Indonesia's Religious Conflicts:
Recent Developments, Causes and Policy Implications for Peace

Amanda Kovacs

Summary
Since the introduction of democracy in Indonesia, political and societal conflicts have become more visible. This article focuses on religious conflicts, highlights the recent developments and patterns, and analyzes the state's insufficient performance in protecting all of its citizens. The current Indonesian government tends to react rather passively to religious intolerance, discrimination and violence, and the many Indonesian non-governmental organizations and individuals committed to interreligious dialogue are running in place. Three main causes are identified that trigger religious discrimination and violence in Indonesia – namely, the legal framework and its implementation, Islamization and Christianization, and the military and police. The thesis of this article is that policy engagement with these three factors is crucial in order to foster religious peace.

Introduction
Since the introduction of democracy in Indonesia, political and societal conflicts that were suppressed during its authoritarian past have become more visible. This article focuses on religious conflicts and analyzes the recent developments and patterns, as well as the main conflict parties and victims. A main goal of this article is to demonstrate the state’s passivity and, therefore, insufficient performance in granting religious self-determination to all of its citizens and protecting them from intolerance and violence. The structural, historical, juridical and educational causes at the heart of many conflicts are delineated, and policy recommendations for peace are given. The paper highlights three factors that are important contributions to the research on the current religious conflicts – namely, the legal framework and its implementation, Islamization and Christianization, and the military and police. The thesis of this article is that a reformation of the first factor along with transformations of the actors’ behaviors associated with the second and third factors are necessary in order to foster religious peace in Indonesia. The current government has been standing on the sidelines for years, reacting rather passively towards religious discrimination and violence. Furthermore, there are many Indonesian non-governmental organizations