



## Poso's Second Jihad: The Local, the National, the Global

Kirsten E. Schulze & J. Chernov Hwang

To cite this article: Kirsten E. Schulze & J. Chernov Hwang (2024) Poso's Second Jihad: The Local, the National, the Global, Asian Security, 20:2, 57-71, DOI: 10.1080/14799855.2024.2413044

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14799855.2024.2413044>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.



Published online: 16 Oct 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 883



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

## Poso's Second Jihad: The Local, the National, the Global

Kirsten E. Schulze and J. Chernov Hwang



### ABSTRACT

This article looks at the second Poso jihad from 2011 to 2022, focusing on its local, national, and global dimensions. Drawing upon 62 interviews with members of Poso-based Islamist extremist groups, it advances three arguments: First, it contends that at the local level the lingering grievances and perceptions of injustice as well as the initial jihadi leaders, trainers, and recruits provided continuity between the first and second Poso jihads. Second, it posits that the jihadi training camps served as the crucial bridge connecting the local, the national, and the global dimensions. Third, it argues that the interplay between the local, national, and global enabled MIT to periodically regenerate its jihad and to have a reach far beyond its numbers.

On 30 September 2022 the Indonesian police announced that it had wiped out the Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT) after the group's last fugitive, bomb-maker Jaid alias Pak Guru, was killed in a shoot-out in Poso Pesisir, Central Sulawesi. This marked the end of the second Poso jihad, which began in 2011 with the mobilization of local Muslims, the establishment of jihadi training camps in the mountains above Poso city, and the first jihadi operation (*amaliyah*) in May that year. This jihad was driven by a sense of injustice, a desire for retribution, and fears of new Christian attacks as had occurred during the 1998–2001 Christian-Muslim communal violence, reflecting the continuing trauma felt by many Muslims in Poso. At its heart was a new jihadi organization – MIT – which was established under the leadership of Santoso alias Abu Wardah around 2012. MIT at its height comprised 50–60 combatants,<sup>1</sup> including among its ranks not only local Muslims from Poso but also Muslims from Java, South Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and most importantly from Bima on the island of Sumbawa, as well as foreign Uyghur Muslims from Xinjiang. As MIT's capacity increased, so did Indonesia's security efforts. In January 2016, more than 3,000 members of the military joined the police in the pursuit of MIT in Operation Tinombala and Operation Mandago Raya. Over the period of the 11 years of the second Poso jihad, 51 mujahidin were killed while 19 captured.

The second Poso jihad was clearly rooted in the grievances resulting from the first Poso jihad. However, it was also clearly a separate jihad. It differed from the first jihad in its composition, targets, ideology, and the degree to which it was embedded in and supported by the local community. The second Poso jihad was waged primarily against the Indonesian police rather than Poso's Christians as it was the police that had brought to an end the first, 2000–2007, Poso jihad. Moreover, Santoso's pledge of loyalty to the amir of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, in 2014 shifted MIT's ideology. Santoso saw this as a way to elevate the second Poso jihad beyond the parochial. It was also a way to tap into the broader ISIS network to obtain funding and weapons. Thus, while the second Poso jihad had lines of continuity particularly in its local dimension, it was not a continuation of the earlier, first Poso jihad.

Poso has not occupied a prominent place in the scholarly literature. Often it is only mentioned in passing, a footnote in the literature on terrorism. In their books on Islamist extremism, Zachary Abuza, Maria Ressa, and Ken Conboy all make note of Poso, but their central focus is Southeast

**CONTACT** Kirsten E. Schulze  [K.E.Schulze@lse.ac.uk](mailto:K.E.Schulze@lse.ac.uk)  International History, London School of Economics, London WC2A 2AE, UK

© 2024 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

Asia as the so-called second front in the war on terror.<sup>2</sup> Poso has, however, been examined by those interested in communal violence in Indonesia, tracing the roots of the 1998–2001 Poso conflict, analyzing post-conflict reintegration and rehabilitation, unpacking the rise of jihadi movements, and evaluating the military's response to those groups.<sup>3</sup> Here, Lorraine Aragon analyzed the causes of the communal violence in Poso, charting the phases of the conflict between Muslims and Christians.<sup>4</sup> Dave McRae looked at how Christians and Muslims were mobilized and the role that key personalities and leaders played.<sup>5</sup> Turning to the post-conflict period, Julie Chernov Hwang, Rizal Panggabean and Ihsan Ali Fauzi analyzed the disengagement of Poso jihadis and evaluated the extent to which state programs were aiding in efforts at reintegration.<sup>6</sup> Taking a more psychological approach, Yustinus Tri Subagya's research unpacked women's trauma and healing in the aftermath of the Poso conflict.<sup>7</sup>

There are also several pieces that highlighted Mujahidin Indonesia Timor. Sidney Jones examined the origins and emergence of MIT, the leadership of its founder – Santoso, and importantly, Poso's significance for the greater jihadi movement in Indonesia.<sup>8</sup> Najib Azca and Rani Dwi Putri used the life history method to explore the agency of four women who had joined MIT and nominally participated in paramilitary training.<sup>9</sup> Finally, in the aftermath of the first Indonesian security forces operations, which started to decimate the group, Rachel Diprose and Najib Azca evaluated the military's response to the threat posed by MIT, noting that its small size, its lack of popularity, and the overall state of “conflict fatigue among the Posonese made it unlikely we would be seeing a third jihad.”<sup>10</sup>

Some scholars have also examined Poso comparatively in conjunction with other cases of communal violence, jihadi activity, or terrorist behavior. Kirsten E. Schulze explored Poso in her comparative analysis of the communal violence in Ambon, Poso and Sambas.<sup>11</sup> In a subsequent article, she conducted a robust analysis of the Ambon and Poso jihads to explore what jihadis in Poso learned from their previous experience in Ambon.<sup>12</sup> Julie Chernov Hwang drew on individual level cases from Poso in her books, *Becoming Jihadis: Radicalization and Commitment in Southeast Asia* and *Why Terrorists Quit: The Disengagement of Indonesian Jihadists*, where she examined why Poso Muslims joined Islamist extremist groups and how they came to disengage from violence and reintegrate back into society.<sup>13</sup> Sidney Jones and Solahudin compared the origins of MIT to those of the Mujahidin Indonesia Barat (MIB).<sup>14</sup> Yet little has been written on how the two jihads connected, on the social networks that extremists built during those jihads, on the training that took place in the mountains above Poso, and on how this training reverberated beyond local boundaries to other parts of Indonesia and connected to the global project of ISIS.<sup>15</sup> This article intends to fill that gap.

This article looks at the second Poso jihad from 2011 to 2022, analyzing its local, national, and global dimensions. It discusses local grievances, fears, aims, recruitment, and training drawing upon 62 interviews with current and former members of Poso-based Islamist extremist groups, including Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh, Mujahidin Kayamanya, Mujahidin Tamborana, and MIT as well as key stakeholders in the Muslim community, government, police, military, and civil society.<sup>16</sup> These interviews were conducted between 2003 and 2023 across 8 research trips and were supplemented with court documents. The article then examines the arrival of Indonesians from other parts of the archipelago to attend military training in the mountains above Poso city and the role that the “Bima contingent” played in MIT. Lastly, it explores MIT leader Santoso's ideological shift toward global jihad, focusing on his speeches, statements, and videos but also MIT's connections to ISIS, funding, and the sudden arrival of a group of Uyghur in 2014 who joined the second Poso jihad. Particular attention is paid to the jihadi training within and across the local, national, and global dimensions of the second Poso jihad as this provides insight into who was joining the training, the evolving military capacity of the jihadis, their ideological and religious learning, and the bonds among those who trained together.

This article argues that at the local level the lingering grievances and perceptions of injustice as well as the initial jihadi leaders, trainers, and recruits provided continuity but not continuation between the first and second Poso jihads. It further argues that the jihadi training camps served as the crucial bridge connecting the local, the national, and the global dimensions. And lastly, it contends that the interplay between the local, national, and global enabled MIT to periodically regenerate its jihad and to

have a reach far beyond its numbers. It is here that this article contributes to the broader discussions on the “glocal” nature of jihadism in the twenty-first century, on how and why local jihads “go global,” and on the benefits of affiliation with organizations such as ISIS but also the limitations of moving beyond the parochial.

### How Poso’s Second Jihad was Local

The second Poso jihad began with the training sessions in the mountains above Poso city between February and April 2011 followed by the May 2011 shooting of two police guards outside the BCA Bank in Palu. It came at a time when Poso was rife with rumors, some sparked by anonymous letters, that a renewed outbreak of Christian-Muslim conflict was imminent, that the Christians were preparing for another round of attacks.<sup>17</sup> This fear of impending violence traces back to two local traumatic events that took place during the 1998–2001 Christian-Muslim communal conflict and during the 2000–2007 Poso jihad, namely the May 2000 Walisongo massacre and the January 2007 raids by the police counter-terrorism detachment Densus 88 on the Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh compound in Poso city. The unresolved grievances resulting from these two local incidents created the fertile soil for the second jihad.

The Walisongo massacre saw armed Christians attack a mosque and Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*), killing more than 100 Muslims, mostly women and children.<sup>18</sup> As bodies floated down the river for over a week following the massacre, it became a collective trauma that reverberated throughout the Poso Muslim community.<sup>19</sup> It was the primary motivation for local Muslims to join Islamic study sessions (*pengajian*) and military training (*tadrib*) offered by the mujahidin from Java, who came to Poso in its aftermath to help Poso’s Muslims defend themselves. The shared experiences in local mosques and training camps, in turn, fostered a sense of social bondedness and brotherhood, which would provide a ready-made community for Santoso to recruit from when he launched the subsequent jihad. The memories of the Walisongo massacre were compounded by perceptions that the perpetrators had not been fully held to account, which, in turn, fostered feelings of revenge and deep-seated fears of a future Christian attack. For example, Rianto, a former member of Santoso’s group Mujahidin Tamborana, which predated the establishment of MIT, recalled “we were worried that the Christians would come down from the mountains again.”<sup>20</sup> Gungun, a former member of MIT, shared this sentiment. “We wanted to be ready if [the Christians] slaughtered, burned, or evicted us, just like what had happened before.”<sup>21</sup>

The second notable event was the January 22, 2007 Densus raids on the Tanah Runtuh compound, which resulted in the killing of 14 militants, the arrests of over a dozen more, and the confiscating of a large cache of weapons and explosives.<sup>22</sup> This event perpetuated the belief that the police were idolatrous tyrants (*thoghut*), unjust, and could not be trusted.<sup>23</sup> For those who were part of Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh, this view was especially salient, as 14 of their friends had been killed in those raids.<sup>24</sup> According to former MIT member, Imran, “it was all about revenge against the police because of [the] 2007 [raids]. We did not target the military or the local government. Only the police. They had been unjust. They had targeted Muslims.”<sup>25</sup> Mujahidin Tamborana member Furqon agreed, “Santoso said we needed to avenge our friends who had died in the 2007 raids . . . and for that, we needed guns. I was happy because I wanted revenge. The police had killed my friends in Tanah Runtuh in 2007.”<sup>26</sup> Even among those who lacked direct experience of the raids, the knowledge of them resonated. Those who attended Islamic study sessions or activities in Tanah Runtuh or Kayamanya during the Poso conflict or in Kayamanya in the years immediately following the raid came to understand the view that “the security personnel treated them unfairly”<sup>27</sup> and had disregarded the requirements of Islamic law (*syariat* Islam) in their decisions to crack down on the jihadis.<sup>28</sup> Their jihad was cast as a “search for justice because nothing has been done by the government to rectify the injustice.”<sup>29</sup>

The salience of “the local” can also be found in much of the early strategic and tactical decision-making by those who emerged as leaders of the segment of the Poso jihadi community who did not

want to cease activities following the 2007 Densus raids. Decisions around who led; whom and how to recruit; how and where to train; and what were legitimate targets were all firmly rooted in the local.

To understand the significance of “the local” in the leadership, it is important to look at the roles of three men: Santoso, the military commander; Yasin, the recruiter; and Ali Kalora, who ensured the survival of MIT as an organization after the death of Santoso in 2016 by refocusing recruitment on local volunteers. Santoso was responsible for the early training practices and protocols as well as recruitment, especially in the aftermath of the 2007 raids, when outsiders assumed all was quiet in Poso. He was a former member of Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh who had joined “at the height of the conflict”<sup>30</sup> after many of his family had been “slaughtered at Walisongo.”<sup>31</sup> His decision to join the first Poso jihad had been situational as had been his decision to launch the second Poso jihad, both grounded in the same local grievances. In late 2010, Santoso was asked to become the military commander of the newly established Poso branch of Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT), a national salafijihadi breakaway faction of the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI). In 2012, he established his own organization – Mujahidin Indonesia Timur – after the JAT-Poso military wing had been abolished. It was him specifically who locals followed into the second Poso jihad, bonded by their previous training and fighting together. He identified specific individuals from Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh and Mujahidin Kayamanya that he wanted by his side. As Basri, a former member of Tanah Runtuh’s hit squad, explained:

Santoso came to visit me in prison in Ampana in 2012. He told me he set up a group and asked me to train them. . . . Then when my wife miscarried, I requested leave to visit my family and then I went to Poso. . . . I was collected by Daeng Koro from Tanah Runtuh. We went straight to Gunung Biru. I joined because I wanted to continue the war and because Santoso asked me.<sup>32</sup>

The second key figure was Ustadz Yasin. Yasin was a widely respected Java-born former JI member, who had come to Poso during the conflict, had taught at JI-affiliated Pesantren Amanah from 2002 to 2007 in Tanah Runtuh, and after the conflict, settled in the Kayamanya neighborhood of Poso city. He amassed a local following through his popular sermons and *pengajian* and established his own Islamic boarding school, Darul Anshor. He was key to recruiting former fighters from the first Poso jihad into JAT-Poso, including Santoso. Papa Enal, a veteran of Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh, explained that he joined JAT Poso because he trusted and respected Yasin.<sup>33</sup> Under Yasin, JAT-Poso recruited youth from Kayamanya, Tamborana, Kalora, Malino, Mapane and Palu.<sup>34</sup> Importantly, he was able to reach out across generations to those who were too young to have participated in the first Poso jihad. His *pesantren* also served an additional function; it provided education, a safe environment, and a quasi-parental environment for the children of the MIT leadership.

Last was Maluku-born Ali Kalora, who took over the leadership of MIT from Santoso and shepherded MIT through the period from 2017 to 2021, when it was beset by attacks from the authorities. He ensured the group’s survival by focusing on recruiting local volunteers and centering local grievances and narratives.

Early paramilitary training and Islamic study sessions were also locally grounded, with prominent roles played by Santoso and Yasin. This can be seen from the locations of activities, who was asked to participate, and who was assigned roles in *dakwah* and in paramilitary training. As early as 2007, a small group of Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh members, who still wanted to do *something*, began meeting for *pengajian* at Pesantren Kilat in Lape, Poso Pesisir every Friday.<sup>35</sup> The central figure in these early study sessions was Santoso. His priority was continuing the jihad.<sup>36</sup> According to the men who joined his early group, referred to as both the Santoso Group and Mujahidin Tamborana, Santoso was motivated by a desire to avenge those who died on January 11 and 22, 2007 in the Densus raids.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, he believed that it was near inevitable that the Christians would attack again.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, it was necessary to prepare. Furqon attended these early meetings and characterized Pesantren Kilat as a “recruiting ground, where individuals would be gauged for interest and picked for further activities.”<sup>39</sup> Two participants in the early meetings estimated that 6–8 persons were recruited out of the *pengajian* at Lape; they were all locals and most of them already knew Santoso from before.<sup>40</sup>

They held their own study sessions just for group members as well as conducting limited training in homes, at the beach, or in the forest.<sup>41</sup>

According to “Mat,” by 2008 or 2009, they were also recruiting in Kayamanya via Islamic studies sessions. “Those who were often in attendance, those who were willing and serious, were recruited.”<sup>42</sup> These men became the first to join the training sessions in 2011 under the auspices of JAT-Poso led by Santoso who had been appointed military commander. They joined because of Santoso, his focus on military training, gathering weapons, and plans to attack the police.<sup>43</sup> And they joined because of their personal relationship with Santoso or as one member of Santoso’s group put it, “we did not join [JAT], but we *stayed* with Santoso.”<sup>44</sup>

There were three sessions of military training in 2011 in the mountains above Poso city, the first in February in Gunung Biru, the second in April in Danau Tamanjeka, and the third around Malino village. In these first paramilitary training sessions, all the instructors and a majority of participants were locals. Santoso taught shooting and bomb-making, Papa Enal oversaw ammunition, Ali Kalora taught self-defense, and Anto instructed on local knowledge and map-reading. According to Papa Enal, around 16 were trained in the first session of which nine were from Poso, two from Palu. In the second session 21 were trained, 17 were local.<sup>45</sup> He also explained that the location of Gunung Biru and Danau Tamanjeka had been chosen because “it is strategic, easily accessible but far away from society.”<sup>46</sup> The training conducted there comprised physical exercises; shooting with an M16, SS-1 and revolver; battle techniques; bomb making; map reading; and survival tactics. The aim of this training was to provide JAT Poso with the “skills and capacity . . . to use weapons and make bombs.”<sup>47</sup> “Abu Ja’far Poso,” who was one of these trainees, recounted that

It was about weapons and shooting. There was no theory. There was a bit of map reading and how to use a GPS, some topography, physical exercises, and bomb making. . . . The bombs were with switches and timers. We electrified grenades but sometimes this did not work.<sup>48</sup>

He added that “the religious part took place before the batches went up the mountain” in the form of *pengajian* by Ustadz Yasin.<sup>49</sup>

In the early years, the group prioritized local recruitment and adopted local symbolism. In 2012, Santoso established MIT, a name pointing to its location in *Eastern Indonesia* rather than Java, where 60% of the population and most of the jihadi groups reside. Initially, MIT recruiters relied heavily on social networks established during the Poso conflict and first Poso jihad. “Imran Tamanjeka” explained, “we recruited from among our friends and the people we knew. It was easy. Anyone who wanted to, could join.”<sup>50</sup> Gunung, another member of MIT concurred, “the people who were active in Mujahidin Kayamanya were the same people active in MIT. I joined MIT because I knew them all. I knew Santoso . . . . I knew the others.”<sup>51</sup> That they all knew one another and already trusted one another was an asset for MIT. They did not need to build a supportive community; they already possessed one.

The local nature of the Poso jihad was clearly reflected in the targets chosen for jihadi operations: the police and local Christians. In 2011, they attacked police guarding a BCA bank in the city of Palu in order to acquire weapons to boost their military capacity. Local police and the police counter-terrorism units sent in to deal with surging jihadi violence became the core target of the second Poso jihad. These included the kidnapping and killing of two police officers in October 2012,<sup>52</sup> as well as the bomb attack on a police post in the same month, wounding two police and two civilians.<sup>53</sup> In June 2013, MIT targeted the local police headquarters in Poso city.<sup>54</sup> In 2014, there were further attacks on police posts as well as the murder of a suspected Densus informant.<sup>55</sup> Civilians were abducted and in 2015 Christians were targeted and killed.<sup>56</sup> Between 2016 and 2021 MIT clashed with the police and the military, while continuing to target local farmers and Christians in their attacks.<sup>57</sup>

In addition, MIT emphasized local themes and framing in their media statements. Commenting on the attack against the local police headquarters in Poso city on 3 June 2013, MIT’s Media Division declared that this operation was

One of the ways of implementing the *syariah* of Allah and his Prophet to conduct jihad operations at least once a year. This operation was the first martyrdom bombing in Poso city, city of *hijra* [migration] and *ribath* [fighting for Allah], city of knights and martyrs, and that [operations] will continue with the permission of Allah.<sup>58</sup>

It further added that “this operation came in the form of terror and revenge from us for the transgressions by the *thoghut* state against the Muslim people, especially the mujahidin.”<sup>59</sup> In a video released on 15 October, in an Idul Adha message from MIT, Santoso urged Muslims to “beware of Densus” which is “carrying out a slaughter of the Muslim people,” “in the name of counter-terrorism, especially against my group.”<sup>60</sup> In late October 2014, Santoso in another video asked Poso Muslims to never be afraid of them as they would never attack their people as they only attacked Densus which was “colonizing them” and “colonizing Islam.”<sup>61</sup> In April, MIT released a further statement on the on-going security operation, this time taking issue with the Indonesian soldiers whom it called “stupid pigs” and accused of terrorizing the people, destroying the plantations, and stealing the livestock.<sup>62</sup> These statements harkened back to those original grievances and sources of mistrust, where the locals were righteous and aggrieved and the outsiders – the police, the military and the state – were the aggressors. Through this messaging, they endeavored to portray MIT as the legitimate protectors of the local Poso Muslim community.

The local dimension of the second Poso jihad shows the continuity between the first and second jihads in the mechanisms through which local mobilization of jihadi activists took place. Jihadi veterans were still moved to mobilize by prior collective traumas, notably the 2000 Walisongo massacre and the 2007 Densus raids. These two events continued to cause participants to turn to the jihadi groups in order to secure protection. The early patterns of recruitment and training as well as the leaders and trainers themselves were also firmly proven local actors and rooted in local contexts. While MIT would go on to swear loyalty to ISIS in 2014, its origins and its early years were a local response to an ongoing desire for revenge and ongoing fears of future attacks. The steady recruitment from the local Muslim community until 2022, moreover, ensured that MIT had a local dimension right up to its defeat.

## How Poso’s Second Jihad was National

The national dimension of the second Poso jihad started with the “All-Jihad Front training camp project” in Aceh at the other end of the Indonesian archipelago, demonstrating how training camps connected local jihads such as the second Poso jihad with jihadi endeavors elsewhere in Indonesia, in short connecting “the local” with “the national.” The All-Jihad Front training camp project was initiated by Aceh-born Tauhid wal Jihad member, Yudi Zulfahri, together with Sofyan Tsauri and coordinated by Dulmatin, an Afghan veteran and JI member who had participated in the 2002 Bali bombing.<sup>63</sup> This alliance included members from a wide array of salafi-jihadi and *takfiri* groups, including Negara Islam Indonesia (NII), Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), KOMPAK, Jemaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT), Ring Banten, Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), Front Pembela Islam-Aceh, and Tawhid wal Jihad.<sup>64</sup> It also included Santoso, who was involved in the discussions, “although he never actually made it to Aceh.”<sup>65</sup> Their shared aim was providing military training,<sup>66</sup> and establishing a secure base (*qoidah aminah*).<sup>67</sup> Here, too, Poso was in the running alongside Aceh, Banten, and Bima. In late 2009, JAT had even gone to Poso to discuss the possibility of establishing a local branch there, meeting with Ustadz Yasin, Ustadz Latif and Santoso.<sup>68</sup> This, however, was put on hold as Aceh became the first choice. As Sofyan Tsauri explained:

In Banten there was no real secure place. We favored Aceh over Poso. Bima was also briefly considered but there is not enough ground cover. You could see everything from a helicopter.<sup>69</sup>

Moreover, Aceh was the only province in Indonesia where Islamic law was already being implemented and the All-Jihad Front broadly assumed that this would translate into local support. However, on February 22, 2010, a month after the training camp in Jantho, Aceh had started

training its first batch of 50, the camp's existence was reported to the police by locals and broken up.<sup>70</sup> This put Poso back into the picture. Zufahri recounted that “some [of the jihadis] went to Poso and tried to rebuild the network there.”<sup>71</sup> Similarly Tsauri asserted that “the jihad shifted back to Poso which was the only other area suitable. Weapons bought for Aceh that were still in Jakarta were sent to Poso.”<sup>72</sup>

JAT moved ahead with setting up its Poso branch in November 2010,<sup>73</sup> which then became the hub through which Poso became connected to “the national.” Santoso’s Mujahidin Tamborana now had links with JAT in Java and with JAT’s Palu and Bima branches.<sup>74</sup> Then, in February 2011, JAT started to send people for training – from Java, Bima, and Kalimantan.<sup>75</sup> Former MIT courier Imron recalled that Santoso was already in the mountains, preparing the JAT training, when he was asked to take a group up. They “came from Bima, Java, Kalimantan, and Ambon,”<sup>76</sup> and included members of the Badri Hartono group from Solo. “I brought them to Santoso. They said that they could not do shooting practice in Solo.”<sup>77</sup> Similarly, Rianto, a former member of Santoso’s group explained that when the outsiders came in 2011, he picked them up at Poso City market and took them to Gayantri hamlet. “There they met another person who would take them up.”<sup>78</sup> He added that he did not know “who organized the outsiders,” but he knew “some of them were from Bima because they told me.”<sup>79</sup>

After three training sessions in 2011, JAT central moved away from military training, possibly because the Aceh training camp trials had begun but also clearly in reaction to the first local *amaliyah*, the attack on the police guards of the BCA bank in Palu in May 2011. JAT distanced itself quickly with JAT leader Abu Bakar Ba’asyir asserting that there was no JAT in Central Sulawesi as JAT only had branches in Java, Lampung and Bima. The perpetrators had not been JAT members but merely people who had, on occasion, sought advice. Their actions had been purely personal.<sup>80</sup> Basri believed that JAT had gotten cold feet.<sup>81</sup> Rianto recalled that “the JAT ustadz [now] only wanted *dakwah* [Islamic outreach] and *amar ma’aruf* [encouraging morality].”<sup>82</sup> The JAT-Poso military wing was shut down, the locals lost interest in a demilitarized JAT-Poso, and JAT-Poso ceased to exist.

When Santoso subsequently established MIT, MIT and the second Poso jihad remained connected to “the national” in three important ways. First, the police response to the renewed violence in Central Sulawesi was integrated into the national campaign by Islamists calling for the disbandment of Densus. In October 2012, the head of Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia (DDII), Aris Munandar accused the police of “persecuting the Muslims” in Poso,<sup>83</sup> and former MMI spokesman Fauzan Al Anshori claimed that Densus was targeting mosque activists.<sup>84</sup> Then, on November 3, the police shot dead Poso resident Mohamed Khalid as he was returning from morning prayer accompanied by Ustadz Yasin whom they arrested. In response, Poso’s Muslims barricaded streets, shut shops, and set buildings on fire.<sup>85</sup> By the end of the day 15 people had been arrested on suspicion of involvement.<sup>86</sup> Allegations that Khaled had been shot at close range in the head execution-style, that the police had mistreated Poso residents in the security operation resulting in 22 hospitalizations including a woman who had been hit in the face,<sup>87</sup> and that the 15 who were arrested had been tortured,<sup>88</sup> were immediately taken up by the national “disband Densus” campaign.

By April 2013, even mainstream Muslim organizations had joined the anti-Densus movement. In that month Muhammadiyah leader Din Syamsudin together with Slamet Effendy from Nahdlatul Ulama and the Indonesian human rights commission Komnas HAM held a meeting to which also Poso Muslim leader Adnan Arsal, head of Pesantren Amanah and a former leader of Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh, was invited to speak about the mistreatment of Poso Muslims by Densus. As Din Syamsudin explained,

We saw Densus committing human rights abuses. . . . We know Densus has a wider agenda than just catching terrorists. They are against Muslim activists who have no terrorist motive whatsoever. It has become a project for Densus to make it permanent - and that is why we have called for the disbandment of Densus.<sup>89</sup>

The “disband Densus” campaign reflected how Muslim and Islamist groups across Indonesia related to the Poso jihad politically, effectively legitimating MIT’s targeting of the police. This campaign also put Poso on the map as a place where one could obtain training and military skills.



Training camps were the second way that the second Poso jihad connected to “the national.” MIT continued to provide military training as well as the opportunity to gain jihad experience for Indonesians from other parts of the archipelago. Initially, Santoso drew upon the connections previously established through JAT.<sup>90</sup> Later Indonesian pro-ISIS groups also sent people for training. One of those who came for training with Santoso and later became part of MIT was Sabar Subagyo alias Daeng Koro from Bantul, Yogyakarta. He was a former Indonesian military officer, who had been a member of Mujahidin Kayamanya during the first Poso jihad, where he served as combat instructor, recruiter, and fighter.<sup>91</sup> He joined Santoso in 2011 and “brought his own men from Makassar and Bima.”<sup>92</sup> He provided weapons training and military style physical training, quickly acquiring a reputation for having superior skills. As “Imran Tamanjeka” explained, Daeng Koro “was more disciplined than Santoso; he insisted that we had to be properly dressed.”<sup>93</sup> Other examples of those who stayed with MIT include Ali Kalora and Rajif Gandhi Sabban alias Rajes, both from Maluku. Ali Kalora succeeded Santoso as MIT leader. He was “national” by origin but, as seen earlier, he strategized on behalf of “the local.” Rajes, according to Central Sulawesi police chief Inspector General Syafril Nursal, was also part of the core leadership, a skilled marksman and bomb-maker as well as one of MIT’s executioners.<sup>94</sup>

Other Indonesian trainees returned to their own areas to carry out attacks.<sup>95</sup> For instance, Kurniawan from Bima went to train with MIT in Gunung Kalora in 2014, after having joined JAT-Bima three years earlier in 2011. He stated in his deposition that he wanted to receive military training in the context of the jihad against the Indonesian government, which was not guided by Islamic law.<sup>96</sup> The training he received lasted a week and included running, sit-ups, push-ups, and rolling under Santoso’s instruction, weapons training by Barok, and lessons on intelligence by Daeng Koro. After the training he returned to Bima where in 2017, after having taken the loyalty oath to ISIS leader Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi, Kurniawan constructed a TATP bomb for an *amaliyah* against the police station in Woha.<sup>97</sup>

The third “national” dimension lay in the composition of MIT itself. Of particular importance for the organization were the Bimanese, who arrived as a large contingent and in a steady stream. The Bimanese who joined MIT, as Ihsan Ali Fauzi and Dyah Ayu Kartika explained, were among the most active jihadis as they were the products of a “radical milieu” resulting from Bima’s history as an Islamic sultanate and its Islamic puritanism and Islamist activism centered around the area of Penatoi.<sup>98</sup>

The connection between Bima and the second Poso jihad was particularly resilient because it cut both ways. For the Bimanese, Poso provided the sought-for training and jihad opportunity, which they could not pursue at home as Bima was too exposed. Poso also served as a sanctuary after the police laid siege to the radical Islamic boarding school, Pesantren Umar bin Khatab, in July 2011 and Bimanese militants had to flee.<sup>99</sup> For the Poso mujahidin, Bima served as a hinterland, a refuge and safe haven. Both Santoso and Basri hid in Bima when they went on the run; both took Bimanese women as their second wives. These two Bimanese women became MIT members and even joined their husbands in Gunung Biru where they received rudimentary military training.<sup>100</sup>

However, between 2014 and 2021, the presence of the Bimanese fighters also contributed to disagreements and leadership splits in MIT over ideology, personality, leadership style, and the presence of the women. Thus, when Santoso was killed in July 2016, the leadership of MIT was somewhat unclear. Formally Santoso was succeeded by Ali Kalora, but according to Densus sources, it was really Barok from Bima who led MIT during this time. They assert that Ali Kalora only became MIT leader after Barok was killed in 2017.<sup>101</sup> IPAC reports contend a different Bimanese was Kalora’s rival – Qatar alias Busron, who had a reputation for ruthlessness and for being “the real strategist.”<sup>102</sup> Qatar was killed in July 2021.<sup>103</sup> Kalora was killed two months later in September 2021.

The national dimension of the second Poso jihad shows how it was tied into the broader dynamics of radical and militant Islamism in Indonesia, both politically and militarily. MIT’s targeting of the police, which was grounded in “the local,” slotted nicely into the broader Islamist campaign to delegitimize the police, situated in “the national.” Conversely, this national campaign legitimated

MIT's targeting of the police. Most importantly, it shows how the training camps established in Poso from 2011 onwards served to attract recruits from other parts of the archipelago. This, too, served to connect the "local" with the "national" as the second Poso jihad was able to fill a "national" need for jihadi training and became a way to fulfil the obligation of jihad.

## How Poso's Second Jihad was Global

After Santoso took the *bai'at* (loyalty oath) to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in 2014, the second Poso jihad was reframed globally. This was not the first time that Santoso had reached out to "the global." In 2013 he established connections with Al-Qaeda's Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF).<sup>104</sup> When ISIS gained ground and superseded Al-Qaeda in the eyes of many jihadis, Santoso switched. Not only did ISIS appear to be more powerful, but it also had territory. By affiliating with ISIS, Santoso sought to elevate the second Poso jihad beyond the local. If Poso could become part of the Islamic State caliphate, maybe even a province (*wilayah*), MIT would be able to obtain funding, weapons, and build connections with other ISIS affiliates.

According to Imron, Santoso contacted former Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh member Brekele, who provided logistical support to MIT.<sup>105</sup> "Brekele was Santoso's link to the outside,"<sup>106</sup> as he had connections with ISIS through two Indonesians in Syria: Bahrumsyah, the Indonesian commander of the ISIS Southeast Asian battalion Katibah Nusantara,<sup>107</sup> and Abu Jandal who later established his own battalion, Katibah Masyaariq.<sup>108</sup> Imron asserted that "after Santoso pledged loyalty to Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi, MIT received money from ISIS."<sup>109</sup> In fact, Santoso received "substantial funds from Bahrumsyah for logistic support and for arms purchases."<sup>110</sup>

Santoso's *bai'at* to ISIS was recorded, the Indonesian text was translated to Arabic, and the video was sent to Abu Jandal via WhatsApp.<sup>111</sup> With that act, MIT's local jihad "turned into a global jihad."<sup>112</sup> Indeed, those who joined MIT after it had started supporting ISIS perceived it only in global jihad terms. As another former MIT member explained:

I did not swear a *bai'at* to MIT but directly to ISIS in 2018 together with other MIT members. MIT's jihad was global. It was fighting together with countries like the Philippines, Syria, and Iraq. We were in direct communication with Baghdadi and Adnani. What we wanted to establish is a global caliphate.<sup>113</sup>

Santoso reaching out to "the global" was driven by pragmatic, practical interests rather than ideology. He was keen on the benefits such as funding, links with ISIS supporters, and elevating his own position as a jihadi leader. However, that does not mean that ideology was unimportant or that he did not understand what he was signing up to. Indeed, the foundations for "going global" had already been laid in the Islamic studies sessions he had attended as a member of Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh during the first Poso jihad which had focused on the local conflict at hand but also the idea of a global caliphate, largely disregarding "the national."<sup>114</sup> Thus, when Ustadz Yasin began preaching the Islamic State's global message in Poso, it fell onto fertile soil. The majority of MIT happily pledged their loyalty to Baghdadi as they had already been exposed to the ideas in Yasin's Islamic study sessions or they were the product of Bima's radical milieu, which had also shifted toward ISIS. The odd one out was Daeng Koro. His lack of support for ISIS became the main reason for the rupture between him and Santoso in 2014.<sup>115</sup>

The global framing could be seen in MIT's statements, press releases and videos which now featured the black ISIS flag. It was also reflected in the language used and the attention paid to other, non-Indonesian, areas of jihadi activity alongside Poso as well as the global enemy. For instance, MIT's "Statement 4" issued in February 2014 reminded the population that Densus was the ally of "the imperialists" and they worked with an "injection" of money and aid from their "crusader American employer . . . to curtail Islamic movements."<sup>116</sup> Even clearer is the language in the lengthy call to "Fight them with all your Strength" released in April 2015 by the Islamic State Hacking Division Mujahidin Indonesia Timor. Here MIT pointed to "the loudness of the war drums of the crusaders, pagans, atheists, and apostates" who were "united under the banner of falsehood promoted by America and the Zionists."<sup>117</sup> This coalition of unbelievers, it explained, were fighting a "crusader war" under the

pretext of establishing “the *syirk* (idolatrous) laws of democracy,” by getting their lackeys in the media to label every believer a terrorist.<sup>118</sup> MIT then addressed the *anshor thogut* (helpers of the idolatrous tyrants) and *thogut* Indonesia stating that “we have drawn our swords and are ready to cut your throats” unless Indonesia separates from this coalition.<sup>119</sup> Turning to the situation of Indonesian jihadis intercepted in Turkey on their way to Syria, it demanded that the *thogut* Erdogan release all of the *ikhwan* (brothers) who want to *hijrah* to the caliphate, to allow them to proceed without disturbance, and to cancel all planned deportations of *ikhwan* to countries of unbelief.<sup>120</sup> The MIT release concluded conveying the good news that the black banner is flying over the east of Nusantara (the Indonesian archipelago) and that the jihad started in Poso will reach Rome and Andalusia and then move toward the liberation of Al-Quds (Jerusalem).<sup>121</sup> On the odd occasion MIT also featured in ISIS publications, showing that MIT was recognized by ISIS in Syria as part of its network and contributing to its global jihad. For instance, *An-Naba* newsletter 289 reported “the killing of two Indonesian security force members and four Christians in operations by the soldiers of the Caliphate in Indonesia,”<sup>122</sup> thanking Allah for this success.

The global framing of the second Poso jihad was also reflected in the volunteers that came to train with MIT in the mountains above Poso. They included members of other Indonesian pro-ISIS groups such as the Jemaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) network. Moreover, they included foreigners. “Imran Tamanjeka” recalled that the foreigners started arriving in 2014, from Malaysia.<sup>123</sup> According to Ali Kalora’s wife Ummu Fadil, during the time she was with MIT in the mountains between 2014 and 2016, “there were 43 men up there and 3 women. They included 6 people from Turkey [Uyghurs], from the Philippines, and from Malaysia.”<sup>124</sup>

The Uyghurs comprised the largest number. In 2014, some 10 Uyghurs traveled to Central Sulawesi. At least two of them appeared in MIT videos. Four were arrested and six eventually killed by the Indonesian security forces. They had left the Xinjiang area of China because, as Abdul Bazit Tuzer explained in his deposition, they were not permitted education beyond primary school, were not permitted to practice their religion – Islam, and only earned 10% of what a Han Chinese person earned for the same job.<sup>125</sup> Similarly, Ahmet Mahmud contended that “Muslims in Turkistan were oppressed by China which has a communist ideology and does not like Muslims.”<sup>126</sup>

They left China going via Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand to Malaysia. There they acquired Turkish passports with the aim of going to Turkey. It is here that the Uyghurs who ended up in Indonesia linked up with someone who brought them into Indonesia illegally and took them to Makassar where they shopped for warm clothes.<sup>127</sup> From there they were taken to Palu to connect with MIT members who would take them to Santoso in the mountains. Akbar, one witness in the trials of the Uyghurs who were arrested in the Parigi Moutong area of Central Sulawesi in September 2014, stated that he had been told that “there were guests in Makassar” and asked whether he could take them to Poso or hide them in Palu.<sup>128</sup> When he met the “guests,” he was surprised they were foreigners. According to Akbar, the aim of the four foreigners was to “meet Santoso,” “to join in the *tadrib*,” or to “give technology lessons to MIT” and “discuss the cooperation of MIT with foreign jihadi organizations, especially those in Syria.”<sup>129</sup>

The four Uyghurs on trial did not make it up the mountain as they were spotted and arrested in Parigi Moutong. However, others did. Another witness, Andriansyah, who took people up and down the mountain, recalled that between July and September 2014 he made three trips, bringing five foreigners to join with Santoso.<sup>130</sup> All five were Uyghurs. Arif Budi Setiawan, another witness, stated that he received news in October 2014 from Bagus Maskuron, who had trained with MIT and subsequently gone to Syria, that there “are thousands” who are in the process of “being directed toward Santoso.”<sup>131</sup>

MIT also explored sending its own members to train with other Islamic State affiliates in Southeast Asia. According to one former MIT member “there was discussion about sending some MIT to the Philippines,”<sup>132</sup> while another asserted that MIT had actually “sent people to the Philippines” and that “MIT hoped to connect with Marawi in 2017.”<sup>133</sup>

Lastly, a small number of MIT members also went to Syria to fight for and live in the Islamic State caliphate. The above-mentioned Bagus Maskuron was one of the first to go in November 2013.<sup>134</sup> He

became a key conduit through whom subsequent MIT members went.<sup>135</sup> Others, according to a former MIT member, can be seen “in the 2014 ISIS video when they were burning their passports.”<sup>136</sup> He believed, when interviewed in August 2023, that “some are still there.”<sup>137</sup>

The global dimension of the second Poso jihad was the result of Santoso reaching out to ISIS as he needed money and weapons. Recognition from ISIS served to elevate his standing as the leader of MIT and elevate his jihad beyond the parochial. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that the foundations for “going global” were already laid by the Islamic studies sessions during the first Poso jihad. Also, notable is that subscribing to the global ideology of ISIS varied across MIT members and trainees. The most global were the foreigners, followed by Indonesians from other parts of the archipelago after 2014, and the later generation of local Muslims from Poso who had been too young to experience the first Poso jihad. Lastly, it is absolutely clear here as well that the training camps in the mountains above Poso played an important role connecting “the global” with “the local.”

## Conclusion

This article has examined Poso’s second jihad from 2011 to 2022, analyzing its local, national, and global aspects. It argued that this second jihad was born out of the unresolved issues and grievances of Poso’s first jihad, which was embedded in the 1998–2007 Poso conflict. The continuing sense of injustice, that not all Christian perpetrators involved in the 2000 Walisongo massacre had been brought to justice, as well as the anger about the police operation against the mujahidin in January 2007, created the desire for revenge among parts of Poso’s Muslim community, especially the mujahidin who had been targeted. A small group of these, 6–8 men led by Santoso, who wanted to continue the fight, became the core of subsequent jihadi organizations, first Mujahidin Tamborana, then the military wing of JAT-Poso, and culminating in Mujahidin Indonesia Timor.

This core of jihadis was also central for maintaining the local nature of this jihad through key leadership figures such as Santoso and Ustadz Yasin. It was through the latter’s Islamic studies sessions in Poso that first the “old” mujahidin from the first jihad were approached and later “new” volunteers were recruited. For most Poso Muslims who participated in this second jihad the fight was about local issues, about revenge, about establishing Islamic law in Poso, and, above all against the police. At the same time, the second Poso jihad had a distinctly national dimension in the way it was integrated into the broader, national campaign against Densus, in the way it attracted volunteers from across the archipelago, and the ties established by the Poso mujahidin with other jihadi groups in Indonesia. And lastly, Poso’s second jihad had a global dimension which saw Santoso reach out first to Al-Qaeda and then to ISIS in the search for funding and to elevate his own standing as well as that of the second Poso jihad. As MIT had territory, Poso was put forward as a possible location for an Islamic State *wilayah* in Southeast Asia and Poso Muslims also departed for Syria to fight for and live in Baghdadi’s caliphate.

What tied “the local,” “the national,” and “the global” together, as argued in this article, was the training camps in the mountain range above Poso city. Here, local Poso Muslims trained together with volunteers from Makassar, Bima, Ambon, Kalimantan, and Java. They also trained and fought together with Uyghurs from Xinjiang. This training provided the trainees with military skills and jihad experience. Those who stayed with MIT boosted the second Poso jihad, those who returned to other parts of Indonesia fed into jihadi efforts at home or into broader Indonesian Islamist dynamics, and those who left for Syria contributed to the Islamic State’s global jihad.

Several notable lessons can also be drawn from the second Poso jihad and the strategic decisions of MIT that more widely explain Islamist extremist movements both in the region and in the world more broadly. First, the second Poso jihad shows how a small group of jihadis in a remote part of Indonesia was able to put itself onto the global jihadi map. Like other small jihadi groups globally they used the internet and social media. However, the most important element in establishing the relationship with ISIS was the Indonesians, who counted among their associates such as Bagus Maskuron, who went to Syria and could advocate for MIT and the territory that it controlled. This made MIT successful where many other small jihadi groups across the globe failed.

Second, MIT demonstrates how a militant group may choose to align with ISIS for instrumental reasons, rather than a deep and abiding ideological loyalty to the ISIS caliphate. By swearing loyalty to ISIS, they would be able to access resources, attract international media attention, and inflate their domestic significance. Association with ISIS served to elevate their status beyond their immediate numbers both nationally and internationally. These “practical” motivations should not be underestimated in the decision to take the *bai’at*, especially for smaller groups, as research has shown that 50% of all terrorist groups globally exist for less than a year. Access to such resources increases the likelihood of staying power. Thus, while analysts writing on MIT have often assumed that the *bai’at* was the result of ideological affinity and cohesion, it may, in fact, have been no more than a strategic decision. This also holds true for other smaller jihadi groups such as the Maute group, IS-Basilan, Dawlah Islamiyah, and IS-Sulu in the Philippines.

Third, even when militant Islamist groups swear loyalty to ISIS, their grievances often remain rooted in local factors. Without understanding the local aspects, states and civil society organizations cannot foster long term conflict resolution, and one is more likely to see insurgencies and extremist movements reemerging periodically, even if repression leads to a temporary pause in hostilities. The unresolved grievances of the first Poso jihad laid the foundation for the second. This pattern, too, can be seen in other conflict areas across the globe ranging from the Moro insurgency and the 2017 Marawi siege in the Southern Philippines to the Tuareg rebellions in Northern and Eastern Mali. Understanding the local causes is thus critical for long-term conflict resolution both at the organizational level in demobilizing and disarming the groups and at the individual level in disengaging and reintegrating their members. Recognizing local roots, players and norms as well as taking the necessary steps to redress local grievances is key to designing effective interventions.

## Notes

1. Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), “Militant Groups in Poso: Down but Not Out,” *Report no. 86*, June 27, 2023, 3.
2. Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2003); Maria Ressa, *Seeds of Terror* (New York: Free Press 2004); and Ken Conboy, *Second Front: Inside Asia’s Most Dangerous Terrorist Network* (Jakarta: Equinox 2005).
3. See Jacques Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004); Yukhi Tajima, *The Institutional Origins of Communal Violence: Indonesia’s Transition from Authoritarian Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2014); John Sidel, *Riots, Pogroms, Jihad: Religious Violence in Indonesia*. (Ithaca: Cornell University press 2006). Kirsten E. Schulze, *Contesting Indonesia: Islamist, Separatist and Communal Violence since 1945* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2024).
4. Lorraine V. Aragon, “Communal Violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi: Where People Eat Fish and Fish Eat People.” *Indonesia* 72, (2001): 45–79.
5. Dave McRae, *A Few Poorly Organized Men: Interreligious Violence in Poso, Indonesia* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).
6. Julie Chernov Hwang, Rizal Panggabean and Ihsan Ali Fauzi, “The Disengagement of Jihadis in Poso, Indonesia,” *Asian Survey* 53, no. 4 (2013): 754–77.
7. Yustinus Tri Subagya, “Women’s Stories of Violent Conflict in Poso and Trauma Healing,” *International Journal of Humanity Studies* 2, no. 1 (2018). <https://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/IJHS/article/view/1573>
8. Sidney Jones, “Poso’s Jihadist Network,” *Janes Terrorism and Insurgency Monitor* (February 2013).
9. Najib Azca and Rani Dwi Putri. “The Women Behind Mujahidin Eastern Indonesia: Negotiating Agency and Gender Dynamics,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Special Issue on Radical and Militant Islam in Indonesia, (online January 2024).
10. Rachel Diprose and Najib Azca, “A Return to the Past or a New Geopolitical Future? The Implications of Past Communal Conflict for Contemporary Security Debates in Indonesia,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 49, no. 5, 780–05.
11. Kirsten E. Schulze, “The ‘Ethnic’ in Indonesia’s Communal Conflicts: Violence in Ambon, Poso and Sambas,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 12 (2017): 2096–114.
12. Kirsten E. Schulze, “From Ambon to Poso: Comparative and Evolutionary Aspects of Local Jihad in Indonesia,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 11 (2019): 35–62.
13. Julie Chernov Hwang, *Becoming Jihadis: Radicalization and Commitment in Southeast Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023), Julie Chernov Hwang, *Why Terrorists Quit: The Disengagement of Indonesian Jihadists* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018). See also Julie Chernov Hwang and Kirsten E. Schulze, “Why They Join: Pathways into Indonesian Jihadist Organizations,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 30, no. 6 (2018): 911–32.

14. Sidney Jones and Solahudin, "Terrorism in Indonesia: A Fading Threat," *Southeast Asian Affairs*, (2014): 139–47.
15. See International Crisis Group (ICG), "Indonesia Backgrounder: Jihad in Central Sulawesi," *Asia Report No 74* (February 3, 2004); ICG, "Weakening Indonesia's Mujahidin Networks: Lessons from Maluku and Poso," *Asia Report no. 103* (October 13, 2005); ICG, "Indonesia: Tackling Radicalism in Poso," *Asia Briefing no. 75*, January 22, 2008; ICG, "How Indonesian Extremists Regroup," *Asia Report no. 228*, July 16, 2012; IPAC, "Indonesia's Lamongan Network: How East Java, Poso and Syria are Linked," *Report no.18*, April 15, 2015; and IPAC, "COVID-19 and the Mujahidin of Eastern Indonesia (MIT)," *Short Briefing no. 3* April 28, 2020, IPAC, "Militant Groups in Poso."
16. This article fully complies with the research ethics regulations of the LSE (222862) and Goucher College (IRB 20,141,699). All interviews were voluntary, and all interviewees were informed of the nature of this research and that it would be published at the start of the interviews. Interviewees were given the option of using their name, an alias, a generic description, or remaining off the record.
17. Interview with Furqon, former member of Santoso's group, Tamanjeka, August 1, 2023.
18. Chernov Hwang, *Why Terrorists Quit*, 37; McRae, *A Few Poorly Organized Men*, 96, ICG, "Jihad in Central Sulawesi," 2.
19. Julie Chernov Hwang, Fieldwork notes 2011–2012, 2015.
20. Interview with Rianto, former member of Santoso's group and MIT, Poso, August 2023.
21. Interview with Gungun, former member of MIT, Poso, July 2019.
22. Chernov Hwang, Panggabean and Fauzi, "The Disengagement of Jihadis in Poso," 765, ICG, "Tackling Radicalism in Poso," 1.
23. Interviews with "Yuda," former member of Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh and subsequently MIT, Ampana, January 2012; "Abu Jafar Poso," former member of Mujahidin Tamborana, Poso, August 2023; Imron, former member of MIT, Palu, July 2023; Rianto, former member of MIT and Santoso's group, Poso, August 2023; and Gungun, former member of Tanah Runtuh and MIT, Poso, July 2019.
24. Interviews with "Yuda," "Abu Jafar Poso," Rianto, and Gungun.
25. Interview with "Imran Tamanjeka," former member of MIT, Tamanjeka, August 2023.
26. Interview with Furqon.
27. Interview with Gungun.
28. Deposition of Anang Muhtadin alias Papa Enal, June 12, 2011.
29. Interview with Iwan Ambo, former member of Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh, Palu, August 5, 2017..
30. IPAC, "Militant Groups in Poso," 3.
31. Interview with Iwan Ambo.
32. Conversation with Basri. member of Mujahidin Tanah Runtuh then MIT, Jakarta, 2 August 2017.
33. Deposition of Anang Muhtadin alias Papa Enal.
34. Deposition of Anang Muhtadin alias Papa Enal.
35. Interview with Gungun.
36. IPAC, "Militant Groups in Poso," 3.
37. Interview with Rianto.
38. Interview with Furqon.
39. Interview with Furqon.
40. Furqon estimates 8. "Imran Tamanjeka" estimates 6.
41. Interview with "Imran Tamanjeka."
42. Interview with "Mat," former member of Mujahidin Indonesia Timor, Poso, July 2019.
43. Interview with "Abu Ja'far Poso."
44. Interview with "Imran Tamanjeka."
45. Deposition of Anang Muhtadin alias Papa Enal.
46. Deposition of Anang Muhtadin alias Papa Enal.
47. Deposition of Anang Muhtadin alias Papa Enal.
48. Interview with "Abu Ja'far Poso."
49. Interview with "Abu Ja'far Poso."
50. Interview with "Imran Tamanjeka."
51. Interview with Gungun.
52. "Hilangnyah 2 Polisi di Sarang 8 Teroris tahun yang lalu," *Liputan 6*, October 12, 2020, <https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/4375824/hilangnya-2-polisi-di-sarang-teroris-poso-8-tahun-lalu>
53. "Polisi masih terus sidik pelaku bom Poso," *Tempo*, October 24, 2012, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/437567/polisi-masih-terus-sidik-pelaku-bom-poso>
54. Official Statement on the Martyrdom bomb at police headquarters Poso city, Number: 002/06-13 (June 3, 2013).
55. Robi Sugara, "Santoso: The Leader from Nowhere," *Counter Terrorism Trends and Analysis* 6, no. 10 (2014): 25–26.
56. "Tiga Jenazah Korban Kelompok Teroris Santoso Dimakamkan," *Sindonews.com*, January 17, 2015, <https://daerah.sindonews.com/berita/952007/25/tiga-jenazah-korban-kelompok-teroris-santoso-dimakamkan>

57. "Kronologi Satu Keluarga di Sigi Dibunuh Anggota MIT," Merdeka.com, November 29, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220408095338/https://m.merdeka.com/peristiwa/kronologi-satu-keluarga-di-sigi-dibunuh-anggota-mit.html>
58. Official Statement on the Martyrdom bomb at police headquarters Poso city.
59. Official Statement on the Martyrdom bomb at police headquarters Poso city.
60. "Idul Adha MIT media rilis pesan Syekh Mujahid Santoso Abu Wardah," *Arrahmah*, October 16, 2013, <https://www.arahmah.id/idul-adha-mit-media-rilis-pesan-syekh-mujahid-santoso-abu-wardah/>
61. MIT, "Pesan untuk Warga Poso," <https://archive.org/details/seruan1>
62. MIT, Peryataan 11, "Hakikat Operasi PPRC Thogut Indonesia," April 20, 2015.
63. Interview with Sofyan Tsauri and Yudhi Zulfahri, initiators of the Aceh training camp, Depok, July 29, 2023.
64. Interview with Tsauri and Zulfahri.
65. Interview with Tsauri and Zulfahri.
66. Interview with Tsauri and Zulfahri.
67. Interview with Tsauri and Zulfahri.
68. ICG, "How Indonesian extremists regroup," 6.
69. Interview with Tsauri and Zulfahri.
70. ICG, "How Indonesian extremists regroup," 3.
71. Interview with Tsauri and Zulfahri.
72. Interview with Tsauri and Zulfahri.
73. Deposition of Anang Muhtadin alias Papa Enal.
74. Interview with "Abu Ja'far Poso."
75. Interview with "Imran Tamanjeka."
76. Interview with Imron.
77. Interview with Imron.
78. Interview with Rianto.
79. Interview with Rianto.
80. "Gegabah! Polri ungkapkan JAT dibalik penembakan polisi di Poso," *Arrahmah*, June 6, 2011, <https://www.arahmah.id/gegabah-polri-ungkapkan-jat-dibalik-penembakan-polisi-di-poso/>
81. Conversation with Basri.
82. Interview with Rianto.
83. "Ustadz Aris Munandar: Serangan kepada umat Islam awal dari konflik Poso," *Arrahmah*, October 24, 2012, <https://www.arahmah.id/ustadz-aris-munandar-serangan-kepada-umat-islam-awal-dari-konflik-poso/>
84. "Fauzan Al Anshari: Seharusnya Densus layani tantangan Mujahidin Poso bukan menangkap aktivis Masjid," *Arrahmah*, October 30, 2012, <https://www.arahmah.id/fauzan-al-anshari-seharusnya-densus-layani-tantangan-mujahidin-poso-bukan-menangkap-aktivis-masjid/>
85. "Masyarakat bakar kota Poso," *Arrahmah*, November 3, 2012, <https://www.arahmah.id/masyarakat-bakar-kota-poso/>
86. "Brimob tangkap 15 warga Poso yang dituding melakukan perlawanan," *Arrahmah*, November 3, 2012, <https://www.arahmah.id/brimob-tangkap-15-warga-poso-yang-dituding-melakukan-perlawanan/>
87. "Wanita korban kebrutalan Polisi mengadu ke LPSHAM Poso," *Arrahmah*, November 5, 2012, <https://www.arahmah.id/wanita-korban-kebrutalan-polisi-mengadu-ke-lpsham-poso/>
88. "Pasca disiksa Polisi, 15 warga Poso dibebaskan," *Arrahmah*, December 28, 2012, <https://www.arahmah.id/pasca-disiksa-polisi-15-warga-poso-dibebaskan/>
89. Interview with Din Syamsudin, Muhammadiyah leader, Jakarta, April 10, 2013.
90. Conversation with Basri.
91. IPAC, "Militant Groups in Poso." 2.
92. Interview with "Imran Tamanjeka."
93. Interview with "Imran Tamanjeka."
94. "Indonesia: Senior MIT militant killed in Poso gunfight," *Benarnews*, April 27, 2020, <https://www.benarnews.org/english/news/indonesian/MIT-senior-militant-slain-04272020180855.html>
95. Conversation with Basri.
96. Deposition of Kurniawan alias Kurnia alias Nia alias Low Profile, Jakarta, June 26, 2017.
97. Deposition of Kurniawan alias Kurnia alias Nia alias Low Profile.
98. Ihsan Ali Fauzi and Dyah Ayu Kartika, "Violent Extremism in Bima, Indonesia: Radical Milieu and Peacebuilding Efforts," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Special Issue on Radical and Militant Islam in Indonesia, (online January 2024).
99. IPAC, "Militant Groups in Poso," 4.
100. Interview with Ummu Fadil, ex-MIT female combatant, wife of Ali Kalora, Desa Kalora, 1 August 2023. For a more detailed discussion of the women in MIT see Azca and Putri, "The Women 'behind' the Mujahidin Eastern Indonesia." See also IPAC, "Mothers to Bombers: The Evolution of Indonesian Women Extremists," *Report no. 35*, January 31, 2017, 14.
101. Interview with Densus officer, 11 August 2023.

102. IPAC, “Militant Groups in Poso,” 5.
103. IPAC, “Militant Groups in Poso,” 8.
104. Kirsten E. Schulze and Joseph Chinyong Liow, “Making Jihadis, Waging Jihad: Transnational and Local Dimensions of the ISIS Phenomenon in Indonesia and Malaysia,” *Asian Security* 15, no. 2 (2019): 134.
105. Interview with Imron.
106. Interview with Imron.
107. IPAC, “Update on Indonesian pro-ISIS prisoners and Deradicalization Efforts,” *Report no. 34*, December 14, 2016, 14.
108. Schulze and Liow, “Making Jihadis, Waging Jihad,” 132.
109. Interview with Imron.
110. IPAC, “Marawi, the ‘East Asia wilayah,’ and Indonesia,” *Report no. 38*, 21 July 2017, 13.
111. Witness statement by Arif Budi Setiawan alias Abu Kholid alias Arif Tuban alias Fais alias Budi Bin Mulyono, Defence of Ahmet Mahmud alias Ahmet Bozoglan, Abdullah alias Altinci Bayram alias Muhammad Kasiem Bin Mustafa, Abdul Basit Tuzer, PID.SUS/2015/PN.JKT-UTR, State Court North Jakarta, July 1, 2015.
112. Interview with Furqon.
113. Interview with former MIT member, Tamanjeka, August 1, 2023.
114. Interview with “BR,” former member of Mujahedin Tanah Runtuh, Palu, August 6, 2017.
115. Interview with Densus officer, August 11, 2023.
116. MIT, Statement 4 “Pernyataan dan Seruan Terkait Peristiwa Padang Lembara,” 11 Rabi’ul Akhir 1435/11 Februari 2014.
117. Gharibul Ikhwan, “Perangilah Mereka Dengan Segalilah Kekuatan,” *Serial Tinta Al-Busyro*, Edisi 10, Islamic State Hacking Division Mujahidin Indonesia Timor, 17 Jumadil Akhir 1436 April 6, 2015.
118. Gharibul Ikhwan, “Perangilah Mereka Dengan Segalilah Kekuatan.”
119. Gharibul Ikhwan, “Perangilah Mereka Dengan Segalilah Kekuatan.”
120. Gharibul Ikhwan, “Perangilah Mereka Dengan Segalilah Kekuatan.”
121. Gharibul Ikhwan, “Perangilah Mereka Dengan Segalilah Kekuatan.”
122. *An-Naba* Newsletter, No 289, Thursday 22 Shawal 1442 AH.
123. Interview with “Imran Tamanjeka.”
124. Interview with Ummu Fadil.
125. Deposition of Abdulbazit Tuzer, September 16, 2014.
126. Deposition of Ahmet Mahmud alias Ahmet Bozoglan, September 15, 2014.
127. Deposition of Abdulbazit Tuzer. Deposition of Ahmet Mahmud alias Ahmet Bozoglan.
128. Witness statement of Akbar alias Rosi alias Jojo alias Bams alias Hamzah alias Bamba, Defence of Ahmet Mahmud alias Ahmet Bozoglan, Abdullah alias Altinci Bayram alias Muhammad Kasiem Bin Mustafa, Abdul Basit Tuzer, PID.SUS/2015/PN.JKT-UTR, State Court North Jakarta, July 1, 2015.
129. Witness statement of Akbar alias Rosi alias Jojo alias Bams alias Hamzah alias Bamba.
130. Witness statement of Andriansyah alias Andrian, Defence of Ahmet Mahmud alias Ahmet Bozoglan, Abdullah alias Altinci Bayram alias Muhammad Kasiem Bin Mustafa, Abdul Basit Tuzer, PID.SUS/2015/PN.JKT-UTR, State Court North Jakarta, July 1, 2015.
131. Witness statement by Arif Budi Setiawan alias Abu Kholid alias Arif Tuban alias Fais alias Budi Bin Mulyono.
132. Interview with former MIT member, Tamanjeka, August 1, 2023.
133. Interview with “Imran Tamanjeka.”
134. IPAC, “The Evolution of ISIS Indonesia,” 13.
135. Schulze and Liow, “Making Jihadis, Waging Jihad,” 134.
136. Interview with former MIT member, Tamanjeka, August 1, 2023.
137. Interview with former MIT member, Tamanjeka, August 1, 2023.

## Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Notes on Contributors

*Kirsten E. Schulze* is a professor in the International History Department at the London School of Economics, UK.

*J. Chernov Hwang* is an associate professor in the Political Science and International Relations Department at Goucher College, Maryland, US.