

ihre Bezugsgruppen zurückkehren, in denen oft massive Feindbilder gepflegt und tradiert werden.

Der Präsident der Philipps-Universität, Prof. Dr. Volker Nienhaus, und Prof. Dr. Jochen Röpke verwiesen auf die Notwendigkeit auch der ökonomischen Umgestaltung des Landes. Aceh verfügt über reiche Bodenschätze und Agrarprodukte, die in der Regel als Rohstoffe und damit ohne große Gewinne ausgeführt werden. Zur Anhebung der Einkünfte müsse zumindest ein Teil der Weiterverarbeitung im Lande verbleiben. Dafür böte gerade der islamische Hintergrund des Landes eine gute Basis, weil er ein Banken- und Kreditwesen begünstigt, das insbesondere auf die Förderung von Kleinunternehmen baut.

Die Marburger Konferenz konnte viele Fragen aufgreifen und Wege zur Aussöhnung aufzeigen. Gerade aus der Vielzahl an Empfehlungen, die für gewöhnlich nur jeweils einzeln in den Blick genommen werden, ergeben sich neue und umfassende Perspektiven zur Koordination der unterschiedlichen Schritte. Manche Fragen sind aber auch noch offen und z.T. von der Forschung noch gar nicht hinreichend intensiv in Angriff genommen wurden. Dazu gehört beispielsweise die Frage, wann nach Einstellung von Kampfhandlungen Maßnahmen zur Aussöhnung sinnvollerweise eingeleitet werden sollten: möglichst unmittelbar, um eine breite gesellschaftliche Diskussion auszulösen, oder mit Verzögerung, um gerade oberflächlich verheilte psychische Schäden nicht gleich wieder aufzureißen?

Ulrich Wagner / Johannes M. Becker

### **In Search of Reconciliation and Peace in Indonesia and East Timor**

International Conference of the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, Singapore, 18-20 July 2007

In search of reconciliation and peace in Indonesia and East Timor scholars from Asia, Australia, Europe and the United States came together at the National University of Singapore (NUS) from 18-20 July 2007. The conference was sponsored by the Asia Research Institute (ARI), supported by the Indonesia Study Group (ARI & NUS) and organised by Dr. Birgit Bräuchler (ARI).

Recent large-scale conflicts in various parts of the world have given rise to a reconciliation toolkit of truth commissions and law enforcement, justice and human rights, forgiveness and amnesty. These mechanisms are supposed to be the means not only to stop conflict and violence, but also to reconcile warring parties and create sustainable peace. Victims are typically treated as 'objects', not as agents of reconciliation. Debates on reconciliation in Indonesia and East Timor are heavily influenced by these international discourses. The often limited success of these mechanisms requires the exploration of other means for reconciliation that take grassroots agencies and the socio-cultural contextualisation of conflict and reconciliation into account. These have been marginalised or ignored, both in the

relevant literature and in national and international peace interventions, because they often tend to be collective-oriented and thus in seeming conflict with Western norms of individual justice and accountability. Promoting an interdisciplinary examination of two of the most conflict-affected countries in Southeast Asia, Indonesia and East Timor, the conference contributions went beyond a mere political and legal approach to reconciliation and offered new understandings of bottom-up reconciliation approaches and the cultural dimensions of reconciliation.

While violence and conflict have been prominent topics on the research agenda for Indonesia and East Timor for a long time, the multiple dimensions of reconciliation and peace have attracted much less attention so far. This conference successfully helped to fill this gap. Covering different areas of Indonesia and East Timor the participants analysed grassroots reconciliation initiatives and explored the ways in which reconciliation connects with issues like civil society, gender, religion, tradition, culture, language, social memory, education, displacement, performance, public space and the media. Contributions covered a wide range of conflicts such as state-sponsored organised violence (including the pogrom following the failed coup attempt of 1965 and the 1984 Tanjung Priok massacre), secessionist conflicts, struggles for independence, communal conflicts and localised small-scale conflicts. In the discussions it became very clear that there is no such thing as a blueprint for reconciliation and that each particular case requires an individual approach to reconciliation that takes the kind of underlying conflict as well as the socio-cultural setting into account. Reflecting on problems and challenges coming along with the emphasis on grassroots concepts for reconciliation some contributors also investigated the emergence of unpeaceful or extremist civil society groups or the misuse of collective reconciliation procedures such as the instrumentalisation of religious concepts or traditions by political elites, which rather inhibits reconciliation and can create new conflict lines.

The publication of selected conference papers will fill major gaps in the literature on reconciliation in Indonesia and East Timor and on conflict, peace and transitional justice much more general.

For a conference outline, program and abstracts please consult the ARI webpage ([http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/events\\_categorydetails.asp?categoryid=6&eventid=551](http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/events_categorydetails.asp?categoryid=6&eventid=551)). For more details please see the forthcoming publication or contact Dr. Birgit Bräuchler.

Birgit Bräuchler