



Submission No 102

Inquiry into Australia's Relations with Indonesia

Organisation: Australian Federal Police

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Janet Holmes
Secretary, Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Department of the House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

Dear Ms Holmes

Inquiry into Australia's Relations with Indonesia

Thank you for the transcript of the AFP's appearance before the Committee's Inquiry into Australia's Relations with Indonesia.

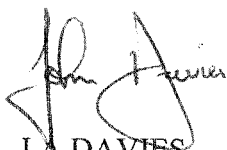
I have made some corrections to the transcript that are noted in Attachment A. You will note that there is also a correction of fact in the transcript.

The AFP took a question on notice from the Committee and the answer to this question is provided in Attachment B.

Further to the AFP's submission and appearance before the Committee, I would like to inform the Committee that on 1 July 2003 Commissioner Keelty was personally conferred with the Bintang Bhayangkara Utama medal in Jakarta by Her Excellency Madame Megawati Soekarnoputri, President of the Republic of Indonesia. The medal is Indonesia's highest police award and has been conferred on Commissioner Keelty because of his outstanding efforts in furthering cooperation between the Indonesian National Police and the AFP.

The AFP looks forward to the Committee's final report and should we be able to further assist the Committee in the drafting process we would be happy to do so. Please contact Meegan Fitzharris on 6275 7553 in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



J A DAVIES
Deputy Commissioner

Question taken on notice during AFP appearance at the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade Inquiry into Australia's Relations with Indonesia

Mr Brereton—Deputy Commissioner Davies, I think we are all greatly encouraged by the report on the progress that has been made on the building of the relationship between yourself and your counterpart agency. I want to ask a question about the alleged JI involvement in the church bombings during Christmas 2000 across the archipelago. What is the state of AFP knowledge of that, and when, how and in what circumstances did we become aware of these matters?

Mr Davies—I am not in a position, unfortunately, to be able to answer your question. The terrorism area of investigations does not report through me; it reports through the executive director, protection. I can certainly undertake to come back to you on that.

Australian Federal Police answer

On Christmas Eve 2000 a number of small improvised explosive devices were detonated at a range of locations around Indonesia. Christian churches and clerics were the main targets of the attacks, in which 18 people died and a further 82 people were injured. A total of 38 bombs were planted and 15 were defused by disposal experts. These attacks were shortly followed by a series of attacks in Manila and southern Philippines, killing 22 people and injuring more than 100.

Media and academic speculation following the attacks was directed towards al Qaeda or Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), with minimal implication of the JI network. This speculation focused heavily on the alleged involvement of Riduan Isamuddin (aka Hambali) in the attacks, who at the time was believed to have represented the interests of al Qaeda in the region.

While the AFP was made aware of the bombings through its international liaison network, it had little knowledge about the specific planning and execution of these attacks until the debriefing of Bali bombing suspect Amrozi on 11 November 2003. During his initial debrief Amrozi provided information implicating Hambali, Bali bombing suspect Imam Samudra and JI's religious Emir, Abu Bakar Bashir, in the Indonesian bombing campaign.

Since this time, the AFP has received intelligence from the Indonesian National Police (INP) implicating Bali bombers, namely Dr Husin Bin Azahari and Ali Gufron (aka Mukhlas), as well as other alleged JI operatives, in these attacks. Analysis suggests that JI's senior leadership were principally responsible for planning and coordinating the execution of these attacks in Indonesia. This included the then Emir of JI, the JI Operations Chief and heads of JI's Mantiqi One and Mantiqi Two.

Abu Bakar Bashir was formally arrested on 15 December 2002 in relation to the Christmas Eve 2000 series of bombings against Christian churches. Similarly, Imam Samudra has since been indicted on charges pertaining to this incident and the Bali bombings. Mukhlas has reportedly been indicted on the same charges as Samudra, however it is not clear if this relates only to the Bali bombings or includes the 2000 church bombings. A number of the other suspects involved in this operation, including Hambali and Zulkifli remain at large.

These attacks were the first coordinated bombing operation undertaken by JI. The attacks represented a significant change in the general strategy and tactics employed by JI since the migration of their leadership and operation base back to Indonesian in late 1990's.