction can only be successful when the initiative of the locals is harnessed by giving them access to land, funds, materials, and other resources. This is done to create new hope for the traumatized and bereaved.

In Aceh, this was done following the Tsunami when the government opened up the tsunami-affected areas in Aceh and North Sumatra to aid agencies. BRR coordinated aid for housing, schools, boats, and small business credit for tsunami-affected families plus major projects like the reconstruction of highways and airports. Road reconstruction was prioritized because it had been neglected for decades during the war (Adamy, 2021).

Effective coordination between AG and conflict-affected areas was essential. All areas had to be included so that reconstruction was felt by all of Aceh as proof of equitable implementation of Aceh's special autonomy. Even though there was a special policy for conflict victims, the people of Aceh as a whole had to have their rights fulfilled as citizens.



2) Poverty reduction

Many sources show that policies for reducing poverty in Aceh have had some positive impact so hopefully, Negative Peace can change to Positive Peace. However, statistics still show Aceh as one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia, ranking 30 out of 34 as stated by Wikipedia, 2022. Poverty reduction, which should have been realized with the large allocation of funds, is still not felt by all.

3) Strengthening the economic security of affected communities

Poor, war-affected communities, often get caught up in violent conflict and economic instability. They don't have resources to improve their lives and get trapped in the 'poverty security trap'. They become trapped in a pattern of 'looking for work' where peace has only a minor impact on their needs until local industries can be established. This is supported by the interviewees as below:

The peace we see does not extend to the human spirit. It is just peace on the outside, not on the inside Aceh. The most sacred place, the birthplace of Islam in Indonesia, never fully colonized became the de-facto center of Independence. Acehnese Gold bought the planes that became the Indonesian Air Force. Now Aceh is the poorest province. Peace aid flows back to Jakarta: This is a 'fragile peace' (R).

West Aceh was severely impacted by the civil war with many victims. Till now, the results of peace have not arrived for the families of most victims. We hear that help will be provided for all the victims as a mandate from the MoU but this hasn't happened (I).

Only one goal of peace has been obtained, namely personal welfare for those close to the rupiah. Those who control the game win. Others are only spectators (Y).

The contents of the peace agreement included a clause to provide land and education to the victims of the conflict. I did not feel this and nor did many other victim families. I don't know who to complain to so we can feel this peace. We haven't felt any effects of the peace from 2005 other than being able to worship in safety and to look for income (I).

These interviews show dissatisfaction with the implementation of the MoU. It can be seen that some people still feel that the MoU is 'blank paper'; we can also see this in a letter from a conflict victim Nisam Antara who wrote:

"Peace in Aceh has been going on for 18 years, starting August 15th, 2005 in Helsinki, Finland. Many still consider it a 'blank cheque' 'not yet a priority'; still not in favor of the poor, especially conflict victims, many points of MoU yet to be realized".

As a society rich in local wisdom, problems with implementing the peace proposals should have been resolved by now, especially since land and education are two areas where ostensibly the Acehnese were given self-autonomy.

2. Discussion

a. Immorality is still prominent in the following three areas

1) Immorality in politics at the National level

This is the most worrying when looked at with a perspective from the past viz: GRI has consistently had the moral perspective that Indonesia is a "Unitary Republic" so what is best for the majority is best for Indonesia (Miller, 2010): Thus - what is best for the Javanese, as the majority population, is best for Indonesia. 61% of Indonesia's population live in Java: By contrast, Acehnese are less than 2% and many other cultures have 2 to 3% like the Batak, Minang, and Dayak (Misachi, 2018). The Javanese, especially their elite, consistently use majority control of GRI politics to enact policies that benefit themselves, like control of land and resources, appointment of officials at regional levels and transmigration, seizing land in low-density regions and giving it to poor families from Java, to grow estate crops (Fearnside, 1997). Fortunately for Aceh, because of wars in Aceh, transmigration was unable to proceed.

Repeated immoral breaking of special autonomy promises by the GRI has resulted in four cycles of Acehnese rebellion (McGibbon, 2004). This is possibly the most serious threat to the continuity of peace. Ex-GAM



have said that, although they want to stay with their families, they are still 25% rebels and are prepared to rebel again if GRI breaks the promises made in the MoU (Frodin, 2008).

2) Corruption

Indonesia ranks 120 amongst 180 nations for corruption in Transparency International rankings as stated by Wikipedia, 2023. Corruption occurs at all levels, national, provincial, and district. Most concerning is that it occurs at the highest levels within society. Thus, Irwandi, Aceh's most popular Governor post-MoU and certainly one of the most moral has twice been involved with corruption: In his first term as Governor, for approving a palm oil plantation in a protected forest which was hypocritically against all he said he stood for and then in his second term he was caught red-handed with the Bupati of Bener Meriah District (Andespu, 2018), by students from SAKA the Aceh Anti-Corruption School set up in Banda Aceh in 2011 (Barret, 2021). Peace is a very important time to uphold human rights after going through wartime conditions and the arbitrariness of the security forces. Implementation of all agreements should be able to provide changes for the better starting from 2005 (Usman & Megawati, 2019; Azwar et al., 2024).

The main cause for the emergence of post-peace conflicts is often structured, massive, and systematic injustice, greed, dishonesty, and fraud occurring in so-called democratic politics (McCulloch, 2003), e.g.: money politics and demeaning opponents that can trigger re-emergence of conflicts and social anarchism. Corruption erodes trust in ex-combatants transforming into politicians.

3) Gender

Women were never properly compensated: *Inong bale* (female GAM) was not on the list to be compensated. Women were victims of atrocities by both sides but especially under martial law after May 2003 when over 100,000 were herded into hastily set up 'refugee' camps where many



women were raped, while GRI soldiers burned their villages and stole their chickens and goats and no one was ever held accountable (Relief web, 2014; Nuroniyah & Maula, 2022).

The Acehnese are traditionally matrilineal yet patriarchal, in the past, women were Sultanas, warriors, and strong leaders (Jones, 2017) yet they are rarely included in the post-MoU recovery. One notable exception was the appointment of an Acehnese woman as acting District Head of Bireuen in 2022 by GRI, but she was ex-secret service.

b. Later stages of peace building

These are very important, the UN notes that half the countries that get peace return to violent conflict in less than five years (Sec-Gen UN, 2005). Trijono (2009) says that conflict trends can be identified from the operation of three main factors that drive conflict, namely:

- 1) Recent conflict situation: tensions originating from the roots of past conflicts not yet fully resolved.
- 2) Drivers of conflict: Changes taking place such as policies that drive conflict including economic favoritism, nepotism, land grabs, and disenfranchisement.
- 3) Conflict triggers Disputes related to the control of resources (Matsyah, 2017).

The results from these three factors produce changes in society which encourage latent conflict potentials to surface and social tensions to increase (Trijono, 2009).

Aceh is now at peace, few predict that large-scale violence will re-emerge. Former rebels have moved into governing roles, securing landslide victories in post-MoU local elections. Deaths dropped dramatically after the MoU, but the end of the war did not end all violence. Crime increased briefly after the MoU, partly as a result of leftover weapons and a lack of postwar economic opportunities.

Early elections were marked by significant political violence. The 2009 legislative elections were the first in which Partai Aceh, the political party



formed by GAM, fielded candidates for district parliaments. The 2012 election, for provincial governor was marked by divisions between two GAM factions. Both elections saw widespread intimidation and violent incidents. Since 2005, 465 incidents of election-related violence were recorded including 13 deaths.

However, the latest round of elections for district heads, in October 2016, was relatively peaceful (Kingsbury, 2016). Generally, peace should give birth to democracy. Political conflict is normal between differing political elites, one factor driving the potential for conflict to become open is a desire for major change, (Hoffer, 1998). Democracy as a political system is synonymous with conflict management in a peaceful manner. The road to post-conflict democracy requires rebuilding trust, rebuilding local economies, stimulating and supporting income-earning opportunities, ensuring security, housing, health, and education, and resolving conflicts over resources (Jarstad, 2008; Fariana, 2021; Nur Aziz et al., 2023).

Neglecting or not making the challenges above a priority in peacebuilding can slow down the process and potentially trigger violent conflict anew. Peacebuilding doesn't happen in a vacuum it happens within a political system. The first requirement in building peace is to increase human security. This emphasizes the importance of enhancing the core values of family security viz: security against violence plus gainful occupations, whether self-employed e.g. as farmers or working for others plus access to housing, health, education, and safe transport. Second, control of resources causes conflict that can become violent (Martanto, 2009; Khoiri & Nasution, 2022).

Thirdly, programs of activities are needed to rebuild sustainable peace. Failure to have such programs can result in a return to violent conflict. Constructively managing conflict, especially developing democratic, cooperative systems to manage differences constructively is necessary to ensure peacebuilding is a continuum that does not lose momentum (Harris, 2000; Zada, 2023).

The new AG that was brought in as a result of the UUPA has not yet distributed the benefits of peace fairly and root causes of the conflict with GRI have not all been resolved. Much poverty and socio-economic inequality



remain. Many Acehnese feel disappointed with the AG post-MoU, ex-combatants have even committed acts of armed violence out of despair. To realize positive peace, Aceh needs self-autonomy by the MoU that is unique for Aceh by Acehnese morals. This will be different from that of other provinces which have regional autonomy (Miller, 2012). GRI is not likely to give Aceh unique self-autonomy because that will not fit with the Javanese morality of 'one nation'!

Full control of Aceh's natural resources still needs to be returned to the AG: As an example in 2015 a group of international investors prepared millions of dollars to rehabilitate the KKA operation and replant millions of pines a year to supply it but GRI wouldn't transfer the factory and forests to GA free of debt, KKA is technically bankrupt, even if sold for scrap iron that wouldn't cover its loans from the GRI, said the champion.

Although SAFA (Special Autonomy Fund for Aceh) and STF (the Special Transfer Fund) were set up after the MoU, Aceh does not appear to have made much progress in meeting the SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) for 2030. Witjatmoko (2023) found that even though North Aceh was receiving these special funds plus funds from the Aceh Revenue Sharing Fund from Oil and Gas (ARSFOG) it was still one of the poorest districts in Aceh. He also found that although 50% of the funds were going to infrastructure the condition of district roads had declined.

The AG needs to establish a moral development model that can improve economic and social welfare with justice so that the continuation of peace as one of the missions of the AG is truly implemented. Morality in politics can be a means of preventing conflict in society if it builds communities that are equitable and built on the basis of shared values (Butarbutar, 2015). Immorality in politics results in victims, of course, victims will protest against injustice (Siapno, 2002; Sakhowi, 2022).

It is necessary to remind politicians of the importance of morality as a common basis for democratic politics (Stedman, 1997). Morality in politics is understood as the behavior of politicians to help everyone get a better life by expanding the scope of security, freedom, and democracy and building better



institutions that embrace all of society, GAM and non-GAM, haves and have-nots, men and women, believers and non-believers.

The world in the mid-2020s is different from that at the turn of the century, now the air is full of the internet, 4G, 5G, and drones, people now work from home for businesses on the other side of the world, children spend their time playing space wars on his and tablets, people now study online with far-distant schools and universities, shopping too is done online. 75% of the world was shut down in 2020 because of an immoral academic caused by a flu made more potent by immoral illegal gain-of-function medical engineering and governments, led by the USA, are pushing people to get scam vaccinations that are killing and maiming more than 1 in 400 who get jabbed with them: Meanwhile 25% of the world in countries like Sweden and Uttar Pradesh which used ivermectin and natural remedies are silenced by the global media (Kory, 2023).

Aceh in the 2020s is different too from that at the turn of the 20th century, after almost a non-stop guerilla war for over a century there has been no civil war for two decades. The guerillas have turned their swords into spades and Aceh youth no longer see glamour in surviving in the jungle, the GRI battalions are now back in their barracks. It is unlikely that an active guerilla war can be revived, the immoral negative peace is likely to continue into the foreseeable future.

The path forward for peace must lie in creating employment opportunities in Aceh. While a few may be able to get a livelihood from raising cows amongst oil palms (Yunus et al., 2017), the reality is that much more employment will be needed and industry is not likely to provide the jobs needed. Part of the future for Aceh may best lie in going back to the things that Aceh was best known for in the past while upgrading them to the present: Instead of being sold to agents from Medan, products that could be marketed directly to quality online markets include high grade roasted Arabica coffee, essential oils, organic black rice, knock down teak furniture, dried fish, traditional embroidered Muslim clothing and gold jewelry.



At the same time, the government needs to clamp down on the immoral, illegal recovery of artisanal gold with mercury that is poisoning rivers and leading to innumerable health problems (Hamdan et al., 2021). Aceh could also target the Muslim holiday market taking advantage of its *halal* community plus unspoiled tropical forests and ocean coastlines, this could even be combined with Indonesia's non-aligned status to attract Russian Muslims for *halal* holidays.

The *halal* homestay market could also be targeted through Airbnb (Airbnb, 2023), while other opportunities for employment lie in large-scale mining and gas developments (McCarthy, 2022). However, for employment in the latter, Acehnese youth will first need to go for technical training overseas to gain the necessary skills, fortunately various sources are prepared to provide scholarships for such training.

D. Conclusion

One cause of insurrection is immoral conflict over resources. This happened in Aceh, because the central government dominated by the Javanese, separated the Acehnese from their natural resources. So the natural, strategic step to reduce the conflict had to be to give the Acehnese control of their natural resources as the precursor for self-managed economic development. Hypocrisy in politics is so commonplace that 'politician' has become a synonym for 'hypocrite' so morality in the political processes becomes essential.

Reconstruction after the civil war can only be successful with the initiative of the local people who must also be given access to land, training, and resources. This must be done to create new hope for those who have experienced trauma. They must have a significant voice throughout. Peace and justice are two sides of the same coin.

Capital needs to be supplied morally so that a change from negative peace to positive peace can occur completely and comprehensively. Employment based on human ability and natural resources is needed to bring peace post-conflict. Even though the present situation is still an



immoral negative peace it is likely to be sustained because the Acehese now have some form of self-government and now get the majority return from new natural resource developments in Aceh.

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