

INDONESIA

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom and, in practice, the government generally respected the religious freedom of the six officially recognized religions. However, certain laws, policies, and official actions restricted religious freedom, and in some instances the government failed to protect persons from discrimination and abuse based on religion. The government placed restrictions on non-recognized religious groups and on some groups considered "deviant."

The government's respect for religious freedom remained unchanged. The government prosecuted some individuals responsible for religion-related violence in Sulawesi and the Maluku. During the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the government prevented several vigilante actions. However, it sometimes failed to prevent abuse and combat discrimination against religious groups by nonstate actors, and at times failed to punish perpetrators of violence. Some hardline Muslim groups opposed to religious pluralism engaged in violent activity against other religious groups and activities deemed contradictory to their view of Islamic values. The central government holds authority over religious matters but made no effort in some regions to overturn local laws restricting rights otherwise provided for in the constitution. Members of minority religious groups continued to experience some official discrimination in the form of administrative difficulties, often in the context of civil registration of marriages and births and/or the issuance of identity cards.

There were reports of societal abuses and discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice. According to a leading nongovernmental organization (NGO), there were more than 50 attacks against members of the Ahmadiyya sect during 2010 and more than 75 attacks against Christians. Some hardline Muslim groups used violence and intimidation to close several churches, some of which were unregistered with the government. Some of the churches remained closed at the end of the reporting period. The government has prosecuted only a few perpetrators of these and past abuses; however, it did prosecute the perpetrators in the case of a Christian pastor who was stabbed in September in the city of Bekasi.

The U.S. government discusses religious freedom with government and civil society leaders as part of its overall policy to promote human rights. The embassy

promotes religious freedom and tolerance through exchanges and civil society development programs.

Section I. Religious Demography

An archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, the country has an area of approximately 700,000 square miles and a population of 237 million. According to a 2000 census report, 88 percent of the population is Muslim, 6 percent Protestant, 3 percent Roman Catholic, and 2 percent Hindu. Other religions (Buddhist, followers of traditional indigenous religions, Jewish, and other Christian denominations) are less than 1 percent of the population. Some Christians, Hindus, and members of other minority religious groups say that the 2000 census undercounted non-Muslims. The government conducted a national census in 2010 that was expected to provide more accurate figures; however, at the end of the reporting period, results of this census were not available.

Muslims in the country are overwhelmingly Sunni. The two largest Muslim social organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, claimed 40 million and 30 million Sunni followers, respectively. There are an estimated one million to three million Shia Muslims.

Many smaller Muslim organizations exist, including approximately 200,000 persons who subscribe to the Ahmadiyya Qadiyani interpretation of Islam. A smaller group, known as Ahmadiyya Lahore, is also present. Other small Islamic minorities include al-Qiyadah al-Islamiya, Darul Arqam, Jamaah Salamulla (Salamulla Congregation), and members of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Institute.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs estimates that 19 million Protestants (referred to locally as Christians) and eight million Catholics live in the country. The province of East Nusa Tenggara has the highest proportion of Catholics at 55 percent. The province of Papua contains the highest proportion of Protestants at 58 percent. Other areas, such as the Maluku Islands and North Sulawesi, host sizable Protestant and Catholic communities.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs estimates that 10 million Hindus live in the country and account for approximately 90 percent of the population in Bali. Hindu minorities also reside in Central and East Kalimantan, the city of Medan (North Sumatra), South and Central Sulawesi, and Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara). Hindu groups such as Hare Krishna and followers of the Indian spiritual leader Sai Baba

are present in small numbers. Some indigenous religious groups, including the "Naurus" on Seram Island in Maluku Province, incorporate Hindu and animist beliefs, and many have also adopted some Protestant teachings.

The country has a small Sikh population, estimated at between 10,000 and 15,000, residing primarily in Medan and Jakarta. Eight Sikh gurudwaras (temples) are located in North Sumatra and two in Jakarta.

Among Buddhists, approximately 60 percent follow the Mahayana school, Theravada followers account for 30 percent, and the remaining 10 percent are spread between the Tantrayana, Tridharma, Kasogatan, Nichiren, and Maitreya schools. According to the Young Generation of Indonesian Buddhists, most believers live in Java, Bali, Lampung, West Kalimantan, and the Riau islands. An estimated 60 percent of Buddhists are ethnic Chinese.

The number of Confucians remains unknown because respondents were not allowed to identify themselves as Confucian in the 2000 national census. The Supreme Council for Confucian Religion in Indonesia estimated that 95 percent of Confucians are ethnic Chinese, and the balance are mostly indigenous Javanese. Many Confucians also practice Buddhism and Christianity.

An estimated 20 million persons, primarily in Java, Kalimantan, and Papua, practice animism and other types of traditional belief systems termed "Aliran Kepercayaan." Many combine their beliefs with one of the government-recognized religions and register under that recognized religion. The National Commission for Human Rights stated there are 244 organizations of traditional/indigenous belief at the national level with 954 chapters nationwide across 25 provinces.

There are small Jewish communities in Jakarta and Surabaya. The Bahai community reported thousands of members, but no reliable figures are available. Falun Dafa, which considers itself a spiritual organization rather than a religion, claims between 2,000 and 3,000 followers, nearly half of whom live in Yogyakarta, Bali, and Medan.

Section II. Status of Government Respect for Religious Freedom

Legal/Policy Framework

Please refer to Appendix C in the *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* for the status of the government's acceptance of international legal standards <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/appendices/index.htm>.

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom and, in practice, the government generally enforced these protections. However, the central government did not invoke its constitutional authority to review or revoke local laws in some areas that violated freedom of religion. The constitution accords "all persons the right to worship according to their own religion or belief" and states that "the nation is based upon belief in one supreme God." The first tenet of the country's national ideology, Pancasila, similarly declares belief in one God. The government does not allow for not believing in God. Government employees must swear allegiance to the nation and to the Pancasila ideology. Other laws and policies placed restrictions on certain types of religious activity, particularly among unrecognized religious groups and "deviant" sects of recognized religious groups.

Aceh remained the only province authorized by national legislation to implement Sharia (Islamic law). Non-Muslims in the province remained exempt from Sharia. Some local governments outside of Aceh also have laws with elements of Sharia that abrogate certain rights of women and religious minorities. Aceh adopted a Sharia based penal code imposing physical punishment for violations of the law.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs extends official status to six religious groups: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. Unrecognized groups may register with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism as social organizations. Although these groups have the right to establish a place of worship, obtain identity cards, and register marriages and births, they sometimes face administrative difficulties in doing so. In some cases these challenges make it more difficult for individuals to find jobs or enroll children in school. Legally identity card applications are now acceptable when the "religion" section is left blank; however, members of some groups reported that they sometimes faced obstacles.

The government permits the practice of the traditional belief system of Aliran Kepercayaan as a cultural manifestation, not a religion. Aliran Kepercayaan groups must register with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and local authorities generally respected their right to practice their beliefs.

In 2008 the government issued a joint ministerial decree freezing certain activities of the Ahmadiyya Qadiyani (Ahmadiyya). Specifically, it bans proselytizing by the

Ahmadiyya but also prohibits vigilantism against the group. Violation of the proselytizing ban carries a maximum five-year prison sentence on charges of blasphemy. However, the decree does not prohibit the Ahmadiyya from worshipping or continuing to practice within its own community. Hardline groups and a government-appointed body, the Coordinating Board for Monitoring Mystical Beliefs in Society (Bakor Pakem), supported an outright ban. The minister for religious affairs also publicly supported a ban on the Ahmadiyya.

In April 2010 the Constitutional Court upheld the 1965 Blasphemy Law, holding that the government had power to impose limitations on religious freedoms based upon security considerations. Human rights groups, including the Wahid Institute, led the effort to overturn the law. Many Muslims and members of other religions supported maintaining the law.

The Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) has power to issue fatwas (religious decrees), although MUI opinions are not legally binding. Some MUI fatwas were largely ignored, such as one banning smoking. Nevertheless the MUI's edicts or fatwas were considered moral guiding principles for Muslims, and the government took them into consideration when making decisions or drafting legislation.

Numerous regional branches of the MUI have released fatwas on the issue of "deviance" from mainstream Islam, including recommendations to ban the Ahmadiyya. These have been influential in enabling continued official and social discrimination against the Ahmadiyya and other minority religious groups. In July, following its national conference, the MUI issued fatwas on a number of topics, including on the human organ trade, sexchange surgery, and marriages of convenience. In another fatwa the MUI declared sperm banks to be contrary to Islamic beliefs. The MUI also issued a fatwa allowing pilots to break their fast while on duty as long as they pay compensation, and another approving the usage of breast milk banks. The MUI additionally called for the revision of national legislation to enhance the ability of law enforcement to track down wealth of questionable origin in the fight against corruption.

The government requires officially recognized religious groups to comply with Ministry of Religious Affairs and other ministerial directives, such as the Revised Joint Ministerial Decree on the Construction of Houses of Worship (2006), Overseas Aid to Religious Institutions in Indonesia (1978), and Guidelines for the Propagation of Religion (1978). Indigenous/traditional beliefs must register their organization with the Ministry of Tourism and Culture at the district or provincial level, which provides some legal status for the belief system.

The 2006 Revised Joint Ministerial Decree on the Construction of Houses of Worship requires religious groups that want to build a house of worship to obtain the signatures of at least 90 members of the group and 60 persons of other religious groups in the community stating that they support the construction. The decree also requires approval from the local religious affairs office, the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB). While the FKUB at times is a deterrent to construction, it has in some areas helped communities to foster positive communication between religious groups. For example the FKUB in Solo was actively involved in helping a church, GBIS Generasi Pilihan at Pucangsawit, to obtain a construction permit after several years of effort.

The Guidelines for Overseas Aid to Religious Institutions require domestic religious organizations to obtain approval from the Ministry of Religion to receive funding from overseas donors. The Guidelines for Propagation of Religion ban proselytizing under most circumstances.

The Child Protection Act of 2002 makes conversion of minors to a religion other than their own through "tricks" and/or "lies" a crime punishable by up to five years in prison.

The criminal code makes spreading hatred, heresy, and blasphemy punishable by up to five years in prison. Although the law applies to all officially recognized religions, the few cases in which it has been enforced have almost always involved blasphemy and heresy against Islam. However, in a blasphemy case not involving Islam, the Central Jakarta District Court ordered Buddha Bar, a franchise of an international French-owned chain of upmarket bars, closed on September 1 for blasphemy and violations of laws mandating respect for state-sanctioned religions.

Aceh remained the only province for which the central government specifically authorized Sharia law. Presidential Decree 11/2003 formally implemented Sharia law and established Sharia courts in Aceh. Since that time the provincial government has passed three Sharia laws, one governing relations between members of the opposite sex and two others banning alcohol consumption and gambling. Christians and other non-Muslims are specifically exempted. Since 2007 Aceh overall has steadily reduced enforcement of Sharia law. However, officials in West Aceh have expanded the numbers of Sharia police, particularly after the Head of District (Bupati) Ramli issued a regulation in October 2009 against women wearing pants considered too tight. Religious police detained Muslim women wearing pants and compelled them to change to a long skirt or to wear a skirt over

the pants. Some women complained that the law makes it uncomfortable for them wearing a skirt when riding on a motorcycle. Other districts in Aceh that do not have a law against women wearing pants also sporadically enforced this requirement in the wake of the West Aceh law.

The penalty for more serious violations of Sharia law can include caning. Persons subject to caning in Aceh are fully clothed--sometimes with several layers of clothes. There are also regulations effectively limiting the amount of force that may be applied during a caning. Acehnese canings do not break the skin.

Although not specifically classified as Sharia ordinances, many local governments follow Sharia as the inspiration for their ordinances. According to the Indonesian Women's Coalition, local governments have issued at least 100 such ordinances. Although these regulations are only sporadically enforced and apply only to Muslims, many Muslim scholars and human rights activists claim that these ordinances create or increase discrimination against women. In some cases these laws require Muslim women to wear headscarves in public and prevent Muslim women from receiving government services if they are not wearing headscarves. Regulations also mandate elected Muslim officials, students, civil servants, and individuals seeking marriage licenses to be able to read the Qur'an in Arabic and prohibit Muslims from consuming alcohol and gambling. For example, in Pandeglang Regency and Serang Regency in West Java, local regulations require elementary school students to attend a Quranic school in the evening. A certificate from this school is needed to apply for high schools, although students can obtain this certificate without actually attending class as long as they are able to read the Qur'an. Some of these laws are attempts to deal with local social problems. In many cases the local laws are not enforced.

Civil rights activists asserted that Sharia-based ordinances violate the constitution and called on the government to exercise its constitutional jurisdiction to revoke or review these ordinances.

A 2002 regulation in the Pamekasan Regency of Madura, called the Gerbang Salamor Islamic Society Development Movement, urged Muslim civil servants to wear Islamic attire and cease both public and work activities during the call to prayer. The regulation was issued following requests from the Pamekasan clerics to encourage Muslims to implement Islamic values in daily life. There are no clear sanctions for noncompliance, and the regulation is largely considered a moral guideline.

The 1974 Marriage Law makes polygamy illegal for civil servants, except in limited circumstances. The marriage law for Muslims draws from Sharia and allows a man to have up to four wives, provided he is able to support each equally. For a man to take a second, third, or fourth wife, he must obtain court permission and the consent of the first wife; however, these conditions were not always required in practice. Many women reportedly encounter societal pressures that make permission difficult to refuse. Islamic women's groups remained divided over whether the system needs revision. In 2007 the Constitutional Court upheld a spouse's right to deny a husband's demand to take on additional wives, ruling that restrictions on polygamy in the Marriage Law violate neither the constitution nor tenets of Islam and are necessary to protect the rights of women. Some members of Islamic groups viewed this as a restriction of their religious freedom.

In 2008 the president signed anti-pornography legislation which some provinces refused to implement on the grounds that it limits religious and cultural expression, compelling all citizens to adhere to conservative interpretations of Islamic customs. The law outlaws pornographic acts and images, defining pornography as "man-made sexual materials in the form of drawings, sketches, illustrations, photographs, text, voice, sound, moving pictures, animation, cartoons, poetry, conversations, and gestures." It also outlaws public performances which could "incite sexual desire." The governor of Bali has stated that the law is incompatible with traditional Hindu dances and customs. The law also appears to proscribe the clothing worn in many tribal areas of the country. On March 25 the Constitutional Court held the anti-pornography law did not violate the constitution.

Divorce remains a legal option available to members of all religions, but Muslims seeking divorce generally must use the Islamic-based family court system while non-Muslims use the national court system. In divorce cases women often bore a heavier evidentiary burden than men, especially in the Islamic-based family court system. The law requires the former husband to provide alimony or its equivalent, but no enforcement mechanism exists, and divorced women rarely receive such support.

The government exercises exclusive control over organizing the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. The Ministry of Religious Affairs provides guidance, service, and protection to Hajj pilgrims during their pilgrimage and determines the costs associated with the Hajj. There are frequent allegations of corruption, poor management, and inadequate service. An independent supervisory committee monitors Hajj management.

Under the National Education Law, religious instruction in any one of the six official religions is required when requested by a student.

Religious speeches are permissible if delivered to members of the same religious group and are not intended to convert persons of other religious groups.

Televised religious programming is unrestricted for any of the recognized religious groups.

Publication of religious materials or the use of religious symbols is permitted; however, the government bans dissemination of these materials to persons of other religious groups.

Religious groups and social organizations must obtain permits to hold religious concerts or other public events. The government usually granted permits in an unbiased manner unless a concern existed that the activity would raise strong objections from members of another religious group in the area.

Foreign religious workers must obtain religious worker visas, and foreign religious organizations must obtain permission from the Ministry of Religious Affairs to provide any type of assistance (in-kind, personnel, or financial) to local religious groups.

The law does not discriminate against any recognized religious group in employment, housing, or health care.

During the reporting period, several government officials and prominent political leaders interacted in public forums and seminars with religious leaders and interfaith groups such as Muhammadiyah's International Peace Forum and various seminars sponsored by local NGOs.

The government observes the following religious holidays as national holidays: the Ascension of the Prophet, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, the Muslim New Year, Good Friday, the Ascension of Christ, the Birth of the Prophet Muhammad, Christmas, the Buddhist holiday Waisak, the Chinese New Year, and the Hindu holiday Nyepi. Additional Hindu holy days are recognized as regional holidays in Bali, and the Balinese do not work on Saraswati Day, Galungan, and Kuningan.

Restrictions on Religious Freedom

The country has a long tradition of religious pluralism but certain laws, policies, and official actions restricted religious freedom, and the government sometimes failed to prevent discrimination by individuals against and abuse of others based on their religious belief. A government decree restricts the ability of the Ahmadiyya to engage in certain activities.

Local governments issued bans against Ahmadiyya, al-Qiyadah al-Islamiyah, and other minority Islamic sects during the reporting period and monitored them closely, frequently at the request of local MUI chapters.

Authorities shut down Radio Erabaru, a radio station affiliated with the Sound of Hope network and the Falun Gong movement, on March 23. On October 5 the station won a ruling at the state administrative court allowing it to broadcast temporarily, pending a final decision by the Supreme Court.

In March local authorities closed the Batak Protestant Church (HKBP) at Pondok Timur in Bekasi, West Java. Church members continued to hold services in the sealed building until June, when the local government again sealed the church. Consequently, the congregation held services in a field, where they were attacked by members of hardline groups, including the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) and the Forum of Islamic Believers. On September 12 following the end of Ramadan, FPI members assaulted Luspida Simandjuntak, the church's pastor, and stabbed Asia Sihombing, a church elder. Following this incident, the church agreed to worship at a city-provided building in lieu of the field. On November 25 leadership of the HKBP dropped a lawsuit against the city of Bekasi, and the mayor agreed to provide the church with land to construct a house of worship. At the end of the reporting period, police had charged 12 individuals, including the head of FPI-Bekasi, with involvement in the attack.

The civil registration system discriminated against persons who do not belong to one of the six recognized religious groups. Animists, Bahai, and members of other small minority religious groups sometimes found it difficult to register births or marriages, notwithstanding the 2007 regulation pertaining to marriage and civil administration which allowed Aliran Kepercayaan marriages to be officially recognized. According to the Trimulya Foundation, an NGO that advocates for rights of Aliran Kepercayaan followers, adherents were sometimes unable to register marriages.

Interreligious couples also continued to face obstacles to marrying and officially registering their marriages and often had difficulty finding clergy to perform the

ceremony as required before registering a marriage. As a result, some couples traveled outside the country to marry and then registered the marriage at an embassy. Despite being among the officially recognized religious groups, Hindus stated that they frequently had to travel long distances to have their marriages registered, because in many rural areas, the local government could not or would not perform the registration. For example marriages between Hindus and non-Hindus in the province of West Nusa Tenggara involved a complicated process, which included a meeting with the head of their village and social leaders. Occasionally, these leaders used the meeting to discourage the couple from marrying.

In practice couples prevented from registering their marriage or the birth of a child sometimes converted to one of the recognized religions or misrepresented themselves as belonging to one of the six religions. Those who chose not to register their marriages or births risked future difficulties, such as an inability to obtain birth certificates for children, which were required for school enrollment, scholarships, and government employment.

Human rights groups continued to receive occasional reports of local civil registry officials who rejected applications for identity cards (KTPs) submitted by members of unrecognized or minority religious groups. While civil registry regulations allowed the religion field to be left blank, there were reports of individual officials that did not follow this regulation. Some applicants found it easier to register with a religion other than their own and were issued KTPs that inaccurately reflected their religion. For example, some animists received KTPs that listed their religion as Islam. Many Sikhs were registered as Hindu on their KTPs and marriage certificates. Similarly, some Jews registered as Christians or Muslims. Some citizens without a KTP had difficulty finding work. Several NGOs and religious advocacy groups continued to urge the government to delete the religion category from the KTPs, but no progress was made.

While local FKUBs are designed to serve in part as interfaith forums or arbiters, they were often dominated by the majority religious group, which could oppose or stall provision of licenses to minority groups. In several cases in West Java, small churches faced difficulties obtaining licenses, frequently due to opposition in the FKUB.

Sharia police in Aceh continued to monitor compliance with Sharia regulations, although the level of police activity varied between districts. Province-wide, the budget for the Sharia police has been reduced from from 37 billion rupiah to 20

billion rupiah (\$41 million to \$22 million). Efforts to educate the public about and enforce Sharia continued, albeit at much lower intensity than in the past. A Human Rights Watch report published on December 1 highlighted concerns with enforcement of Sharia law in Aceh, including abuses committed by the religious police and regular police in the execution of their duties. The report also detailed the perceived inconsistent application of Sharia law to settle personal disputes.

During the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, many local governments ordered either the closure or a reduction in operating hours of various entertainment establishments. Several regional governments issued circulars limiting the operating hours of night entertainment venues, cafes, and restaurants during the month of Ramadan. Some of the restaurants chose to close voluntarily while others, if not serving halal food, remained open, often posting a sign that the business was not Muslim-owned.

Surabaya city government officials, social leaders, religious leaders, and business leaders signed a joint agreement not to operate nighttime entertainment during the fasting month. Similar regulations were applied in Jakarta and other parts of the country. Regional governments, city administrations, and hardline groups sometimes employed force in administering these regulations, although in many cases police prevented vigilante groups from taking action. There were 12 regencies and cities in East Java that issued a regulation/circular letter ordering the closure or a reduction in operating hours of various entertainment venues during Ramadan.

Christian groups stated that foreign religious workers found it difficult to obtain or extend visas. Requirements for religious worker visas were more onerous than other visa categories. The application required approval from both local and national offices within the Department of Religion and disclosure of the number of followers of the religion in the community. The applicants must attest they would remain in their position no more than two years before being replaced by a local national. Foreigners granted such visas worked relatively unimpeded. Faith-based workers with a primary focus on development work often successfully registered for social visas with the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Education.

Abuses of Religious Freedom

There were reports of abuses of religious freedom in the country.

NGOs that monitor religious freedom violations in the country recorded between 64 and 100 incidents during the calendar year. The highest number of reported incidents occurred in West Java and Jakarta. During the reporting period, the government continued explicitly and implicitly to restrict the religious freedom of groups associated with forms of Islam viewed as outside the mainstream.

On May 7 members of radical groups attacked a Catholic secondary school, Saint Bellarminus in Jatibening, Bekasi. Protesters claimed they were reacting to a student's anti-Islamic Internet posting. The 16-year-old student faced charges of blasphemy, with a maximum penalty of two years of imprisonment. On September 7 the student was sentenced to one year in prison.

The government tolerated discrimination and abuse toward the Ahmadiyya, failing to reject the 2007 MUI fatwa condemning Islamic groups such as the Ahmadiyya. The government also failed to reject the 2005 MUI fatwa that explicitly banned the Ahmadiyya, as well as related local government bans. Authorities failed to halt or investigate vandalism on a number of Ahmadiyya facilities during the reporting period. Varying reports provided different numbers of mosques attacked or closed.

Some Ahmadiyya followers remained as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Transito Camp in Mataram, Lombok, where they have lived since 2006 after a mob forced them from their homes. Without a home address, most continued to have difficulty obtaining KTPs and, consequently, were sometimes denied free health services from hospitals and voter registration for local elections. Conditions in Transito Camp remained difficult, with cramped living space and limited access to water. Ahmadiyya IDPs no longer received a rice subsidy, water, or electricity supplied by the local government. Although children attended local schools, they faced harassment. In July 2009 Ahmadiyya IDPs requested compensation for their assets from the local administration, but the claim was pending at the end of the reporting period. Despite the absence of a clear decision on their status and the lack of official permission to return home, 12 Ahmadiyya families had previously returned to their home village in Ketapang. However, on November 19, the 12 families were again forced from their homes by local officials after attending a town meeting. On November 26 villagers in Ketapang destroyed 22 houses belonging to Ahmadiyya families. Previously they moved between Transito Camp and Ketapang Village, spending a few days or weeks at each, because at times they feared for their safety in Ketapang. The remaining 19 families in the the camp continued to worry for their safety in Ketapang.

In addition to the Ahmadiyya, blasphemy laws were used against other groups claiming ties to Islam but considered "deviant."

At the end of the reporting period, Lia Eden remained in prison serving a two-and-one-half year sentence. In June 2009 the Central Jakarta District Court found Eden, the leader of the Jamaah Alamulla Group, guilty of blasphemy and incitement of hatred among religious adherents for proselytizing and delivering her messages to government institutions, including the Presidential Palace.

On May 7 the Selong District Court in Lombok sentenced 70-year-old Bakri Abdullah to one year in prison for blasphemy. Police arrested Bakri in October 2009 after he angered residents at his village in Lombok by claiming to be a prophet and to have ascended to heaven twice.

Improvements and Positive Developments in Respect for Religious Freedom

On July 13 the Palu State Court sentenced Arifuddin Lako to 8 and one-half years in prison following his conviction for the murder of Ferry Silalahi, a prosecutor in numerous terrorism and corruption cases in Poso in 2004, including one case involving the terrorist organization Jemaah Islamiyah.

During the Sail Banda event in August, the minister of social welfare announced that the central government would provide approximately two billion rupiah (\$230,000) for the renovation of a mosque and two churches in Ambon that were destroyed during the sectarian conflict.

On October 12-13 the Maluku Interfaith Group held an interfaith workshop in Central Maluku aimed at increasing respect within the interreligious community. The workshop discussed pluralism, tolerance, and peace.

On November 4 the West Jakarta District Court sentenced Eko Budi Wardoyo to 10 years in prison for his involvement in the 2004 killing of Pastor Susianti Tinulele in 2004 and for a 2005 bombing of the Central Market in Poso.

Local police in Central Sulawesi protected local churches and prayer houses during religious services. Local residents expressed optimism that the cycle of violence has slowed. Citizens and religious leaders continued to promote peace and religious harmony in the province. Once the scene of extreme tension and sectarian violence, many consider Poso now a safe place to conduct public religious events. Christian and Muslim communities continued to hold joint events.

On November 25 members of the Presidential Council on Religious Relations met with official and religious leaders from Central Sulawesi Province in Palu to explain the importance of religious harmony and provide an update on the condition of interreligious life in Central Sulawesi.

Section III. Status of Societal Actions Affecting Enjoyment of Religious Freedom

There were reports of societal abuses and discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice.

Controversy over the Ahmadiyya continued throughout the reporting period. Hardline groups renewed attacks and demanded the government disband the Ahmadiyya. Rallies continued throughout the country both for and against a ban. Civil rights activists, members of the Presidential Advisory Council, and leaders from Muhammadiyah and Nadhlatul Ulama continued to assert that any such ban would be unconstitutional and contrary to the principles of Islam.

Between July 26 and July 29, members of hardline groups targeted members of the Ahmadiyya sect of Islam in the village of Manis Lor, Kuningan, West Java. Local authorities attempted to close down several Ahmadiyya mosques, allegedly due to pressure from hardline groups. After the local population forced the reopening of these mosques, 500 protesters from various hardline groups confronted members of the predominantly Ahmadiyya community. Local authorities deployed Mobile Brigade police to control the situation.

On October 1 residents of a nearby village looted and destroyed houses, burned a mosque, and burned cars in the predominantly Ahmadiyya enclave of Cisalada, West Java.

On November 11 a group of students from Perguruan Tinggi Dakwah Islam, a local Islamic college in North Jakarta, threatened to close an Ahmadiyya mosque. The students protested outside the mosque, but police defused the situation before it turned violent.

On December 3 approximately 50 individuals attacked the Al Hidayah Ahmadiyya mosque in South Jakarta. The protesters broke windows at the mosque, but no injuries were reported.

In addition to the Ahmadiyya, according to the Indonesian Communion of Churches and the Wahid Institute, local government officials and local communities forced the closing of several licensed and unlicensed churches during the reporting period. Many of the targeted churches operated in private homes and storefronts, and some churches moved their services to rented spaces in public shopping malls to lessen the potential of threats from hardline groups.

On Sunday, December 12, local authorities in Rancaekek, Bandung, in conjunction with hardline civil society groups, forced the sealing of seven houses belonging to Christians, claiming that they were being used as houses of worship without a permit.

Militant groups and mobs throughout the country attacked, vandalized, forced to shut, or prevented from being established several houses of worship, religious schools, and homes of Muslim groups regarded as unorthodox. In several cases police temporarily detained members of "deviant groups" who were victims of attacks, ostensibly to ensure their safety, but did not arrest attackers.

Muslims reported occasional difficulties in establishing mosques in Muslim-minority areas of Papua, North Sulawesi, and elsewhere.

Hardline religious groups used pressure, intimidation, or violence against those whose messages or practices offended them. Militants purporting to uphold public morality sometimes attacked cafes and nightclubs they considered venues for prostitution or that had not made payments to extremist groups, although the number of such incidents decreased compared to previous years. In one incident in September, activists from a number of hardline Muslim groups disrupted an international lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender film festival in Jakarta, threatening venues with violence and causing the cancellation of film screenings.

In a contrast with previous years, the FPI did not conduct vigilante raids in Jakarta on entertainment establishments during Ramadan. However, FPI members were involved in a number of violent incidents during the reporting period, including attacks on churches and Ahmadiyya mosques.

Voluntary conversions between religious groups occurred, as allowed by law, but remained a source of controversy. Some Muslims accused Christian groups of using food and microcredit programs as incentives for impoverished Muslims to convert.

Section IV. U.S. Government Policy

The U.S. government discusses religious freedom with the government as part of its overall policy to promote human rights.

During the first week of December, the U.S. Department of State hosted the leaders of the National Inter-religious Council as a follow-up to a U.S.-Indonesia interfaith collaboration conference held by the Indonesian government in January. The leaders met with senior U.S. government officials and addressed the U.S. Department of State's Forum on Religion and Global Affairs.

The U.S. embassy and the consulates in Surabaya and Medan regularly engaged government officials on specific religious freedom issues. Embassy staff at all levels met frequently with religious leaders, officials of Muslim social organizations, and human rights advocates to clarify U.S. policy in support of religious freedom, discuss religious tolerance, and promote respect for religion. Embassy staff also met with members of minority religious groups, whose houses of worship or training facilities were forcibly closed, to discuss government response to the closures, as well as religious freedom and pluralism generally.

Embassy and consulate outreach to the public emphasized the importance of religious freedom and tolerance in a democratic and diverse society. The embassy and consulates also promoted pluralism and tolerance through exchanges and civil society programs.

During the reporting period, five young Indonesian leaders travelled to the United States and participated in a U.S. government funded International Visitor Leadership Program on the subject of religious pluralism and multiculturalism. They met with staff from the Office of International Religious Freedom among several other U.S. Department of State offices.

The embassy and consulates reached a broad audience across the country during the reporting period through the production of media programs that provided in-depth coverage of issues, including religious freedom, from an American perspective. These included several television cooperative productions, which broadcast on major free-to-air television stations.

The embassy supported a number of outreach programs during the month of Ramadan, including a number of iftar dinners and an extensive speakers program reaching a broad cross-section of society.

The embassy and consulates engaged with religious figures through an active outreach program. A number of programs at high schools, universities, and pesantrens (Islamic boarding schools) focused on diversity, pluralism, and religious tolerance. The embassy and consulates supported campus seminar programs aimed at strengthening supporters of pluralism on Islamic campuses and reinforcing an understanding of religious freedom, tolerance, pluralism, and gender equity. Five of the embassy's 11 American Corners were in Islamic universities. During the academic year 2010-2011, 14 of 40 Fulbright English teaching assistants were scheduled to be placed in pesantrens.