

SECURITY POLICY PAPER ASSIGNMENT

**INSURGENCY IN SOUTHERN THAILAND AND THE FOUR-TRACK
MITIGATION POLICY**

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INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 21st-century primordial violence, hatred and enmity, which Clausewitz (Howard & Paret 1989, p.77) called the “blind natural force”, among the Malay Muslims and Thai-Buddhists in the Deep South (Pattani, Narathiwat, Yala and four districts of Songkhla) were rekindled. The attacks by the insurgents reached an unprecedented level in eight consecutive years as per the following: 50 in 2001; 75 in 2002; 119 in 2003; 1,789 in 2004; 2,173 in 2005; 1,846 in 2006; 1,878 in 2007; and 355 in the first six months in 2008 (see Figure 1).

From January 2004 to June 2008, 3,071 people were killed and 4,836 people were wounded. The percentage of the casualties was divided into four categories: 64% civilian; 12% armed forces; 10% police; 14% volunteers and civil servants (see Figure 2). In 2007 alone, 2,307 people were injured or killed. Recently, in the first six months of 2008, there were 610 injured or killed. It will be seen from these numbers of casualties, the intensity of the violence in southern Thailand has not yet abated.

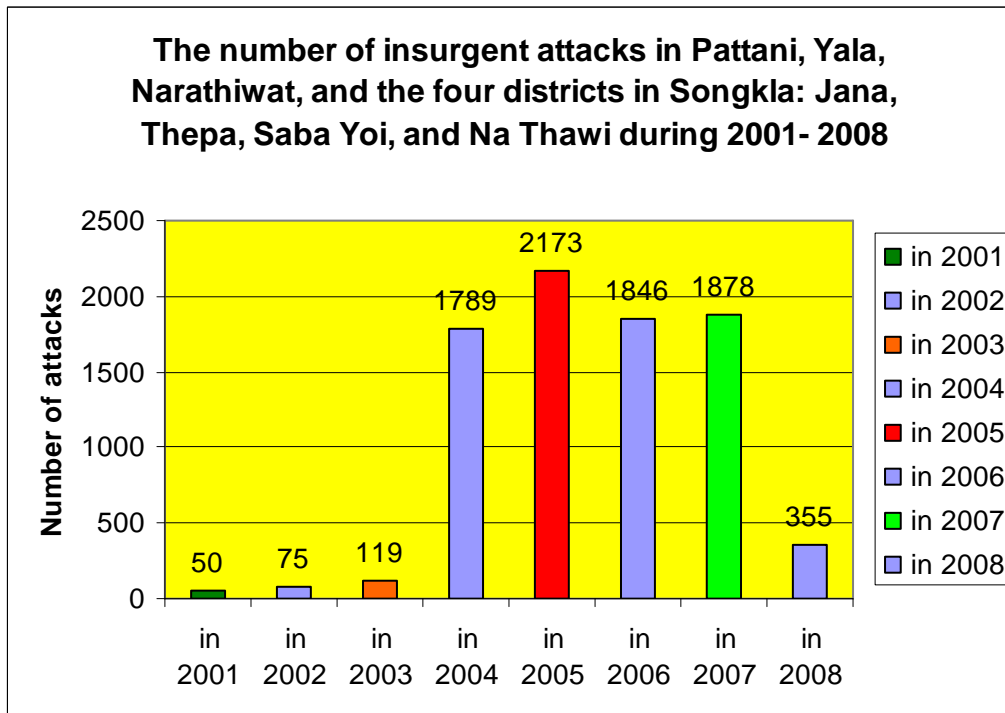


Figure 1

Source: Data from International Crisis Group (ICG 2005a, p.16) and Deep South Watch (Bangkok Pundit 2008b, p.1-2); the data in 2008 is only the first six months.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the insurgency in the Deep South and to define a policy to mitigate it. The perspective of this paper is from that of the Thai government. The paper is divided into three parts: (1) the first part examines the root causes of the insurgency and its development; (2) the second part assesses the failure of Thai government policies; and (3) the third part suggests alternative policies to mitigate the insurgency within 10 years.

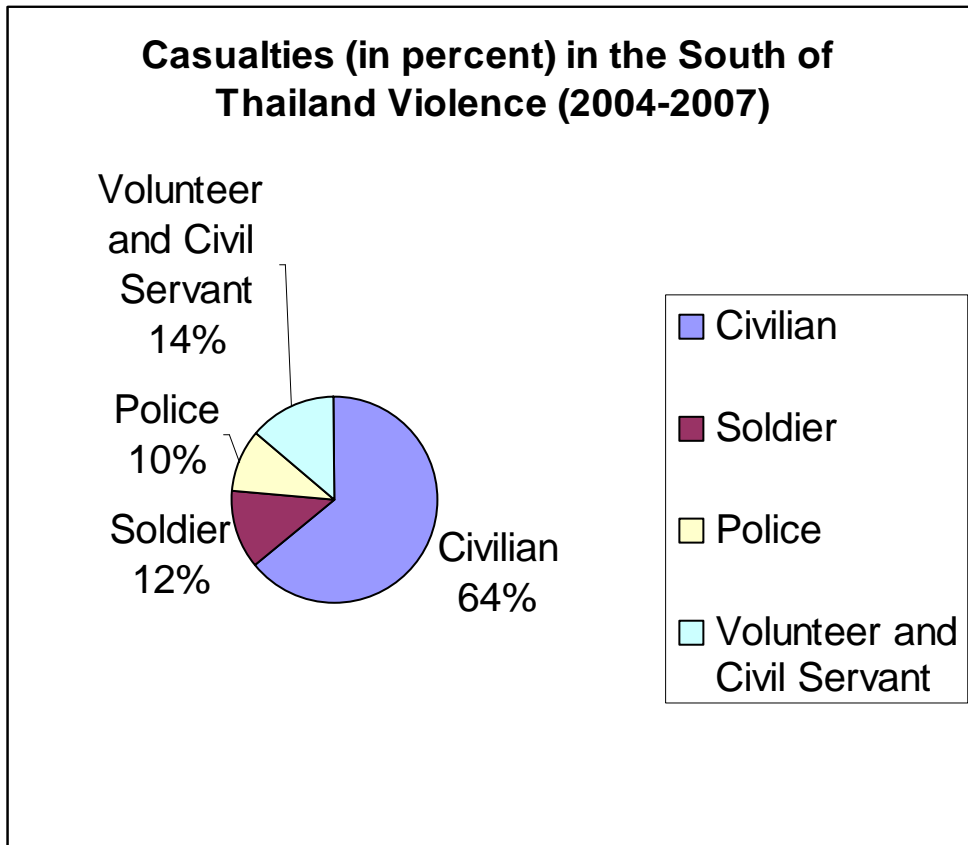


Figure 2

Source: Data from Deep South Watch (DSW 2008, p.1)

PART ONE

THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE INSURGENCY AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

To find out the root causes of the insurgency, one needs to examine when and why the conflict occurred. It is not surprising that the sources of the conflict emerged from a political grievance—a desire to change the system. Therefore, to understand the root causes of the insurgency and its development, the history of the conflict between Thais and Malay Muslims need to be examined.

ROOT CAUSES

The Siam-Patani conflict has three root causes: (1) the desire to have political independence of the Patani kingdom; (2) the consolidation of the Kingdom of Siam in 1909; and (3) the perceived threat to the Malay Muslim identity from the Thai assimilation policy.

Firstly, many conflicts between Siam and Patani existed throughout Thai history. The cause of conflicts was that Patani desired to be free of Siamese suzerainty while Siam wanted to keep it as a vassal state. Whenever Siam was weak, Patani fought against it to gain independence. There were at least four major conflicts between Siam and Patani from the Ayutthaya period to the Bangkok period (see Appendix A). Even after Siam conquered Patani and absorbed it into the Siamese kingdom together with Kedah, Kelantan, and Trengganu in 1785, the violence in Patani remained. These conflicts in the history have been used to rekindle primordial violence, hatred, and enmity among Malay Muslims to fight against the Thai state which in turn has created distrust and suspicion between the Thai government and Malay Muslims.

Secondly, the consolidation of the Kingdom of Siam in 1909 was problematic. Fearing to lose Patani to British imperialism, Siam began to annex it in 1902 (Aphornsuvan 2003, p.14). Britain forced Siam to cede Kelantan, Perak, Kedah and Perlis; however, it recognized Thai suzerainty over Patani in a formal border treaty of 1909. Moreover, the King Rama V removed all sultans and appointed Thai officials instead. Since then the Malay Muslims in the south, except Satun, began to revolt against Thai authorities (Aphornsuvan, 2004, p.2).

Thirdly, the Thai assimilation policy threatened Malay Muslim identity. The Siam government began to educate the Malay Muslims to speak and read Thai under the Primary Education Act in 1921 (Harish 2006, p.52). Why was learning Thai a problem? It is because to be Malay is to be Muslim—the two cannot be separated. By learning Thai, Malay-Muslims felt the Thai authorities were trying to detach religion from ethnicity. The problem intensified when the Phibun administration (1938-1944) promoted Thai nationality. All people in Thailand, including Malay Muslims, were required to speak Thai and wear Thai dress. In 1947, Haji Sulong Tomina—the prominent Malay Muslim religious leader—opposed the Thai assimilation policy and demanded seven rights for Malay Muslims (see Appendix B). In the eyes of the Thai government, these demands were unacceptable. However, Haji Sulong continued his movement until the Khuang administration (November 1947-April 1948) backed by Phibun decided to arrest him on January 16, 1948 (Aphornsuvan 2004, p.40). Consequently, more than 1,000 villagers took part in the “Dusun Nyor” rebellion. After six months of suppression, the situation was brought under control with more than 400 casualties. Consequently, nine separatist movements were established to resist the Thai government (see details in Appendix C).

THE INSURGENCY DEVELOPMENT

Insurgency during the 1990s. The violence in the Deep South has occurred continuously since the Dusun Nyor rebellion until General Prem Tinsulanonda became Prime Minister (PM) in

1980 and initiated the “Tai Rom Yen” policy (Peaceful and Stable South) which completely reoriented the Thai counterinsurgency approach. This policy employed military operation under the guidance of politics. Five conditions for peace were implemented and two major organizations were established:

(1) According to Croissant (2005, p.23), the five conditions for peace were the following:

(a) Malay Muslim cultural rights and religious freedoms were supported; (b) an amnesty was offered to attract insurgents to resume normal lives; (c) economic development plans were implemented; (d) the relations between Thai and Malaysian authorities were intensified; and (e) the security along the border was enhanced.

(2) The Southern Border Provincial Administration Center (SBPAC) and the Civilian-Police-Military Unit 43 (CPM-43) were established within the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC)—which was responsible for implementing the national security policies issued by the National Security Council (NSC). According to Storey (2008, p.34), the SBPAC had five responsibilities: (a) it governed the southern provinces directly; (b) it monitored the implementation of socioeconomic development projects; (c) it provided the interface between central government and local community leaders; (d) it coordinated with all government agencies to alliviate all form of grievances with regard to Malay Muslim; and (e) it had the power to remove officials who were corrupt and incompetent. The CPM-43 was accountable for interagency cooperation and intelligence gathering in the Deep South and it served as a monitoring system which combined operations between military, civil and police. Pojar (2005, p.24) pointed out that “the 1990s was a decade of relative peace in the southernmost provinces. Many of PM Prem’s initiatives in the previous decade had been proven effective.”

In contrast, Dr Wan Kadir Che Man—the official leader of the Patani BERSATU group (Barisan Bersatu Kemerdekaan Patani) and the coalition of Muslim separatist organizations based in southern Thailand—argues that “The quiet ten years were really a period of training for

those separatist groups that preferred the path of violence” (Noor 2005, p.2). With hindsight, Dr Wan Kadir Che Man’s argument seems to be more accurate and it was confirmed by the militant interviewed by Human Rights Watch (HRW 2007, pp.20-22). The militant explained that during this 10-year period of peace the insurgents enjoyed freedom to indoctrinate their ideology—the aim of which as to liberate Patani from Thailand which had invaded, occupied, enslaved, suppressed, and destroying the ethnic Malay identity—into young Malay Muslims in ponohs where Malay Muslims send their children to stay and learn Islam.

Insurgency during the 2000s. During 2001 to 2008, the violence occurred in systematic order; its plans were sophisticated; its operations were guerrilla warfare which included terrorism as its subset. Moreover, the insurgents permitted their militants to kill Kafirs (simply Buddhists) or Munafigs—Malay Muslim who collaborate with the Thai government or fail to cooperate in its struggle whether they are combatants or civilians (Gunawan 2007, pp.11-12; HRW 2007, p.3). To understand the insurgent development, one must examine what the insurgents did and why. The insurgents had five major goals in their campaign against the Thai government during 2001-2008:

(1) **Target the Local Police and Government Agents.** The first and foremost task of the insurgency is to eradicate local police and suspected government intelligence agents who worked for the army in the Deep South. Although many army agents were killed by police due to Thaksin waging war on narcotics, they were killed by insurgents as well. The insurgents also assassinated local police as revenge for their perceived abuse of power. There were many police killed during 2001-2002: 19 policemen were assassinated; and another seven policemen were wounded in assassination attempts (Virtual Information Center 2002, pp.19-20). Local police and government agents were main targets due to these two reasons:

a) Local Police and government agents worked closely with local people.

Whenever something went wrong, they would be able to gain information from their local

people without difficulties. If they had functioned effectively, the insurgents would have had little chance to survive. Therefore, it was a prerequisite for the insurgents to target local police and government agents first before they could escalate a high intensity of violence.

b) The insurgents fed on the Thai security force by taking fifty-four rifles and ammunition after attacking police outposts during 2001-2002. The insurgents needed weapons and ammunition for their militants who were trained during the 1990s and ready to conduct violence.

(2) **Provoke the Thai authorities.** After the Thai government intelligence became ineffective, the insurgents escalated the violence in the Deep South by attacking and raiding the Thai military camps, police outposts and Buddhist temples. The insurgents made these incidents appear as if they were done on the behalf of Malay Muslims to provoke the Thai authorities to retaliate indiscriminately against Malay Muslims which in turn alienated them from the government. At the same time, the insurgents could seize weapons from their victims. There were five major incidents showing a well-coordinate plan of the insurgents to provoke the Thai authorities during 2002-2004 (see Appendix D)

(3) **Rejuvenate Malay Nationalism.** The insurgents planned to rejuvenate the “Dusun Nyor” rebellion for four particular purposes: (a) to rekindle Patani nationalism; (b) to resume its struggle for independence; (c) to hope that Malay Muslims would revolt against the Thai authorities; and (d) to anger the Thai authorities in the hope that they would use brutalizing force indiscriminately against Malay Muslims, which in turn would further consolidate their nationalism. The greater the grievances were, the higher the Malay Muslims support was for the insurgency. There were two important incidents which occurred in 2004:

a) **The Krue Se Mosque Incident.** On 28th April 2004, 15 security outposts and the police stations in Yala, Songkhla, and Patani were attacked simultaneously by the insurgents; 107 insurgents and 5 officials were killed, 17 insurgents arrested. The most tragic

incident that day was the siege of the Krue Se Mosque during which 32 insurgents were killed inside because they would not surrender and fought against the Thai authority. A Malay language book entitled *Ber Jihad di Patani*—“a holy war of liberation for the kingdom of Patani from colonialists” (Liow 2006, p.100)—was found on one of the bodies of the 32 militants killed (Jane’s Intelligence Review 2004, p.15).

b) **The Tak Bai Incident.** On 25th October 2004, another incident occurred when 2,000 Malay Muslim men surrounded the police station at Tak Bai in Narathiwat. They demanded the police release six suspects who had been charged with “criminal association and embezzlement” (ICG 2005a, p.27). Over 300 protestors were arrested; 9 demonstrators were killed in the clash and 78 protestors suffocated to death as a result of unsuitable transportation from Tak Bai to Pattani (Pojar 2005, p.63).

(4) **Take an Opportunistic Recruitment.** Al-Qaida called all Muslims to wage global jihad against the US in 1998, but it was the 9/11 incident that changed the world security environment. The US responded to the attacks with military invasions of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. Thailand supported the US logistically and sent an engineering battalion and some medics each to Afghanistan and Iraq (Chambers 2004, pp.465-469). The insurgents took this opportunity to recruit Malay Muslims who angered Thailand’s support for the GWOT (Global War on Terror) and US-led operations in Afghanistan and Iraq as a war against Islam.

(5) **Maintaining its Momentum of Violence.** The insurgency maintained its momentum of violence in order to demonstrate to the international community that the Thai government is not capable of stopping human rights violations. From 2004 to 2007, the number of attacks remained high. The insurgency will continue its momentum of violence and be patient until the Thai government consents to initiate negotiations with the insurgents or the international community decides to intervene. These were the strategies that many

nationalist-separatist movements often use to achieve their aims; for example, IRA in Ireland during 1916-1921 (Kee 2000, pp.548-752), Irgun and Stern Gang in Israel during 1931-1949 (Pettiford & Harding, 2004, pp.29-31), and FLN in Algeria during 1954-1962 (Oballance 1967, pp.202-220). There were six major incidents in the Deep South during 2005-2008 that created international concerns (see Appendix E).

Finally, the picture that the insurgents have been trying to paint is visualized. However, a good policy cannot be proposed without learning from a past failure. Therefore, the next part will assess the Thai government's policy and its failure.

PART TWO

THE ASSESSMENT OF THE THAI GOVERNMENT POLICY AND ITS FAILURE

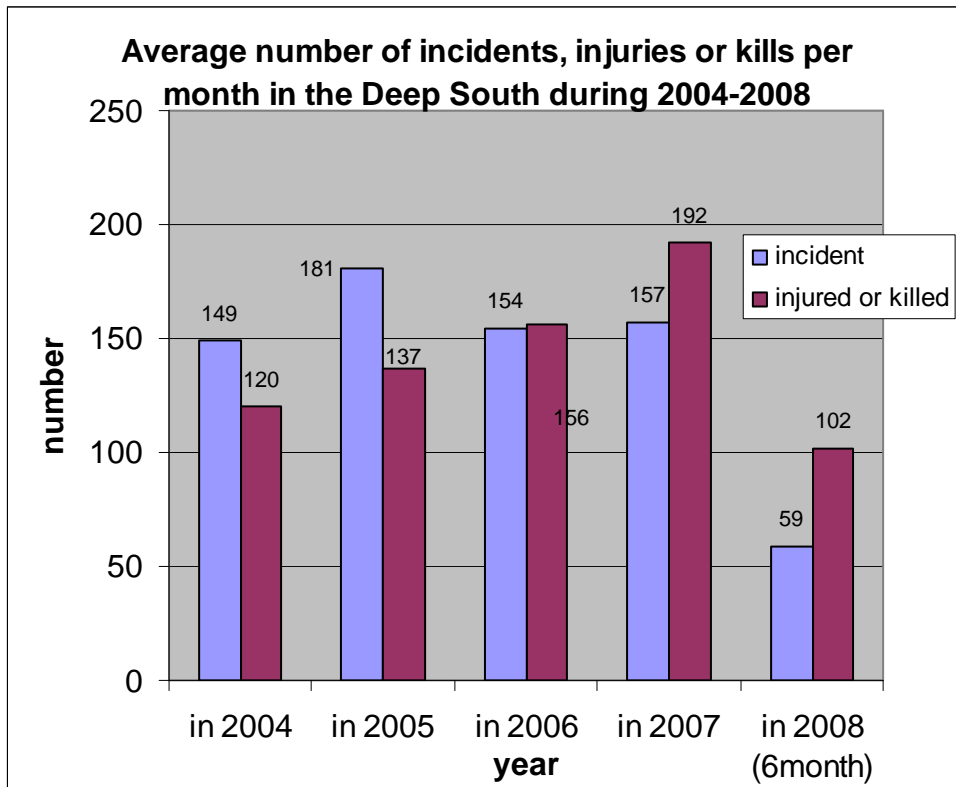


Figure 3

Source: Data from DSW (Bangkok Pundit 2008b, pp.1-2)

Thaksin's Policy. In 2004, there were unprecedented number of attacks on the military, the police, and schools throughout the Deep South. The Thaksin government responded to the insurgent aggression with “a tooth for a tooth” and a policy of suppression beginning in April 2004 (Bangkok Pundit 2008c, p.1). Martial Law was imposed on the Deep South. There were military searches of many Islamic schools and hundreds of suspects were arrested. However, the number of insurgent attacks was increasing. During the Thaksin administration (January 2004 to September 2006), the average number of people injured or

killed per month by the insurgents continued increasing: 120 in 2004, 137 in 2005, and 156 in 2006 (see Figure 3). The total number of people injured or killed in 32 months of conflict during the Thaksin administration was 4,235.

The Failure of the Thaksin Policy. Due to the failure of strategic assessment, the Thaksin policy created the following strategic issues:

(1) **Mishandling of the Krue Se Mosque and Tak Bai Incidents.** The Thaksin administration did not realize that Krue Se Mosque and Tak Bai incidents were the insurgent's plan to rejuvenate the "Dusun Nyor" rebellion in order to rekindle Patani nationalism and to resume its struggle for independence. Although the Krue Se Mosque operation by the military was necessary, it must be explained to the public. In contrast, at Tak Bai, many detainee deaths were unnecessary. The Thaksin government and the commander must take responsibility instead of blaming the deaths on weakness due to religious fasting (The Nation cited in Storey 2008, p.42). These two incidents intensified a sense of injustice among Malay Muslims; consequently, the insurgents were able to recruit Malay Muslims to perpetrate the violence in the Deep South to an increasing level.

(2) **Misguidance.** The Thaksin administration was misguided in its policy. It did not recognize the root cause of the conflicts, but preferred to blame the crisis on criminal and drug activities (Vatikiotis 2006, p.37). This misguided policy impacted upon the Thai overarching strategy which mismatched to the actual problem—that is deeply rooted in political history and ethnicity.

(3) **Intelligence Failure and Interagency Rivalry.** The Thaksin administration made a mistake in dismantling the SBPAC and CPM-43 which created two strategic problems. Firstly, it created an intelligence vacuum during the transferal. All agents of the CPM-43 were dismissed, and some of the agents who were involved in drugs were killed during the Thaksin administration waging war on narcotics. Since its intelligence failed, its

counterinsurgency was ineffective. Secondly, it created interagency rivalry between the army and the police when all security issues were transferred from army responsibility to the police (Liow 2006, p.105).

(4) **Escalation of the Grievances.** The trust between the Malay Muslim community and the government authorities disintegrated due to the government's suppression policy. Under the umbrella of the 2005 Executive Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situations (Section 17), Thai government officials "shall not be subject to civil, criminal or disciplinary liability" arising from their duty (AsianLII 2005, p.6). This allowed officials to brutalize Malay Muslims which created many grievances. By November 2005, the Thai officials were not able to access many villages in Narathiwat designated as a "red zone" where the people viewed the Thai government as a threat to them (Vatikiotis 2006, p.38).

(5) **Distrust and Hatred.** The problem of distrust and hatred between Malay Muslims and Buddhists became wider as a result of the inability of Thai authority to protect Buddhist monks, Imams, and teachers who are symbolic in the identity of Thai Buddhists and Malay Muslims. The insurgents decapitated some Buddhist monks; assassinated Imams and teachers throughout the Deep South. There are three reasons why they are insurgent prime targets: (a) to drive a wedge between Buddhist and Malay Muslims; (b) to eradicate government collaborators; and (c) to deliberately use killings to create anger, distrust and hatred among Thais, Malay Muslims, and the government authorities;

(6) **Security Failure.** The authorities failed to provide adequate security for the people. The insurgents were able to operate freely to kill civilians anywhere, on the road, in markets, in restaurants, and even in their homes. The result has been that people in the south live in fear. Many villagers have been forced not to collaborate with government authorities. If they do, they would probably be killed by the insurgents (HRW 2007, p.21).

(7) **Counter-Propaganda Failure.** The Thaksin administration failed to counteract the insurgent propaganda. The crackdowns at the Krue Se Mosque and Tak Bai were used for effective propaganda purposes to demonstrate the repressive policy of the Thai government against Malay Muslims. The insurgents were able to spread their rumors of the Thai government's repressive policy against Malay Muslims. This disinformation was used to justify their two major actions: firstly, their killing of Buddhists and teachers for the revenge of the assassination of Imams and Malay Muslims which they blamed on the Thai security forces; and secondly, their legitimate claim to represent the Malay Muslims.

(8) **Reconciliation Failure.** The Thaksin administration failed to implement the reconciliation policy provided by the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC). In March 2005, Thaksin appointed the respected former PM Anand Panyarachun to lead the NRC and to arrange a dialogue with Malay Muslim intellectuals and leaders. The NRC provided many recommendations based on resolutions made during the dialogue process to calm down the situation (Vatikiotis 2006, p.37), but these recommendations were ignored.

(9) **International Support Failure.** In the area of international relations, the Thaksin administration failed to build good relations with Malaysia. Instead of seeking its help, it accused Malaysia of supporting the insurgents. Malaysia is one of the keys to success in mitigating the insurgency. Thailand needs coordination with Malaysia so that the insurgents cannot use its territory as a safe haven.

(10) **Poor Civil-Military Relation.** The Thaksin administration had poor civil-military relations. Storey (2008, p.41) pointed out that "Thaksin put his military commanders under intense pressure to apprehend those responsible for the raids and prevent further acts of violence." The consequence was that the poor relations created a policy-strategy mismatch which confused operations on the ground.

(11) **Lack of the Rule of Law.** The Thaksin administration did not abide by the rule of law. Donnell (2004, p.33) pointed out that the rule of law exists if a state institution “fairly applies” a law “without taking into consideration class, status, or relative power held by the parties.” Most of the Thai police, military, and security personnel did not realize the importance of the rule of law; as a result, they tended to use the law to justify extrajudicial killing and mistreatment of detainees.

(12) **Training Deficiency.** Thai security personnel lacked proper training in the Jawi language, and the cultural and social characteristics of the Malay community before being deployed in the Deep South; as a result, they were prone to misconduct and misunderstanding of Malay Muslims.

THE SURAYUD POLICY AND ITS FAILURE

The Surayud Policy. The Surayud administration changed the approach of trying to solve the insurgency problem from heavy-handedness to a pledge to follow reconciliation after October 2006. The Surayud administration policy tried to correct strategic problems created by the Thaksin policy. Moreover, the intelligence infrastructure such as the SBPAC and CPM-43 were reestablished and were assigned under the ISOC. The Commander in Chief of the Army resumed control of the ISOC. On 2nd November 2006, PM Surayud made an apology to the people of the Deep South for the injustices perpetrated by the Thaksin administration. The Prime Minister also ended the practice of blacklisting insurgent suspects and released five detainees on bail. In spite of the reduction in violence, the insurgents responded with a higher number of attacks. During nine months (from September 2006 to May 2007) of this policy alone, the average number of people injured or killed by insurgent attacks was 219.44 per month which was higher than the average number during the Thaksin administration—for 32 months during the Thaksin administration (January 2004-August

2006), the average number of people injured or killed per month was 132.59. One might wonder why violence was increased after the reconciliation policy was initiated, but of course, this policy would win public support away from the insurgency. Therefore, the insurgents had to undermine the policy by increasing their operations to provoke overreaction by the Thai authorities.

Defending the Southern Border. By June 2007, Surayud began to realize that the soft-handed policy alone did not work. The Surayud administration launched a counterinsurgency offensive called “Defending the Southern Border.” According to Askew & Sivarawiroj (2007, p.2), the aims of this operation were to “separate insurgent leaders from communities, disperse their networks and replace them where possible with new village leaders who supported the government and defended the communities against future infiltration.” The operation also led to the arrest of 2,000 suspects. After the counterinsurgency operation was implemented, the number of people killed or injured decreased sharply during June to December 2007 (see Figure 4).

The Failure of the Surayud Policy. Although the Surayud policy resolved many problems, it had three strategic failures:

(1) **No Clear Political End State.** Interestingly, Storey (2008, p.44) assessed the Surayud policy as having “failed to design a comprehensive political solution to the conflict.” He pointed out that the Surayud administration rejected “autonomy or devolution for the south. . . . The real is that the Thai elite historically have viewed autonomy as the first step toward secession.” If a political means of resolution is rejected, violence is the only answer for the insurgents. Thailand needs to set a political end state which is trying to achieve a long and durable peace rather than to win the campaign against the insurgents.

(2) **Security Failure.** The counterinsurgency in the last seven months of the Surayud administration was able to reduce the number of insurgent attacks, but the number of people

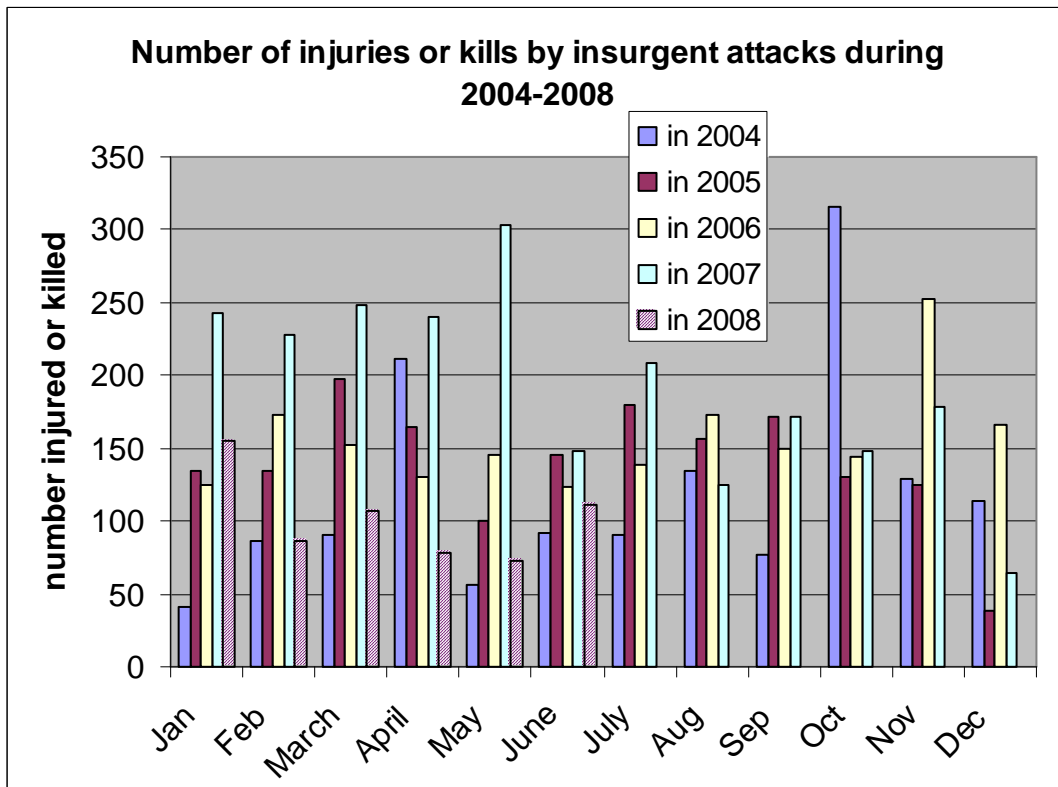


Figure 4

Source: Data from DSW (Bangkok Pundit 2008b, pp.1-2); see detail in Appendix F.

injured or killed rose to 155 in January 2008, and down to 86 in February 2008. This high number of casualties indicated the failure of the Surayud policy. Although PM Surayud tried to apply Sir Robert Thompson's counterinsurgency—clearing, holding, winning, and won—to the Deep South, Surayud's policy has not achieved the “holding” phase yet in which Pelli (1990, p.12) explained that the government has to “eliminate the insurgent political infrastructure” and prevent it from reforming. Once the government has reestablished itself, it must begin strong efforts to provide an improved social and economic environment to win hearts and minds.

(3) **Failure to Win Hearts and Minds.** The insurgents used terror to secure their public support. The strategy of winning “the hearts and minds” of the Malay Muslims cannot

be used effectively to gain support from Malay Muslims under the terror. Winning hearts and minds can be used effectively only after the security of the Malay Muslims is established. It is expected that the insurgents will escalate their terror—even kill more Malay Muslims who are suspected government collaborators—to secure their support.

THE SAMAK POLICY AND ITS FAILURE

The Samak Policy. PM Samak was inaugurated on 29th January 2008. His administration continued implementing the Surayud policy which “included the important matter of resolving and healing the problems in the three southern border provinces, leading towards peaceful co-existence and harmony among the local people, and developing the economic potential of the country’s South so that it becomes a significant national economic base” (Samak 2008, p.2). However, PM Samak refused to give autonomy to the Deep South because of the fear of its separation in the future (Askew 2008, p.201).

The Failure of the Samak Policy. Although the Samak administration continued implementing the Surayud policy, the casualties per attack have been increasing. It would be misguided to assume that the violence was diminished by judging only the number of insurgent attacks, because attacks in 2008 were much more lethal. Each attack during 2006-2008 resulted in more casualties than the attacks during 2004-2005 (see Figure 5).

The tendency towards increased efficiency is growing and it could be expected that the number of insurgent attacks will decrease, but the casualties will increase under the government offensive campaign against the insurgents. The situation in the Deep South was still prone to violence under the Samak administration because of the following facts:

(1) **Ineffective Counterinsurgency.** Although the number of people killed or wounded was reduced in the Deep South due to the increasing number of security personnel—almost 65,000 in the counterinsurgency operation in 2008, the BRN-C insurgent

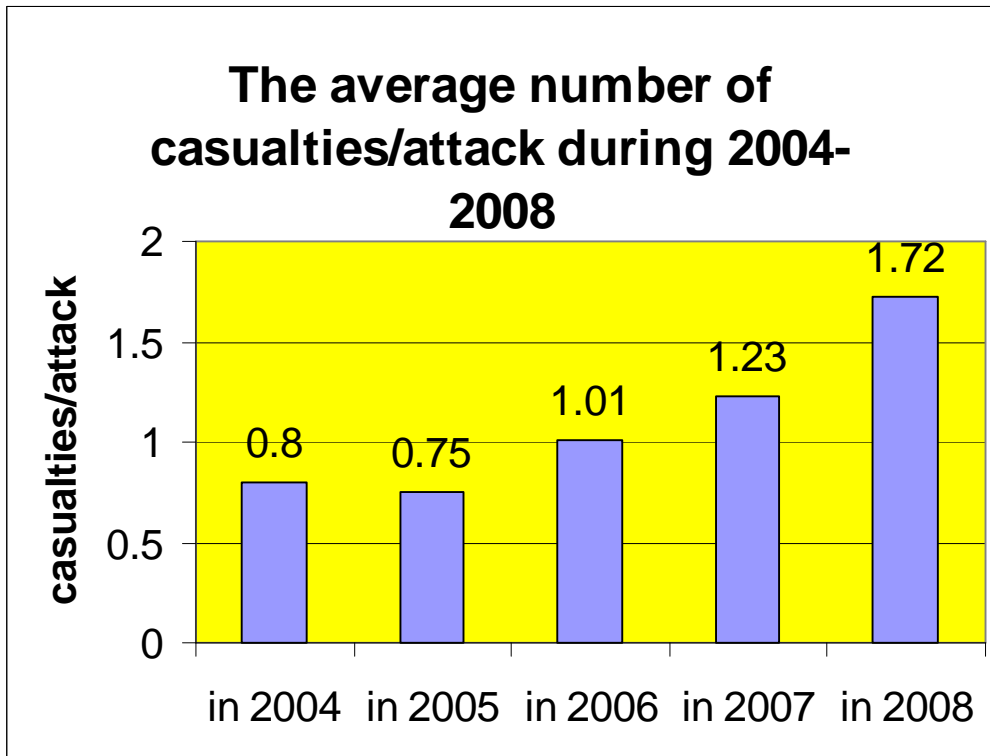


Figure 5

Source: Data from DSW (Bangkok Pundit 2008b)

network remained strong in the border provinces. According to Manipluek (Askew 2008, p.208), the insurgents were continuing the indoctrination of young Malay Muslims who would be recruited to increase the insurgency in the Deep South. He explained that “Military cordon and sweep operations had only led to groups being further pushed underground to wait for favorable opportunities to attack.” The strength of its will remains strong and the Samak administration did not mitigate this strength. Therefore, the counterinsurgency of the Samak administration was ineffective.

(2) Failure to End the Insurgency Politically. The root causes of the conflict continue to feed the hatred and enmity of the Malay Muslims. The insurgents always exploit that hatred and enmity to further their own policy, to fight for independence/autonomy. If

this policy is not resolved politically, then of course the violence is more likely to continue. The only way to end the violence is to negotiate and talk in order to find the solution in which both sides win.

(3) **Failure to Provide Security.** The security of the local people in the Deep South is the highest priority for the Samak administration. However it has failed to provide local people with real security. The violent situation in the southern border provinces had improved but the number of people killed or injured was still unacceptably high, 610 people injured and killed during the first six month of 2008.

In short, the reconciliation and counterinsurgency policy, which the Thai governments have employed for the last four and a half years, are not enough on their own to reduce the level of violence without addressing the remedy to the root causes of the insurgents. The next part of the paper will, therefore, make use of this failure to design the alternative policy to end the violence in southern Thailand.

PART THREE

THE FOUR-TRACK MITIGATION POLICY AND THE IMPLEMENTATION

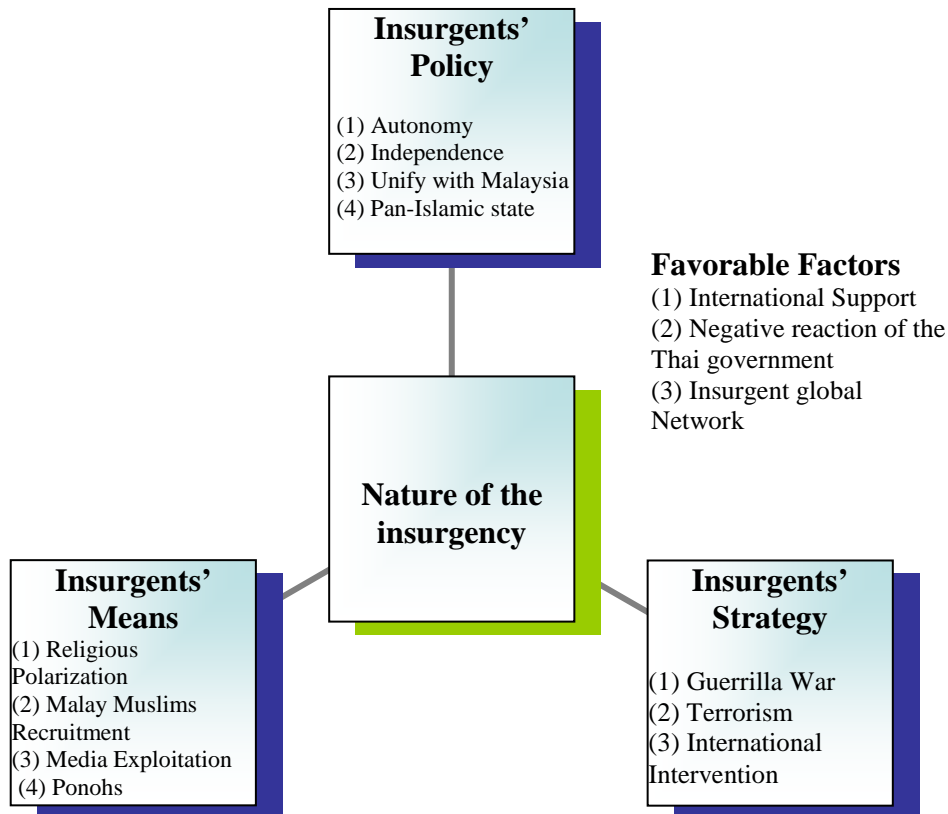


Figure 6

The nature of the insurgency and its favorable factors in the Deep South

THE FOUR-TRACK MITIGATION POLICY

Insurgency in southern Thailand does not occur in a vacuum, but it has developed from four dominant tendencies (see Figure 6): (1) its policy; (2) its strategy; (3) its means; and (4) its favorable factors (Howard & Paret 1989, p.89; Handle 2002, p.109). It is like fire

which needs oxygen, fuel, heat, and a suitable environment to keep the flame burning. To extinguish it, one simply cut off one of its “needs”; however, it might flare up whenever one of its “needs” is rejuvenated. Therefore, all of its required components need to be eliminated to prevent the fire from flaring up; all components must continue to be monitored to guarantee that the violence will never reoccur.

For the last four and a half years, the Thai governments have failed to solve the Deep South problems because they have tried to tackle only some of the dominant tendencies—specifically its strategy, its means and its favorable factors, but have always neglected to mitigate the insurgents’ policy—motives and objectives. If the four dominant tendencies are not mitigated concurrently, a long lasting peace in the Deep South will not be possible. This part of the paper, therefore, proposes a four-track policy to mitigate the four dominant tendencies to end the violence in southern Thailand.

THE FIRST TRACK: MITIGATE THE INSURGENTS’ POLICY

Although the insurgency conceals its motives and objectives from the public, they are revealed by historical research and critical analysis. According to Upward, the insurgents have four possible goals (also see the goals of the separatist movement in Appendix C):

- (1) To be recognized as a minority that varies in culture and language and therefore requires more autonomy within the Thai state.
- (2) To gain independence as a separate state or sovereignty, representing a return to the status of what was once the Sultanate that existed prior to the arrival of colonization.
- (3) Unification with the Malaysian Federated States; or
- (4) The incorporation of the southern Thai Malay states into a Pan-Islamic state. (Upward 2006, p.8)

Interestingly, Dr. Wan Kadir Che Man, the leader of the Patani BERSATU called upon the Thai government to decentralize state power to make allowances for local government and limited self-control for the Deep South in accordance with the 1997 Thai Constitution (Noor

2005, p.7). To remove some of the heat from the insurgency without violating the Thai Constitution, the Thai government should consider his demand seriously, while the other goals towards separation from Thailand must be mitigated. Therefore, the Thai government must adopt the following policies:

(1) **Build Trust and Mitigate Enmity.** The first and foremost task is to build trust between Thais and Malay Muslims while at the same time removing enmity. Without trust and goodwill, peaceful process of conflict resolution will not succeed. Thailand should respect Malay Muslims and should never try to change their identity by any policy. Malay Muslim culture, the Jawi language, and the religion of the people must be promoted and preserved as national cultural property. An amnesty for all separatists needs to be considered if working for a peaceful resolution is to be sincerely undertaken by both sides. The history of the Patani kingdom must be studied in schools and universities throughout the country. Its history and its struggle for independence must be taught and understood by Thai people in order to prevent the conflict of the past and present from casting its shadow over the future. Thais and Malay Muslims should accept past mistakes in the history and try to improve Thai-Malay Muslim relations to build peace in the future. Patani should be promoted as an Islamic study centre for Southeast Asian so that all Thais can be proud of the Patani kingdom as well as the Thai kingdom.

(2) **Mitigate the Insurgents' Will.** The insurgency's power is the product of the two inseparable factors: (a) its policy—the strength of its will; and (b) the means at its disposal (Howard & Paret 1989, p.77). To weaken the insurgency, the two factors must be mitigated simultaneously; and the latter factor will be discussed in the third-track policy. To mitigate the insurgents' policy, the Thai government must adopt a peaceful process of conflict resolution through negotiation. Dialogue must be conducted between the Thai government and the representatives of the Malay Muslims—Members of Parliament, Senators from the

Deep South, religious leaders, religious teachers, Imams and the separatist movement leaders. These leaders can articulate what the Malay Muslims want.

(3) **Understand the Insurgent Position.** Before the peaceful dialogue begins, the Thai government has to understand the insurgent position. If not, it could make irrational and incorrect choices to solve the conflict. For Thailand, the four following facts need to be considered:

Firstly, to impose the central government's will on all Malay Muslims is an impossible task. The insurgents have a strong religion, culture, and language. An assimilation policy or any kind of economic development policy, or even political participation cannot change them into Thais because they are proud to be Malay Muslims. Although today Thailand recognizes and permits all Malay Muslims to enjoy full freedom of worship, culture, and language, the insurgents perceive that the Thai government is trying to eliminate their national identity. Thailand must demonstrate clearly that Thai and Malay Muslims can live together peacefully and enjoy freedom of religion in the same country.

Secondly, the Thai armed forces cannot render the insurgents powerless because of three reasons: (1) the strength of their will is hidden in the insurgents and it is not easy to identify individual insurgents because they blend in among the Malay Muslim community; (2) the insurgents have demonstrated that they are willing to die for their political goals, and the higher is the number of the insurgents who die, the greater is their support from the Malay Muslim; and (3) the Thai armed forces cannot kill Malay Muslims indiscriminately because most Malay Muslims are not insurgents and prefer to live peacefully.

Thirdly, the insurgency in the Deep South is an unconventional war. It is a war by non-state actors against the state. No clear governmental body of the insurgents controls the magnitude and duration of the violence; consequently, the violence tends to increase to the maximum according the Clausewitz's "grammar of war" (Howard & Paret 1989, p.605). If

Thailand recognizes the insurgent leaders, they would take responsibility to control the magnitude and duration of the violence by their policy—purpose of the violence. This is the only possible way that the violence in the Deep South can be controlled.

Fourthly, there are three possible ways that the violence in the Deep South will end: (1) the insurgents win; (2) the state wins; and (3) both insurgents and the state win. For the first, the insurgents must fight with a huge degree of violence for a long duration. In addition, Thailand would be forced to cede the Deep South to the UN intervention. This condition would occur only if Thailand violates the internationally accepted standards of human rights. However, this condition has a slight chance because Thais recognizes those standards. The second might occur temporarily with a high cost; that is if many civilians, soldiers, and police were killed and wounded. However, the Thai government would not win the peace and the Deep South would still be prone to violence because the root causes of the conflict would still exist. The third might occur if both sides make the right choice—beginning a peaceful process of conflict resolution by negotiation. In this case, both sides might find a win-win solution without fighting which is the “supreme excellence.” As Sun Tzu said, “Winning without fighting is the supreme excellence.”

(4) Understand the Thai Position. For the insurgents, the following three conditions need to be considered; if they are not, the insurgents might not achieve their aims:

Firstly, Thailand cannot give independence to the Deep South because of the following facts:

a) If Thailand allows the Deep South to separate from Thailand, its border has to change radically, not only on land but also in its maritime territory, an outcome which Thailand would never accept.

b) The Thai government cannot make a decision by itself. The whole population of Thailand has to make the decision. If there is no consensus among the Thai people and the

Thai government grants independence to the Deep South, there will be riots not only in the other parts of the country but also in the Deep South. The stakes are so high that this choice will never be considered by Thais. If the insurgents do not understand these facts, violence will continue.

c) One may argue that neither of these previous reasons is particularly valid. The main argument against independence for the south is that it would encourage other parts of Thailand, e.g. Isan, to pursue independence as well. Indeed, there is no such problem in the other parts of Thailand except the Deep South. Particularly, Isan people have Thai identity in all aspects: culture, religious, language, belief, and so forth, and so on. There is no reason for Isan to be separated from Thailand.

Secondly, violence alone cannot compel all Thai people to carry out the insurgents' will. The Thai Armed Forces are much stronger than the insurgents. It would be very difficult for the insurgents to win by direct confrontation. The separatists need to get political support from the international community particularly from the UN. If the insurgents fight with unlimited means such as terror, and sway close to the concept of global jihad, they will never be supported by the UN or the international community. The only way that the insurgents might get political support is to adopt a process of peaceful conflict resolution instead of employing terrorism. Fighting, if not controlled by its limited purpose, would never achieve its goal. The insurgents must fight with legitimacy under the international law of war which does not allow for the targeting of civilians.

Thirdly, if Thailand adopted a reconciliation stance, maintaining the rule of law, and respecting international human rights, it would be difficult for the international community to intervene. In contrast, if human rights are violated by the insurgents, the legitimacy of their claim to become independent or autonomous will become discredited.

(5) **Eliminate the Root Causes.** All difficulties, root causes, grievances, and conditions for peace must be addressed in the peaceful process of conflict resolution. The objective of this process is to find a win-win solution which is fair and acceptable to the Thais and the Malay Muslims in order to create long-term peace and stability in the Deep South. A resolution of the conflict can occur only if two sides are willing to compromise. One of the acceptable solutions is to give more autonomy to the Deep South which was proposed by Dr. Wan Kadir Che Man. Thailand must consider sincerely and seriously some form of provincial autonomy for the region in accordance with the 2007 Thai constitutional principle of self-government—Section 78 states that the state shall “decentralize powers to local government for the purpose of independence and self-determination of local affairs, encourage the local governments to participate in implementation of fundamental State policies, develop local public utilities, facilities and economic, as well as fundamental technology infrastructure thoroughly and equally in all area of the country, including to develop provincial governments to be ready to become large-scale administrative organizations by minding aspirations of the people in such provinces (BTIC 2007, p.39)—while Chapter XIV provide a framework for local government (BTIC 2007, pp.198-206). The Thai government should allow Malay Muslims to have some form of political party so that they can express their concerns through legitimate means. If their will is able to be achieved by political means, violence is less likely to be chosen.

Although the 1997 Constitution allow the provincial government to be more autonomous, the Thai government failed to implement it for three reasons. Firstly, the structures of the centralized administration—the national administration, regional (provincial) administration, and local administration—have been the major barrier against the change. Secondly, with a long history as a unitary kingdom, the Thai elites who were evolved in the centralized administration were unwilling to change. They enjoy their power at the provincial and

district (Amphur) administration where a governor and a head of district (75 governors and 877 heads of district) are appointed by the Interior Minister (Sopchokchai 2001, p.2). Thirdly, the Thai government does not trust the Deep South due to a fear of secession. To break off these barriers, the structure change, the personnel reform, and the trust must be managed and addressed in a Decentralization Act which the Thai government must promulgate for the Deep South.

THE SECOND TRACK: MITIGATE THE INSURGENTS' STRATEGY

Although the root causes of the conflict can be resolved politically through the first track policy, some radical groups (BRN-C) might continue fighting to liberate Patani because they are not willing to compromise (HRW 2007, p.44). These radical groups have employed terrorist-guerilla strategies by targeting civilians for their political purposes. The terrorist-guerilla strategies in the Deep South have been used to serve four purposes:

(1) To intimidate and coerce the people in the Deep South to support the insurgents by planting the idea that no one is safe unless they cooperate with the insurgents, and this in turn, can secure and maintain support from their constituency—the Malay Muslim.

(2) To provoke the Thai authorities to overreact and retaliate indiscriminately against the insurgent-claimed constituents. Consequently, that Muslim constituency would become resentful, alienated from the Thai population, switch sides and be driven to the insurgency which in turn, would limit the Thai government's power over the Malay Muslim community.

(3) To provoke a call to national and international public opinion to solve the problem urgently.

(4) To illustrate its incremental victory to satisfy the insurgent expectation which would, in turn, increase their morale.

Although the insurgents use terrorist-guerilla strategies to achieve their aims, they slightly adapt their methods to the nature of the conflict in the Deep South. For example, the

Seven Steps Campaign plan seized by Thai authorities in May 2003 advocates the use of jihad as a main strategy to establish a Patani independent state. This strategy has been used by the insurgents since 1992. Its details are described by HRW as the following:

- (1) Setting up a secretive organizational structure;
- (2) Creating public awareness of Islam (religion), Malay (nationality) and the concept of the “Patani homeland”, the invasion/occupation [by the Thai state] and the struggle for independence;
- (3) Creating mass support through religious teaching [at various levels, including tadika, pondoks (ponohs), private Islamic colleges and provincial Islamic committees];
- (4) Recruiting and training [ethnic Malay Muslim] youth to become militants, aiming to have a 3,000-strong body of well-trained and well-disciplined troops;
- (5) Building an ideology of nationalism and independence struggle among government officials [of ethnic Malay Muslim origin] and ethnic Malay Muslims [of the southern border provinces] who went to work in Malaysia;
- (6) Launching a new wave of attacks;
- (7) Declaring a revolution. (HRW 2007, pp.18-19)

Harish (2006, p.65) observed that the insurgents “seek to skew the conflict towards a clear religious track” in order to create a religious conflict between Muslims and Buddhists in Thailand. Chalk (2008, p.12) agreed that the key strategy of the insurgent is to “foster communal hatred between Muslims and Buddhists with terror similar to the Taliban-style and to create “failed state” characteristics in the three provinces.” In order to mitigate the insurgents’ strategy, the Thai government must implement the following policies:

Counter the Insurgents’ Strategy. To counter the terrorist-guerilla strategy, the Thai government must implement Sir Robert Thomson’s counterinsurgency strategy which the British Army used successfully in a counterinsurgency war in Malaya between 1952 and 1957 (Ludwig III, 2007). There are four reasons to justify conducting Sir Robert Thomson’s counterinsurgency strategy: (1) to deliver security—without being punitive—to the people in the Deep South; (2) to protect the community, the cultural institutions and the social life which meet the community needs of the Malay Muslims; (3) to promote positive attitudes

towards the Thai government; and (4) to gain support from the Malay Muslim community. It is essential that the counterinsurgency be implemented carefully with three legitimacies: (1) respect of international human rights law; (2) conduct within the rule of law; and (3) willingness to prosecute officials who are responsible for abuses. Sir Robert Thomson's counterinsurgency strategy must be employed with the four phases which Pelli (1990, p.15) explains as the following:

(1) **Clearing Phase.** The military and police must pressure the insurgents out of the red zone villages. All surrounding red zone villages must be under government control to prevent the insurgents infiltrating from nearby villages. Strict movement control must be implemented. All villagers must be fully identified and interrogated. Searches for arms must be conducted.

(2) **Holding Phase.** After the village is cleared of the insurgents, the holding phase must begin. In this phase, the insurgents' political infrastructure in the village must be removed and a political infrastructure that support the Thai government must be put in its place.

(3) **Winning Phase.** Once the political infrastructure is firmly established, the winning phase must be activated. This phase has three purposes: (a) to firmly provide security for the villagers; (b) to gain their support; and (c) to stop villagers supporting the insurgency. In this phase, the civil servant/NGOs must interact with the villagers to develop trust and a positive attitude toward the Thai government and local officials. In addition, the Thai government must provide an improved social and economic environment for the villagers. Consequently, they would cooperate with the Thai government which in turn can help the counterinsurgency effort to gather information. Security forces must continue to stay within the village or be proximate to it, to ensure the security of the villagers until the insurgents do not have the capability to attack them.

(4) **Won Phase.** In this phase, the Thai government must maintain the support of the villagers. If this phase is implemented successfully, the villagers will reject the insurgents and provide essential information about the insurgents to the officials. Although Sir Robert Thomson's counterinsurgency strategy may lead the Deep South to stability, long-term peace still relies on a political solution, not a military one. Of course, there is a big difference between the Malaya Emergency and today's insurgency in southern Thailand. In Malaya, the Communist Party of Malaya's leadership and rank and file were ethnic Chinese who were not supported by indigenous Malays. It was easier to separate the two. In contrast, in southern Thailand, the insurgents are Malay-Muslims and a proportion of the population support or sympathize with them; therefore, it is harder to separate the insurgents from the Malay Muslim. However, if the Thai government is able to resolve all causes of grievances, to separate the two will be possible. To separate the insurgents from Malay Muslims, the Thai government must counter all the causes of the grievances by: (a) providing Malay Muslims with a real sense of security, (b) mitigating injustice and distrust, (c) eliminating corrupt officials, (d) protecting and providing a good quality Malay Muslim way of life, and (e) offering a better education for their children.

Improve Effectiveness. To ascertain that the counterinsurgency will be more effective, the Thai government must improve its effectiveness in the following areas:

(1) **Unity of Efforts.** To neutralize the insurgents' strategy, the Thai government must use all national power—political, military, and social power—to fight against it with “unity of effort.” The Thai government must understand that the purpose of the counterinsurgency in the Deep South will not succeed if it does not unify all the government agencies to stop the insurgents from mobilizing Malay Muslim support. If the Thai government uses its military mean unwisely and without coordination with other government agencies, it is more likely that the Thai government will lose popular support. Military means

must be used in conjunction with civic/social operations to win popular support, particularly among Malay Muslims.

(2) **Maximize the Intelligence.** The Thai government must bring all intelligence from all government agencies to work together to maximize intelligence analysis under the following six principles:

- a) The intelligence analysis must be used to pinpoint individual insurgents.
- b) Intelligence must focus on identifying precisely which village the counterinsurgency should conduct operations.
- c) The intelligence must exploit the current media. Internet and mobile signal intelligence must be utilized in order to exploit data to expose insurgency cells. Search and inspection of computer traffic on the internet, or interception of website browsing and e-mail must be made.
- d) An intelligence infrastructure of the government must be established permanently at villages after the fourth phases of the counterinsurgency, these will be the monitoring systems that prevent the village-based separatist militants from reestablishing their infrastructure.
- e) Intelligence services must gather information about the attitudes of the Malay Muslims and whether the government policy gains or loses their support. This information can be used to fine-tune the government's policy.
- f) The intelligence must have the capability to trace funds that support the insurgents from international sources. The source and supply chain of Improvised Explosive Device (IED) components must be traced. All foreign militants from outside the country must be monitored and arrested before they enter the Deep South.

(3) **Improve Security Personnel Training.** Before deployment, all officials must be trained comprehensively in five areas of concern: (a) Malay Muslim culture and language

must be taught; (b) the rule of law and rules of engagement must be internalized by all security personnel so that they will never react excessively to insurgent provocation; (c) All information about villages and grievances of the population must be studied; (d) the technique of gathering intelligence and trust-building among villagers must be taught comprehensively; and (e) all techniques used by the insurgents and all techniques to counteract them must be taught.

(4) **Limit Insurgent Mobility and Encourage Initiative.** The insurgents' initiative and their mobility are the distinguishing features of the insurgency. Firstly, the insurgents both change and create new tactics to maintain an offensive against the Thai authorities, which they do to confuse and deceive. Secondly, in order to intensify the high tempo of operations, the insurgents often move and attack very quickly in a wide area in the Deep South so that their attacks give the impression that they are everywhere. Thirdly, their mobility also helps the insurgents to survive. Fourthly, the insurgents always look for a new target that is weak and sensitive to the Thai society. To counteract these tactics, the Thai security must limit the insurgents' mobility, give freedom of action to the military leaders of a small unit as much as possible, and encourage their initiative to counteract the insurgent tactics.

(5) **Secure the Border.** To prevent the insurgents from infiltrating through the porous border between Thailand and Malaysia, land and sea borders must be strictly secured by both the RTN (Royal Thai Navy) and the RTA (Royal Thai Army). All ships, vehicles and people movements in the border area must be monitored, regulated, and investigated. More troops need to patrol in all possible means of passage whether in jungles and rivers, on mountains or at sea. It is very important that the Thai government must cooperate with the Malaysian government to control the movement of the insurgents in the border areas so that this operation can impose difficulties upon these infiltrations.

(6) Coordinate with Allies and Friends. Thailand should adopt a rigorous Terrorist Act and coordinate with allies and friends to limit the movement of the insurgents who commit terrorist acts. Thailand must coordinate with allies and friendly nations in the following areas: (a) identify the insurgent group which adopts terrorist tactics; (b) notify allies and friendly nations about the insurgent activities such as arms trading, smuggling, money laundering, supporting and assisting terrorists; and (c) exchanging information and collaborating on legal issues.

(7) Improve Legal Security Act. The anti-terrorism and anti-insurgency legal acts must be improved. The legal framework must allow for the increase and regularization of special powers for the police to search, arrest, examine and convict based on suspicion. It must permit the police to freeze financial transactions, and seize the property of the suspects. Information about acts of insurgency and terrorism must be able to be revealed and those who conceal offenders to be charged with such offences.

THE THIRD TRACK: MITIGATE THE INSURGENTS' MEANS

At present, the BRN-C is the most influential separatist movement in the Deep South. Most of its leaders were trained and gained experienced in Afghanistan; its aim is to achieve a pan-Malay independent Republic of Patani (Valsesia 2008, p.7). The BRN-C structure has four subunits: (1) political work and recruitment; (2) economic and financial affairs; (3) women's affairs; (4) youth ("pemuda") and armed activity (HRW 2007, p.19). Its militants are tied to each red zone village and have a high degree of freedom in their operations—about "two thirds of all the villages" in the Deep South are under the control of BRN-C; the BRN-C has successfully recruited its militants from among Malay Muslims who were pious and well disciplined from ponohs (HRW 2007, pp.19-20).

The insurgents employ five different means to fulfill their strategies: (1) religious polarization; (2) exploitation of media; (3) recruitment of new operatives; (4) exploitation of religious schools; and (5) employment of unlimited violence. To mitigate these five means, the Thai government must employ the following policies:

(1) **Alienate the insurgents and Mitigate Religious Polarization.** As stated earlier, the insurgents use Ber Jihad di Patani as a holy war guide of liberation for the kingdom of Patani. The Thai government has to alienate the insurgents from their Malay Muslim constituency. Thailand must seek support from the Islamic world community to prevent the insurgents from exploiting that support. Once the insurgents are unable to win support from their Muslim constituency, their attacks upon innocent people would become counterproductive. The insurgency also seeks to drive a wedge between Muslims and Buddhists in Thailand. The Thai government must educate both Thais and Malay Muslims to understand this insurgents' tactic and try to expose their operation to the public.

(2) **Prevent the Exploitation of Media.** The insurgency needs the media to transmit its six messages to several audiences:

1) To transmit its terror message widely to the Thai public for the purpose of ethnic cleansing in the Deep South.

2) To transmit a punishment message for the Thai public at large to drive a wedge between Thai Buddhists and Malay Muslims. The insurgents have beheaded Buddhists as a "form of punishment" which in turn provokes the Thai authorities to implement a tough security policy against Malay Muslims (Satha-Anand 2005, p.2).

3) To transmit an incremental victory message to their members in the insurgent organizations to raise their morale.

4) To promote the idea of insurgents' legitimacy to claim that it is indeed a protector of Malay Muslims.

5) To convey news of their fighting against non-Muslims to the international Islamic communities in order to get political support from them.

6) To convey a challenge to the Thai government to exacerbate illicit government action.

To reduce the negative influence of the media, the Thai government must: (1) inform the media not to permit themselves to be used as tools of insurgents; (2) publicize its policies and reasons underlying them to counteract the insurgency propaganda which usually exploits misinformation about the government actions; (3) tell the truth and not claim more than that; and (4) use Jawi to transmit government messages to Malay Muslims and use English and Arabic to transmit to the world community.

(3) Prevent Recruitment of the new Operative. To block recruitment to the insurgents' cause, the Thai government must gain influence over the Malay Muslim community. All campaigns must aim at gaining popular support and avoiding counterproductive incidents. At the same time, the Thai government must deny the insurgents the ability to take control of the population. The overarching plan of the Thai government must be to direct its resources and energy to secure support from the Malay Muslim population. All military campaigns must be conducted in a way that supports this overarching strategy. Those who win public support will win this war.

(4) Deny the exploitation of Ponohs. The insurgents recruit their militants from a wide network of ponohs. The Thai government must learn how to manage ponohs, including religious teachers and students, from Malaysia and Muslim countries. In addition, the Thai government must support Malay Muslims to continue their studies in higher education by providing special privileges to study in the universities and colleges with government scholarships and must explain its necessity to the public. After graduation, these students will be appointed to work as civil servants, police, doctors and nurses in the Deep South.

(5) **Dissuade Unlimited Violence.** Currently, the insurgents fought with unlimited means (without limit in time and method, even using terrorist tactics). To oppose this unlimited violence, the Thai government must apply international terrorist legal conventions to limit the insurgents who attack civilians and who do not abide by international humanitarian law. Those who commit war crimes must be identified and brought to justice no matter where they are. The Thai government must pressure the separatist leaders to control their militants not to use terrorist tactic against civilians.

THE FOURTH TRACK: MITIGATE THE INSURGENTS' FAVORABLE FACTORS

The previous mitigation policies will be more effective, if the insurgents' favorable factors are mitigated concurrently. There are three major insurgents' favorable factors that must be mitigated:

(1) **The Thai Government's Negative Reaction.** The first and foremost factor to be mitigated is the very negative reaction of the Thai government. The insurgents' terrorist-guerrilla strategy will work if the Thai government responds with a heavy-handed reaction. Such reaction only fuels hatred, primordial violence, and enmity among Malay Muslims. As a result, more and more Malay Muslims would support the insurgency. Therefore, the Thai government must respond carefully and avoid indiscriminately targeting Malay Muslims.

(2) **International Insurgent Support.** The second factor that must be mitigated is the international support from sympathizers for the insurgents. The Thai government should adopt these two strategies to dissolve the sympathizers:

a) The Thai government must expose the brutality of the insurgents' conduct towards innocent people in the Deep South to the world community to discredit their cause.

b) The Thai government must strictly observe internationally-agreed human rights and must demonstrate to Muslim communities that Muslims in Thailand have freedom

of worship. They are well respected and are part of Thai society. This will discourage the giving of political or financial support to the insurgents.

(3) **Insurgent Global Network.** According to Gunawan (2007, p.14), insurgencies in the contemporary world operate in global networks to find “allies, supporters, and sympathizers, or only having shared goals or concerns.” They share intelligence, techniques, information, training, personnel, and funding. The Thai government must develop its capability to trace these networks and cooperate with the other state and help each other to destroy them by sharing intelligence, techniques, information, and training. Thailand must utilize and exploit a global network to mitigate and isolate the insurgents.

THE POLICY PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The more important issue, however, concerns putting the four-track mitigation policy into a strategic plan and putting them into practice. To turn the four-track mitigation policy from rhetoric to reality, four steps of strategic planning and management are required: (1) the policy must be clearly articulated; (2) the Thai government must employ all instruments of national powers and orchestrate them to serve the policy; (3) the four-track mitigation policy must be converted into a strategic plan and budget; and (4) the plan must be carefully implemented and managed until a long-lasting peace is achieved.

(1) **A Clearly Articulated Policy.** The Thai government must articulate the four-track mitigation policy clearly to the public: what it is trying to achieve and why. The policy must be explained not only to the Thais but also to Malay Muslims so that they can visualize how the long-lasting peace can be achieved. This public articulation will mobilize support from Thais and Malay Muslims who will then drive themselves towards a long-lasting peace. Of course, some Thai elites and some Thai government officials—“the resisters”—may not agree and oppose the policy due to their conservative world view. If this group of people is not

carefully managed, they might create a crisis for Thailand. There are two steps to handle the resistors: (a) the Thai government must identify ways to change their world view through participation and alter their attitudes, values, and behaviors; and (b) If they still resist the policy, some hard decisions must be made: they must be removed from their government positions so as not to obstruct policy implementation.

(2) Employ and orchestrate all Instruments of National Power. The Thai government must employ and orchestrate all instruments of national power to develop a national strategy to subdue the insurgency. This strategy will resolve four barriers of the policy implementation: (a) unclear authority; (b) uncoordinated intelligence; (c) interagency competition; and (d) poor civil-military relations. The NSC must continue to take responsibility to create an overarching national strategy which will bring to bear all elements of national power to achieve the goals of the policy.

(3) Convert the Policy into Plan and Budget. The ISOC must translate the four-track mitigation policy into a ten-year plan which must cover six major tasks: (a) the key strategic objectives to be achieved, (b) the responsibility and accountability of the organizations involved, (c) the three supportive cultures—the rule of law, respect for human rights, no abuse of power—which all Thai government officials must observe, (d) the command, control, and report system, (e) the key performance indicators (KPI) to be measured, and (f) the **budget allocations** for each strategic objectives by adjusting mainly from the existing military annual budget—US\$**4.2 billion** in 2008 (ICG 2008, p.6)—for the next 10 years. Once the NSC approves the plan and budget, the ISOC must execute and manage it.

(4) Implement the Plan and Manage the Budget. To ensure the successful implementation of the four-track mitigation policy, the ISOC must take full responsibility in the following areas: (a) the ISOC must have power to command and control all Thai

government agencies; (b) the ISOC must investigate all issues that might occur during the plan execution; (c) the ISOC must evaluate all KPI and make necessary adjustments according to the strategic objectives; (d) the ISOC must monitor the achievement of strategic objectives and give guidance to all Thai government agencies if necessary; (e) the ISOC must insure that all support plans are well coordinated; (f) the ISOC must approve all supporting plans proposed by all Thai government agencies; and (g) the ISOC must insure that all Thai government agencies give priority to adjusting their **annual budgets** to support the four-track mitigation policy for the next 10 years.

CONCLUSION

There are three root causes of the violence in southern Thailand: (1) the desire to have political independence from Thai suzerainty, (2) the problematic consolidation of the Kingdom of Siam in 1909, and (3) the perceived threat to the Malay Muslim identity from the Thai assimilation policy. Although the violence in the Deep South declined during the 1990s, the insurgents' desire to liberate Pattani has continued to burn. The insurgents have intensified their violence to an unprecedented level since 2004. For the last four and a half years, the Thai governments have not been able to resolve the insurgency because none of them have ever attacked the four dominant tendencies of the insurgency concurrently.

This SPP recommends the four-track policy to mitigate the insurgency by tackling the four dominant tendencies:

(1) The insurgents' policy must be mitigated by the peaceful process of conflict resolution through negotiation. Trust between Thais and Malay Muslims must be built. All conditions for peace must be addressed, and the Thai government should consider provincial autonomy for the Deep South, but in accordance with the Thai Constitution.

(2) The insurgents' strategy must be countered by implementing the four phases of Sir Robert Thomson's counterinsurgency strategy. For an effective counterinsurgency campaign, the Thai government must employ all instruments of national power, improve its intelligence, enhance its personnel training, limit insurgent initiative and mobility, secure the Thai-Malaysian border, coordinate with allies and friends, and improve its legal security act.

(3) The insurgents' means must be mitigated. The Thai government must seek support from the Islamic world community. Both Thais and Malay Muslims must be educated about the insurgents' tactics which are trying to drive a wedge between them. All media must be informed not to allow themselves to be used as tools of the insurgents. All ponds must be managed to prevent them from being the breeding ground of the militant recruitment. Unlimited violence by killing civilians must be discouraged by applying international terrorist legal conventions.

(4) The insurgents' favorable factors must be marginalized. The Thai government must not overreact and must avoid very negative responses against the Malay Muslim population. International supports from the insurgents' sympathizers must be dissuaded by exposing the insurgents' brutality, in particular the killing of civilians. The Thai government must respect human rights and freedom of worship.

Finally, this SPP recommends that the Thai government should pay more attention to translating the four-track mitigation policy into a realistic plan and then implementing it. This paper suggests that the four-track mitigation policy must (1) be articulated clearly, (2) employ and orchestrate all instruments of national power, (3) be converted into a strategic plan and budget for the next 10 years, and (4) be implemented carefully and be monitored closely until a long-lasting peace in the Deep South can be achieved.

APPENDIX A

**THE FOUR MAJOR CONFLICTS BETWEEN SIAM AND PATANI FROM
AYUTTHAYA TO BANGKOK**

Distrust and suspicion between Siam and Patani existed throughout Thai history. There were four major conflicts between Siam and Patani from Ayutthaya to Bangkok.

- (1) In 1564, when Ayutthaya was surrounded by Burmese, the Malay forces from Patani, as part of the tributary system, were asked to assist Ayutthaya to fight against the Burmese forces. In spite of aiding Siam, the Malay forces attacked Ayutthaya (Aphornsuvan 2003, p.13);
- (2) During 1630-1633, Patani took several rebellions and when Ayutthaya was destroyed by Burma in 1767, Patani declare independence (Aphornsuvan 2003, p.13). However, King Rama I conquered the Patani kingdom in 1778 and decided to annex it into the Siamese kingdom together with Kedah, Kelantan, and Trengganu in 1785 (Haemindra cited in Harish 2006, p.50).
- (3) The Patani rebellion took place in 1817. However, it was defeated by King Rama II (1809-1824). This time, he divided it into seven small states—Patani, Yaring, Sai-Buree, Nong-Chik, Ra-ngae, Raman, and Yala—and each of them was ruled by an appointed Siamese ruler (Wyatt cited in Pojar 2005, p.13);
- (4) Several rebellions continued during the reign of King Rama III (1824-1851). To resolve the problem, he decided to allow each small state to be ruled by its sultan. As a result, peace and stability was maintained in the seven small states for almost a century (Wyatt cited in Pojar 2005, p.13).

APPENDIX B**THE HAJI SULONG TOMINA DEMAND**

In 1947 during the Thamrong administration (1946-1947), Haji Sulong Tomina demanded seven rights for Malay Muslims:

- (1) The appointment of a single individual with full powers to govern the four provinces of Patani, Yala, Narathiwat and Satul, and in particular having authority to dismiss, suspend, or replace all government servants—this official is to have been born in one of the four provinces and elected by the people;
- (2) 80 percent of government servants in the four provinces to be Muslims;
- (3) Both Malay and Thai to be official languages;
- (4) Malay to be the medium of instruction in primary school;
- (5) Islamic law to be recognized and enforced in a separate court other than a civil court where the fakir (non-believer) sat as an assessor;
- (6) All revenue and income derived from the four provinces to be utilized within them; and
- (7) The formation of a Muslim board having full powers to direct all Muslim officers under the supreme head of state mentioned. (Jam Mc Girk cited in Utitsarn 2007, p.7)

APPENDIX C

THE SEPARATIST MOVEMENT

The insurgents have set up many organizations as the primary means to achieve its policy. There are at least six separatist organizations in the Deep South:

(1) **GAMPAR (Gabungam Melayu Patani Raya)**. The GAMPAR has three aims:

(1) “to unite all southern Thai Malays and their descendants who are now in Malaya”; and (2) “to improve education and revive Malay culture in southern Thailand” (Haemindra cited in Harish 2006, p.53).

(2) **BNPP (Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Patani)**. The BNPP fights for the reviving of Patani royal authority; more recently it fights for religious leaders and scholars (Mansurnoor 2005, p.36).

(3) **PULO (Patani United Liberation Organization)**. Its goal is to “establish an independent Muslim state through armed struggle” (Abuza 2006, p.4).

(4) **BRN (Barisan Revolusi Nasional)**. Its goal is to “incorporate the southern province of Thailand in a pan-Malay state across Southeast Asia” (Farouk cited in Harish 2006, p.54).

(5) **BRN-Coordinate or Pejuang Kemerdekaan Patani (Patani Freedom Fighter) and RKK (Runda Kumpulan Kecil)**. These organizations fight to liberate Patani from Thailand through armed struggle along with political struggle through mosques and ponohs (Abuza 2006, p.4).

(6) **BERSATU (Barisan Bersatu Kemerdekaan Patani)**. The BERSATU’s aim is to coordinate all separatist organizations to achieve a possible goal. It declared a “jihad for all Islamic communities and all those who support freedom and decolonization” on 15 June 1997 (Vatikiotis 2006, p.34).

(7) **GMIP (Gerakan Mujahidin Islam Patani)**. According to Valsesia (2008, p.7),

The GMIP was founded by Afghani veterans in 1995. The GMIP political program includes the Constitution of an independent Patani and its network embraces many international cohorts.

(8) **New PULO (New Patani United Liberation Organization)**. Its aim is to fight for an independent Patani State. Its leaders were trained in Libya and Syria. Their specialty is a bomb-making (Valsesia 2008, p.8).

APPENDIX D**THE FIVE MAJOR INCIDENTS TO PROVOKE THE THAI AUTHORITIES
DURING 2002-2004**

There were five major incidents that show a well-coordinate plan of the insurgents to escalate the situation in southern Thailand during 2002-2004:

- (1) In June 2002, the insurgents attacked the offices of a national park in the “Bannang Sata” district of Yala and seized 17 Hk-33 rifles, 16 shotguns and 1,400 rounds of ammunition (Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism 2007, p.9).
- (2) On 26th April 2003, “two Border Patrol Police officers were beaten to death by a mob after they had been detained by Muslim villagers in the Ra-ngae district of Narathiwat” (Jane’s Intelligence Review 2003, p.13).
- (3) On 28th April 2003, two groups of insurgents attacked the Royal Marine Corps development units in Narathiwat. The insurgents killed five marines and seized 30 M-16 rifles (ICG 2005a, p.16).
- (4) On 3rd July 2003, insurgents launched simultaneous attacks on various checkpoints in Pattani and killed five policemen and one civilian. All weapons and body-armor were seized by the insurgents (Jane’s Intelligence Review 2003, p.13).
- (5) On 4th January 2004, an army depot in Narathiwat was raided in a deliberate plan with 30 armed rebels. More than 300 weapons were stolen and 4 Thai soldiers were killed (Liow 2004, p.535). Subsequently, 320 insurgent attacks occurred throughout the regions including brutal killings of three Buddhist monks; consequently, the Thai government declared martial law over the three provinces.

APPENDIX E

THE SIX MAJOR INCIDENTS TO CREATE INTERNATIONAL CONCERN

DURING 2005-2008

There were six major incidents during 2005-2008 used by the insurgents to create international concern:

- (1) On 3rd April 2005, the Hat Yai airport and Carrefour supermarket in Songkla province were bombed, 2 people were killed, and 75 people were wounded (Ratjaroenkajorn 2007, p.9). These two incidents raised much concern in the international community that the insurgents might be expanding their operations out of the three southern provinces.
- (2) In 2005, there were 8 Thai Buddhists beheaded by the insurgents (Moore 2006, p.39). The purpose of the beheading was to intimidate Buddhists in the Deep South and drive a wedge between Muslims and Buddhists. At least 34,500 people, mostly Buddhist, had fled the area by mid-2005.
- (3) On 30th August 2005, 131 Malay Muslims in the Deep South fled to Malaysia and entreated for political shelter although Bangkok argued that some of them were the insurgents (Cline 2007, p.283). However, The UN High Commission for Refugees has begun interviewing the asylum seekers.
- (4) On 20th September 2005, two Marines were taken hostage and killed brutally in that night at Tanyong Limo village after villagers promised to release the Marines (ICG 2005b, p.15). Why were the two marines killed brutally? The reason was that the insurgents tried to provoke the Marines to take revenge on the villagers in order to alienate them further.

- (5) In 2006, the average number of violent incidents prior to the Surayud administration was 146 per month. Within five months of the Surayud administration beginning, the average number of violent incidents rose to 169.4 incidents per month (Storey 2008, p.46). The average number of people killed by the insurgents increased from 53 deaths per month to 72 deaths when Surayud was in power (Storey 2008, p.47).
- (6) On February 2007, insurgents “conducted 50 bombing, shootings, and arson attacks, killing nine and injuring 44 (Storey 2008, p.47). The insurgents tried to create hatred in the Buddhist communities by selectively killing 8 Thai Buddhists in a van but letting the Muslim driver live. On 9th May 2007, 9 soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb. On 31st May 2007, 11 paramilitary rangers were killed, and 7 soldiers were killed on 15th June 2007.

APPENDIX F

NUMBER OF PEOPLE KILLED OR INJURED IN THE DEEP SOUTH

DURING 2004-2008

	Number of people injured or killed in the Deep South				
	In 2004	in 2005	in 2006	in 2007	in 2008
Jan	41	134	125	243	155
Feb	87	134	173	228	86
March	91	198	152	248	107
April	211	165	131	240	78
May	56	100	146	304	73
June	92	145	124	148	111
July	90	180	138	209	0
Aug	134	157	173	125	0
Sep	77	171	150	172	0
Oct	316	131	144	148	0
Nov	129	125	252	178	0
Dec	114	38	166	64	0
Total	1438	1678	1874	2307	610
Casualties/month	119.8333	139.8333	156.1667	192.25	101.6667

Source: Data from DSW (Bangkok Pundit 2008b, pp.1-2)

APPENDIX G
NUMBER OF ATTACKS IN THE DEEP SOUTH
DURING 2004-2008

	Number of attacks				
	in 2004	in 2005	in 2006	in 2007	in 2008
Jan	100	111	170	132	87
Feb	113	188	124	213	58
March	222	180	203	171	48
April	266	198	132	210	48
May	98	345	119	165	54
June	128	313	180	247	60
July	112	193	63	144	0
Aug	137	188	236	227	0
Sep	81	119	115	113	0
Oct	165	119	101	120	0
Nov	189	173	210	94	0
Dec	178	46	193	42	0
Total	1789	2173	1846	1878	355
Attacks/month	149.0833	181.0833	153.8333	156.5	59.16667

Source: Data from DSW (Bangkok Pundit 2008b, pp.1-2)

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