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### Language

In the 1970s, as oil exploitation in the province grew, so did the grievances of the population who they were not receiving their share of the proceeds and against the behaviour of the Indonesian military guarding the oilfields. In 1976, the Free Aceh Movement was founded and took up arms to fight for independence. The next 20 years are largely a story of human rights abuses and repression, but after the fall of Suharto in 1998 Acehnese students involved in the Indonesia-wide student movement began to organise support throughout the villages of Aceh for a referendum on the province's status. Despite four massacres of unarmed civilians by the Indonesian military, claiming around 200 lives between May and October 1999, and despite internal displacement of more than 140,000 Acehnese, the students succeeded in organising a succession of nonviolent protests. In June, they boycotted the Indonesian elections, in September they organised a province-wide strike, and in November they mobilized hundreds of thousands in the provincial capital, Banda Aceh, to demand a referendum. In December 1999 new Indonesian president Wahid reduced the military presence in the province and early in 2000 a ceasefire was agreed between GAM and Indonesia. This did not hold, but talks continued and at the same time international aid agencies became involved in the situation, and local civil society groups began to take root. In May 2002, three years of negotiations concluded with a new peace agreement, but this also broke down, and in May 2003 Indonesia again imposed martial law.

What fundamentally changed the situation then was the otherwise disastrous 2004 tsunami. Following this, the Indonesian government and GAM signed a peace accord, expanding Aceh autonomy and control over natural resources, and authorising a 300-strong European Union monitoring mission to oversee the agreement until elections in 2006.

Aspinall, Edward, [Islam and Nation: Separatist Rebellion in Aceh](#) [1], Stanford CA, Stanford University Press, 2009, pp. 312

Braithwaite, John ; Braithwaite, Valerie ; Cookson, Michael ; Dunn, Leah, [Anomie and Violence: Non-truth and reconciliation in Indonesian peacebuilding](#) [2], Canberra, Australia National University EPress, 2010, pp. 501

Aceh, pp. 343-428, Papua, 49-146.

Drexler, Elizabeth, [Aceh, Indonesia: Securing the Insecure State](#) [3], Philadelphia PA, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008, pp. 296

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[1] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2009/islam-and-nation-separatist-rebellion-aceh> [2] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2010/anomie-and-violence-non-truth-and-reconciliation-indonesian-peacebuilding> [3] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2008/aceh-indonesia-securing-insecure-state>

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