

Chapter 5

Broadening the Coalition for Agrarian Reform in the '90s

The Agrarian reform movement should be a new pillar within the Indonesian nation's journey to realize agrarian justice (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998a: point 22)

Inter social movement organization relations are a central dynamic of any social movement; [but] one form of interaction between social movement organizations that is not well understood is competition for resources (Zald and McCarthy 1980).

At the end of the 80s and the beginning of the 90s, there was an increasing awareness of the need to rebuild local peasants' organizations, not only among NGOs and student activists who had been assisting peasants to fight for land rights, but also among local peasant leaders themselves. This awareness increased together with, on the one hand, the strengthening of social movements with an orientation towards human rights advocacy and policy change in development and, on the other, increasing land conflicts as a result of more limited access of local people to land and natural resources.¹ This situation provided fertile ground for new ideas of agrarian reform. Some activists, who had been working with land disputes, came to the conclusion that agrarian reform could only be achieved with the involvement of the peasants whom they were organizing.

¹ See Chapter IV.

This idea of agrarian reform was rather different from that of the 70s and much of the 80s. During this earlier era, ideas were developed about training, or through debates in the mass media, which depended largely on the initiative of intellectuals and academics that brought their ideas to government officials to be implemented. In contrast, from the beginning of the 90s, agrarian reform was adopted by several social movement groups and used in various direct action campaigns challenging the legitimacy of the New Order, by claiming success in rural development programs. Peasant organizations at local and national levels immediately began to put agrarian reform on their agendas.

A difference between this and the earlier period was the attempt to develop organizations as 'seeding' places for agrarian reform campaigns, as the way to resolve agrarian problems and rural poverty. The existence of institutions that develop bases for supporters of specific ideas is an important aspect in discourse development in order to influence changes in orientation of public policy (Weedon 1987, Irwan 2005). This had not existed during the 70s-80s in the context of bringing agrarian reform back as the main perspectives in rural public policy-making in Indonesia. From the beginning of the 90s up till the present, the idea of agrarian reform implementation could be held up in public discourse, as well as becoming a framework for rural social movements intending to influence politics in Indonesia.

This chapter will discuss the paths taken by some activists and NGOs involved in land rights struggles in the late 80s and the beginning of the 90s in order to broaden agrarian reform movement networks in Indonesia. In the beginning they took initiatives to build local peasant organizations, in order to redevelop a national coalition for peasant struggle. This followed self-criticism of their advocacy work, which, so far, had been dominated by urban-based NGOs and/or student groups. Despite these criticisms, they still had to rely on several urban-based NGOs to implement their ideas as well as political action. There was an undeniable contradiction to be resolved. On the one hand, they had to network with as many NGOs as possible to revitalize the idea of

development through agrarian reform; on the other hand they had to develop political influence against the anti-reform ruling regime. In the end several activists preferred to develop a broad national coalition for agrarian reform, namely the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA, *Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria*), in 1994. In this dissertation, I call this 'the first way' to scaling up the pro-agrarian reform and rural social movement in Indonesia.

However some activists were disappointed with this approach. They had hoped to establish a national coalition of peasant movements. This was 'the second way', which we will discuss in the next chapter. However, the terms 'first' and 'second' ways are not intended to imply that the former was more important than the latter. They are only labels for strategies that were tried in order to develop a national movement to re-implement agrarian reform in Indonesia.

Therefore the next two chapters will describe a process in the politics of Indonesian rural social movements which Tilly and Tarrow (2007) call the 'scaling shift'. This means identifying a strengthening of movement bases including the broadening of issues and campaigns from purely local claims for land rights into national demands for agrarian reform. This process began with the re-emergence of public discourse about agrarian reform during the Suharto years (70s and 80s), which, without broad support, continued to appear and then disappear without being inserted into agrarian policy-making at that time.

5.1 Toward the Formation of Rural Mass-based Organizations in the 1990s

Aside from providing support for activists trying to delegitimize the New Order's politics of development, land conflicts and local radicalism which occurred after the 80s became fertile ground for activists to redevelop social movement bases in the rural areas. However, many of these activists, involved in both campaigning and advocacy, were uneasy with these developments.

Their concern was the increasing dependency of peasants' groups on those who called themselves 'urban middle class activists'. These two things, the development of local resistance and the dependency of peasants on urban activists, led some activists to work on what they thought was needed for the further development of rural social movements in Indonesia post-1965. From the beginning of the 90s there was more political experimentation to build new independent and autonomous peasant organizations.

5.1.1 Rise and Fall of the First Autonomous Peasant's Movement: the West Java Peasant's Union (SPJB, Serikat Petani Jawa Barat)

In the context of the development of rural social movements in Indonesia post-1965, the formation of SPJB reflected the shift of movement bases from urban to rural areas. This was the first real attempt by activists to redevelop mass politics in rural areas and to assist autonomous peasant organizations in their struggle for better livelihoods. Since its formation in 1991, this rural-based movement organization was the pioneer 'role model' for the emergence and development of other similar movement organizations in the decade of the 90s.

In 1991 some Bandung-based activists formed the Institute for Rural Education and Development (LPPP, Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan; frequently called as LP3).² One objective of LPPP, as described by one of its founders, was to strengthen community organizing, particularly in land conflict areas. This objective was to organize land rights struggles into local peasant units in order to 'scale up' their struggle for other social and economic rights. LPPP was also to be a vehicle for the defence of student activists to maintain ongoing involvement with peasant movements. The aim was to insulate activists from other middle class political issues that could

² LPPP or LP3 formed by several Bandung-based student and NGO activists (see Chapter IV, subsection 4.2.1). This was an organization with less than 15 activists, working mostly on a voluntary basis. Its main activity was to strengthen peasant movements, and they had support from the Oxfam U.K. Office in Indonesia.

cause them to leave their movement bases in rural areas (interview with ex LPPP activist, Bandung 25 November 2008 [No.: S-04]). The LPPP founders were also aware that peasant communities should be organized in deeply rooted local groups lead by peasant cadres themselves, in order to limit their dependency on 'urban middle class activists...whose bodies and minds (*badan dan pikirannya*) were not actually grounded in rural life' (interview with LPPP activist, Garut 11 January 2008 [No.: P-05]). 'Members of these organizations must be peasants, and they must be organized by leaders who actually fought against oppression ... so the organisation's demands will be based on their interests. On the contrary, if members of peasant organizations or their leaders originally come from the middle-class backgrounds, even though they are pro people, the struggle perspective of the oppressed peasants can be biased by these middle-class' interests' (Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan 1994a: 8).³

A commitment to develop rural-based mass movements through the formation of a genuine peasant organization was realized in 1991, when Bandung-based urban activists of the LPPP set up the West Java Peasant's Union (SPJB, Serikat Petani Jawa Barat), the first autonomous local peasant organization in Indonesia during the New Order period. On 2nd of March 1991, LPPP activists together with peasant groups, already organized around eight land struggles in West Java (Cimerak in Ciamis district⁴; Sagara,⁵ Cisewu⁶ and

³ Some parts of this document originated in an article written and presented by Noer Fauzi in 1991 at an internal discussion of the LPPP. A revised version was presented again at an inter-regional workshop on land conflicts, usually referred to as 'the 1993 Lembang Meeting', the proceedings of which were published 5 years later (Fauzi 1998 [originally 1993]). Noer Fauzi was a founding member of LPPP, and one of its prominent activists. The 1993 Lembang Meeting will be described later in this chapter (section 5.1.2)

⁴ This case concerned plantation development through a Nucleus Estate and Smallholder (NES) scheme, managed by PTP XIII in the sub-district of Cimerak, Ciamis District, West Java. The project started in the beginning of the 1980s and converted people's agricultural land on State Land into a coconut hybrid plantation estate. Hundreds of local people were forced to participate by giving up their cultivated land for the project. They had subsequently protested, asking PTP XIII to return their land, because the project failed to fulfill its promise to increase participants' incomes. For details of the case see YLBHI and JARIM 1990: 1-15, Komite Pergerakan Mahasiswa untuk Rakyat Indonesia 1992: 12-17, and Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan 1995a (republished twice as Harman *et al.* 1995: 165-174, and Yayasan Sintesa and SPSU 1998: 113-125).

Badega⁷ in Garut district; Cikalong Kulon⁸ and Cimacan⁹ in Cianjur district; Jatiwangi¹⁰ in Majalengka district; and Gunung Batu¹¹ in Cianjur district), agreed to bring the bases of rural social movements back to rural areas and their leadership back to the peasants. They also agreed to intensify political education and training for the peasant leaders and cadres, especially in West Java, through this organization. Political education and training for the peasant leaders was an important agenda of the LPPP at that time. It also encouraged other social movement organizations from other regions to do the same thing through informal and/or underground networks settings (interviews with

⁵ This case was about competing claims between local people of Sagara and Karyamukti villages, in Pameungpeuk sub-district, Garut District, West Java, and Perhutani (the State-owned forestry company) over around 600 ha of a sand bank (*tanah timbul*), claimed as conservation forest by Perhutani in 1984. Around 500 families protested the decision because they had cultivated the land since the 1920s. For details of this case, see Agustiana 1995 (republished in Harman *et al.* 1995: 219-224 and Yayasan Sintesa and SPSU 1998: 251-257) and Lukmanudin 2002.

⁶ This case of competing claims between local people of Cisewu and Girimukti villages of Cisewu sub-district, Garut District, West Java, and Perhutani (the state-owned forestry company) was over 82 ha of land, claimed as forestland by Perhutani. This was a continuation of an origin claim made by the colonial forestry authority, dating back to the 1940s. For detail of this case see Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan 1995b (republished in Harman *et al.* 1995: 203-209, and Yayasan Sintesa and SPSU 1998: 127-134).

⁷ On Badega case see Chapter II (subsection 2.1).

⁸ This case of competing claims between 400 families of Ciramaeuwah Girang and Cigunung Herang villages, Cikalong Kulon sub-district, Cianjur District, West Java, and Perhutani, was over 400 ha land claimed as forestland by Perhutani. Originally classified as State land, it was developed by local people for agriculture and for hamlets during the colonial period. In 1951 the Indonesian forestry authority claimed the land was State forest. In the mid 80s, Perhutani implemented a social forestry project (funded by the Ford Foundation) in the area. For details of the case, see Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan 1995c (republished in Harman *et al.* 1995: 211-217, and Yayasan Sintesa and SPSU 1998: 153-162); also Lucas and Bachriadi 2000.

⁹ This case involved 300 small peasants evicted from 32 ha land that was converted into golf course in Rarahan Village, Cimacan sub-district of Cianjur District, West Java, in 1987. For details see Komite Pergerakan Mahasiswa untuk Rakyat Indonesia 1992: 21-23, Amir 1995 (republished in Harman *et al.* 1995: 225-232, and Yayasan Sintesa and SPSU 1998: 29-39), and Bachriadi and Lucas 2001.

¹⁰ This was a case of competing claims between peasant cultivators in seven villages in the Jatiwangi area of Majalengka District, West Java, with the Indonesian Air Force (TNI-AU, Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Udara). The land disputed was around 1,000 ha claimed by TNI-AU as part of the runway of Sukatani air force base. For details see Komite Pergerakan Mahasiswa untuk Rakyat Indonesia 1992: 8-11, and *Setiakawan* No. 7, January – June 1992, pp. 86-88.

¹¹ This land eviction was experienced by around 1,000 families of Gunung Batu Village, Ciracap sub-district of Sukabumi District, West Java. They were forced to move from around 330 ha land that claimed by PT BLA (Bandung Lestari Abadi) as part of its plantation area. For detail case see Komite Pergerakan Mahasiswa untuk Rakyat Indonesia 1992: 18-20, Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan 1995d (republished in Harman *et al.* 1995: 149-155, and Yayasan Sintesa and SPSU 1998: 259-266).

founder-members of LPPP, Garut 11 January 2008 [No.: P-05] and Bandung 25 November 2008 [No.: S-04]).

The formation of the SPJB in March 1991 was also the result of an agreement between peasant leaders of the eight land conflicts cases just mentioned and the LPPP activists. They did not talk about the idea with their communities before the meeting for security reason. Forming a genuine peasant organization during the New Order was a very sensitive political issue for both the regime and for the peasants, because the political trauma of the 1965-66 rural massacres still haunted peasants everywhere, and because the New Order's security apparatuses had ears everywhere. 'Any leaked information about us and our struggle could destroy our consolidation' (SPJB leaders in *Berjuang untuk Tanah* 2003: tape no. 5).¹²

Although peasants in land conflict cases were willing to take radical action to fight for their land rights, formation of a genuine 'formal' peasant organization was a different thing. In land conflict cases at that time, the most peasants wanted was to get their land back and/or to get fair compensation, they did not think what other rights could be achieved through having a new peasant's union. LPPP activists were aware of this situation. Together with peasant leaders from the above-mentioned eight land cases that formed the SPJB, they were aware that forming a genuine peasant union was risky.

It took more than a year for LPPP activists and the founders of SPJB to talk about this newborn peasant union to the cell groups within their communities, as well as peasant leaders of other groups. The formation of the organisation was finally announced after the 1st Congress of SPJB conducted in 1992. But the urban activists of LPP were hampered by two factors. Firstly they were also activists of student groups¹³ and other NGOs¹⁴, which meant that their energies

¹² *Berjuang untuk Tanah* 2003 is set of tapes contained interviews with some peasant leaders in West Java, including SPJB leaders. These are product of an oral history research project conducted in 2002-2003, in which I was involved as one of the researchers. See Chapter I, subsection 1.4.2, on methodology and the reason for using these materials in this study.

¹³ Such as KPMuRI and 'Bakor Mahasiswa Bandung'.

were divided between the political activities of their own organizations and the newly formed SPJB. Secondly, funds were limited which constrained efforts to recruit more peasant groups to the 1st Congress of SPJB (interview with ex LPPP activist, Bandung 25 November 2008 [No.: S-04]), which was eventually held on the 11th to 13th of August 1992. Only seven representatives of the eight previously mentioned peasants groups, who originally formed the SPJB in 1991, attended this congress. Due to the tense situation in Jatiwangi at the time, no representative of this dispute attended this momentous meeting (interview with ex LPPP activist, Bandung 25 November 2008 [No.: S-04]).

The first congress formulated a set of SPJB statutes; it also produced the West Java Peasants Charter (*Piagam Petani Jawa Barat*) signed by 13 peasant leaders and announced at the end of the congress on the 13th of August 1992.¹⁵ Calling itself ‘the West Java Peasants’ Congress’, it was not a huge meeting; rather it was an underground meeting attended by the 13 peasant leaders representing 8 land conflict communities in West Java and 12 ‘urban middle class’ student and NGO activists (*Berjuang untuk Tanah* 2003: tape no. 5; and interview with ex LPPP activist, Garut 11 January 2008 [No.: P-05]).

Although from its beginning, SPJB had a mixed leadership model, with leaders coming from both peasants, students, youth and NGOs activists, the West Java Peasant’s Charter was only signed by the peasant leaders. This reflected the commitment of the ‘urban middle class’ SPJB founders that the organization was formed to be a struggle organisation of peasants. Involvement of the urban middle class activists in the organization leadership was intended to be temporary, a transition period until LPPP considered that the peasants were ready to lead this organization independently (interview with ex LPPP activist, Garut 11 January 2008 [No.: P-05]; see also Fauzi 1995: 4).

¹⁴ Such as LBH-Nusantara and LBH-Bandung.

¹⁵ The 13 peasants leaders, representing 8 land conflict cases around West Java, who signed the West Java Peasants Charter were: Darsono of Cimerak; Amir of Cimacan; Ma’mun Munawar, Darmawan and Salim Sutrisna of Sagara; Oko and Uja Suganda of Ciramaeuwah Girang; Ara Mandraguna and Aji Saji of Cisewu; Oon and Suhdin of Badega; Ani Akad and Marsikin of Gunung Batu.

The Charter said that the West Java peasants were uniting to: (1) deliver justice and prosperity as stated in the Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution; (2) eradicate poverty and ignorance and respect peasant dignity (3) recognise the effect of monopoly over resource exploitation that damages peasant livelihoods; (4) struggle for land rights on the basis of article 33(3) of the 1945 Constitution¹⁶ and the BAL; and (5) create an strong independent organisation with an orientation towards social justice. These five objectives became the SPJB charter as a struggle and education organisation for the peasants in West Java to fight for their rights (see also Serikat Petani Jawa Barat 1994).

Looking briefly at the views of those involved, according to one of the founders of the SPJB, this union was formed to be 'one of the struggle organisations of the peasantry in Java together with other embryonic peasant organizations' (Faryadi 1997: 322). In fact, SPJB was the only autonomous peasant union that consolidated groups of rural villagers across the province of West Java. In its intended pioneering role, the SPJB aimed to be the 'locomotive' of the formation of other peasant unions in a drive towards the formation of a national coalition of peasant struggle. Another founder student activist said, 'politically, SPJB is an experiment to test New Order tolerance of the formation of independent and autonomous rural mass-based organizations' and to test 'the capability of the union itself to organize peasants with a broad mass base; not an organization based on free promotion in the mass media but with no substance and easy to defeat' (Faryadi 1997: 322).

As a peasant organization, SPJB was formed to bring peasants out of the Soeharto regime's control and co-optation over rural villagers through HKTI and KTNA, which Efendi Saman, an urban-based lawyer activist and an SPJB leader, called '*di-regim-inasi*'. According to Saman, the fact that the people were expected to validate the behaviour of the state (*rakyat seolah-olah harus membenarkan perilaku negara*) also made the SPJB appear radical, because they

¹⁶ Article 33(3) says that 'land, water and natural resources within [the ground] shall be under the control of the state and shall be used for the maximum benefit of the people'.

certainly weren't doing that!¹⁷ They were doing just the opposite, opposing the behaviour of the state in the land cases they were supporting. But of course in other contexts this new agrarian activism was seen as a threat by the military.

For almost half a decade after its formation in 1991, SPJB operated practically underground. Its secretariat was embedded in the secretariat of LPPP, with no banner, no flag, operating through cells, the existence of which were only known to selected persons in the community. Almost all its political, advocacy and economic programs were embedded in LPPP's programs: outsiders did not know these were in fact SPJB's programs. This 'undercover' strategy helped SPJB expand quite well. At the end of 1996, the union had linked around 25 peasant groups in 9 districts in West Java (Darsono 1996). In contrast, amongst those 'urban middle class' activists in Indonesia involved in organising rural land conflict cases, SPJB became a well-known entity as a political exercise to revive rural mass politics.

SPJB-LPPP's success in transforming awareness about their struggle from just land rights to broader political and economic objectives such as freedom to organize in rural areas and development of an alternative economic cooperative units; political education and training for cadres;¹⁸ building capacity to organize various peasant groups in land conflict areas into one peasant union at provincial level; and its economic solidarity with workers

¹⁷ My thanks to Anton Lucas for making available his notes from an interview with Efendi Saman, conducted in Bandung, 19 April 2000.

¹⁸ According to Saman, in political education courses, peasant leaders and cadres were trained to strengthen community organizing in order to reclaim and/or reoccupy land until they can *de facto* hold it. They were taught about the New Order's repression through a village governance system which controlled village-based cooperatives, and controlled farmers' organizations such as HKTI and KTNA (on HKTI and KTNA see again Chapter II); and, of course, the most important thing was they were taught to think critically about Indonesian agrarian laws and regulations and how to use these for advocacy activities. They were taught about these things because SPJB wanted to challenge the New Order's state structure and domination (based on Anton Lucas' interview notes with Efendi Saman, Bandung, 19 April 2000).

movements,¹⁹ made the SPJB a model for later autonomous local peasant organizations throughout Indonesia.²⁰

In the LPPP perspective, the formation of an autonomous peasant organization like SPJB was *a sine qua non* step forward by peasant protest movements at that time: '... the development phase of the peasant protest movements had reached a point where it needed to have a wider struggle program, the need for a genuine peasant organization was essential' (Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan 1994a: 7). A genuine peasant organization had to transform local protests into a national movement of rural oppressed people against capitalism and the authoritarian state. Its aim 'must be not local and sectoral oriented, but it must have national orientation to build bases of people power together with other oppressed groups such as workers. It means their struggle mission is not merely economic, but clearly part of the political struggle for democracy' (Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan 1994a: 9). As a consequence, the organization leadership model developed in the SPJB was intended to move away from the non-structured and informal patterns of rural protest movements against land evictions of the 1970s and 1980s, in which leadership was concentrated in small groups of traditional, charismatic persons and people participation was based on spontaneous involvement and narrow economic interests.

¹⁹ At that time SPJB has a special program providing low priced rice to urban workers groups and the urban middle class activists in West Java. Workers could purchase the good rice at lower prices than the same quality sold for in the market. This direct marketing system from producers to end-users reduced the costs of the distribution chains, which in turn helped SPJB's farmers to get bigger margins. This mutual relationship occurred for some years in the mid 1990s, until the LPPP as the central distribution unit lost its capacity to continue this action. The intensive movement consolidations against Soeharto across regions in Java, in the two years before 1998, was the reason why LPPP activists turned their attention from economic solidarity actions to the immediate campaign against the authoritarian dictator.

²⁰ How this happened will be discussed later in subsection 5.1.2 below. Henry Saragih, an activist from North Sumatra who was a founding member of the Sintesa Foundation Kisaran, the North Sumatra Peasants Union (SPSU, Serikat Petani Sumatera Utara), and the Indonesian Federation of Peasant's Unions (FSPI, Federasi Serikat Petani Indonesia) also told me that the SPJB was not only a reference group for the union he had helped to initiate in Sumatera Utara, it was also the model for other groups and activists in their development of peasant organizations at local and/or district level (personal communication with Henry Saragih, Bandung 10 October 1997).

In LPPP's perspective, rural protest movements against land evictions had the potential to become elements of a national peasant movement against capitalism and the authoritarian state. Although they realised that using rural protest movements against land evictions had disadvantages when building a large peasant struggle organization to fight a long struggle for wider economic, political, social and cultural rights (Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan 1994a: 7-9).²¹ The leftist LPPP intended to use political education to create 'new' radical movement leaders and cadres. They were expecting to work together with limited numbers of student and NGO activists, which Gramsci categorized as 'organic intellectuals'²², to lead this transformation process of peasant movements. They were trying to bring the movement forward from 'spontaneous' rural protests into deep rooted and organized revolutionary peasant organizations struggling for political freedom and radical social change (interview with ex LPPP activist, Garut 11 January 2008 [No.: P-05]).

The LPPP activists were convinced that new leaders and cadres were needed to break the dependent relationship between rural protest groups and urban-activists groups, regarding both mobilization and advocacy against land evictions at that time. The advocacy model developed by students and NGOs which Fauzi, a key actor in the LPPP, called 'the politics on behalf of' (*'politik atas nama'*)²³ created a dyadic relationship between peasant groups, students and NGOs in land disputes, similar to the relation between patients and doctors which have a high degree of dependency in Indonesia.

According to Fauzi 'the politics on behalf of' is

²¹ Other reflections of LPPP activists are given in articles written by Noer Fauzi, a key activist in this group and also in the formation of SPJB. See Fauzi 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1998.

²² The 'organic intellectual' is Gramscian terminology originally meaning bourgeoisie scholars who cultivate strong roots in his/her community, working to maintain links with local issues and struggles that connect to the people and their experiences. The opposite term is the 'traditional intellectual', an autonomous group of intellectuals separated from political class struggle and strongly allied with the dominant ideology. For a detailed explanation of this perspective, see Gramsci (1971: 3-23). See again Chapter I note 18, p. 17.

²³ About the 'politics on behalf of' (*'politik atas nama'*) see also Radjab 1991.

“a political skill that NGO activists have in using organizational resources for the interests of both groups (peasants and NGOs). Expressions such as ‘on behalf of the people ...’ (*atas nama rakyat ...*), ‘based on the power of attorney given by the people of ...’ (*atas dasar surat kuasa yang diberikan oleh sekian penduduk ...*), ‘based on the principles of people’s sovereignty, democracy and human rights ...’ (*dengan berpijak pada prinsip kedaulatan rakyat, demokrasi dan hak asasi manusia ...*), are used in their rhetoric” (Fauzi 1995: 2; see also Fauzi 1996).

The ‘*politik atas nama*’ that led to the ‘doctor-patient’ relationship model was a negative model of political action because the leaders of peasant groups (*tokoh petani*)²⁴ who fought for land, were the same leaders who interacted with students and NGOs activists. This reinforced centralism in decision making among peasants groups. Group leaders became more loyal to the NGOs than to their own community members (Fauzi 1995: 3, Fauzi 1996: 3). Many important decisions regarding community struggle were decided by communication between the peasant leaders and the activists only, while the community were mobilized ‘blind followers’.

While the nature of these peasant-NGO relationships was to maintain *ad hoc*, temporary movement organizations, this kind of peasant mobilization did not lead to well-organized and deeply rooted peasant organizations prepared for long-term struggles for peasant rights. According to Fauzi, the long depolitization of mass politics in rural areas which had occurred since 1965 and the missing experiences of organizing independently were the main causes of the unequal dyadic relationship whereby peasants’ dependency on urban activists remained strong thus creating a new elitism within peasant

²⁴ *Tokoh petani* or ‘prominent peasant leader’ was a local person who originally led spontaneous protests against land eviction and/or the peasant struggles for land rights. They are not necessary traditional religious or community leaders. In some cases, they are ordinary villagers, sometimes they are landless or agricultural workers; most frequently they are landholders or children of the landholders who lost their land because of evictions or the government’s rejection of their land rights. Their bravery to protest and consolidate the victims of land evictions to fight against the authorities is an important factor of their leadership or to be a *tokoh*. *Tokoh petani* in land conflict cases became the new community leaders, although in many cases these *tokoh petani* were also traditional peasant community leaders who led local struggles against land evictions. As new leaders, the *tokoh petani* of land conflicts then became part of the rural political elites who influenced local politics in their communities.

communities (Fauzi 1994: 3-8).²⁵ This is why, according to LPPP, a 'political experiment' was needed to change this paradigm through the formation of an independent peasant organization, with cadre building through education and advocacy. In building a rural mass-based movement organization, NGO activists wanted to change the 'politics on behalf of' paradigm (Fauzi 1994: 7-8 and 1995: 4; see also Santoso 1995: 2). The formation of the SPJB was the first attempt to change this paradigm.

Cadres and new leaders in SPJB's local bases were given political education by LPPP. The primary *'tokoh petani'* that had previously been dominating local protests were encouraged to become core-leaders of the SPJB together with students and NGO activists. So in the 'first layer of peasant leadership', the primary *'tokoh petani'* were expected to consolidate the peasants movement in a cross-regional, inter-community organization, not only supported by their own local bases. At the same time new cadres were being educated to develop their struggle attitude and loyalty to their communities rather than to urban-based organizations and activists (see Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan, *no date*).

LPPP activists had hoped that SPJB as an 'independent peasant organization' would provide the appropriate 'critical consciousness' for further peasant struggle, which could not have been produced without their involvement. This was a kind of Gramscian perspective to analyse consequences of hegemony and how to raise ideological consciousness among oppressed people (see Gramsci 1971, also Femia 1975) even though, as described below, the SPJB political experiment did not achieve the results that were expected. Development of the organization and leadership within the SPJB never achieved the original objectives as expected by its initiators, namely to build a peasant organization into a movement that could create a 'critical

²⁵ We can compare the Gramscian anti-hegemony perspective of LPPP activists with other perspectives which analyze the peasantry who were economically, politically and culturally subordinated to outsiders, making themselves 'subject' to many urban and the rural elites who play important roles connecting rural peasants with the city (Redfield 1956, Wolf 1966, Shanin 1971, Mencher 1983).

consciousness' in the peasantry. This was partly because the role of urban-educated activists still dominated the organization.

Since its formation, the SPJB was developed using a collective leadership model, which combined charismatic peasant leaders of several land cases with students and NGOs. According to an LPPP activist, there had been no choice of peasant leaders available but that this collective leadership model was taken for a transitional period because 'leadership of people-based organization still has to be developed by the NGO. But in the future this leadership should be transferred back to the people themselves' because 'people's organizations themselves should develop their own capacity and evolve as organizations fighting for injustice' (Fauzi 1995: 4).

From its formation in March 1991 until the 1st SPJB Congress in August 1992, the top leaders of SPJB consisted of three people representing three support groups: Darsono, a '*tokoh petani*' in the Cimerak land case as the representative of the peasants; Erpan Faryadi, a Bandung-based student activist as representative of youth and student activists;²⁶ and Efendi Saman, Director of the Nusantara Legal Aid Institute (LBHN, Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Nusantara)²⁷ as representative of the NGOs. At the 1994 SPJB Congress there was an attempt to fully transfer the leadership to representative peasant leaders and local organizers (Darsono from Cimerak as Coordinator; Suhdin, a '*tokoh petani*' from Badega as Vice Coordinator I; Suwarno, a local community organizer from Sukabumi area as Vice Coordinator II). But at the next Congress

²⁶ About Erpan Faryadi, a student of Padjadjaran University, and his involvement in the student movement in Bandung through KSMuRB and KPMuRI see Chapter IV.

²⁷ Efendi Saman studied at the Bandung College of Law (STHB, Sekolah Tinggi Hukum Bandung) in Bandung. He was involved in 'Bakor Mahasiswa Bandung' in the mid of 1980s and was a coordinator of the West Java NGO Forum (Forum LSM Jawa Barat) from 1987-1990. From 1986-1993 he worked in LBH Bandung on land advocacy until he was sacked from LBH by the Director of YLBHI at that time, Buyung Nasution, who said 'lawyers cannot join demonstrations'. Nasution also told Saman that he needed 'tigers in court, not tigers on the street' (*macan di pengadilan, bukan macan di jalan*). During 1990-1993 he was coordinator of WALHI's West Java Forum (WALHI Forum Daerah Jawa Barat). In 1993 Saman formed the Nusantara Legal Aid Institute (LBHN, Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Nusantara) in Bandung (Based on Anton Lucas' interview notes with Effendi Saman, Bandung 19 April 2000).

in 1998,²⁸ the official leadership was changed back to the previous model of collective leadership shared between representatives of the peasants and urban-based activists.

At the 1998 congress there was criticism from both peasants and activists: the SPJB under peasant leadership was not performing well; the leadership was not effective; many of its agendas, particularly the cadre building, education, organization consolidation, and the economic program were not being implemented very well. Many SPJB members and urban-based activist sympathizers considered the peasant groups were still not capable of running their own struggle organization. Its official leaders acknowledged this formally at that time. So it was agreed that involvement of non-peasant groups in leading the SPJB was needed,²⁹ and the urban-based activists tended to be more dominant. This changed model of leadership has been maintained until now. Today the SPJB is a peasant struggle organization in name only.

When the 1994 congress decided that peasants and local organizers should fill the SPJB leadership, student and NGO activists tried to provide more space for these leaders to build up the organisation and establish continuing relationship with funding sources as well. However, even though backed up by the LPPP, SPJB lacked formal management skills. Today the SPJB still lacks the capacity to transform leaders of protest movements into leaders of a more structured organization who can implement education, cadre building, and consolidation agendas. Meanwhile, SPJB's main external funding source, Oxfam GB, preferred to deal with LPPP in terms of funding management rather than with SPJB directly (interview with ex LPPP activist, Bandung 25 November 2008 [No.: S-04]). So, in practice, LPPP still controls the fund for SPJB activities.

²⁸ In the 1994 SPJB Statute, article 12, stated that a Congress will be held in every 5 years; but it can be held anytime if necessary (article 12: 2). See Serikat Petani Jawa Barat 1994. In practice, even before SPJB had a statutes document, it had conducted congresses based on important issue/problems whose decisions were binding on all members. However, available funds and urgent political issues were the two main reasons for conducting a congress.

²⁹ As an organizer of the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA, Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria) at that time, I attended all sessions of this 1998 SPJB Congress.

Outside the 1998 Congress forum, an ex-leader of SPJB, originally a charismatic leader in the West Java peasant movement, said SPJB leaders at that time could not implement the organization's plans because they did not control its material resources and funds. As we have just noted, SPJB resources were managed by the LPPP; SPJB leaders could not intervene in the management of resources. This problem led to distrust among the coalition, between some of the primary *'tokoh petani'* and the activists, with some of the former losing enthusiasm to continue their involvement in this 'autonomous peasant organization' (*'Berjuang untuk Tanah'* 2003: tape no. 5).

This meant both LPPP and SPJB were unable to provide enough financial support to conduct political training and consolidation meetings. However, they had to provide fund to cover travel for leaders, trainers and organizers, as local fund rising from the members did not provide enough support to cover these activities. Neither organization could provide enough support to SPJB leaders, who had to travel from various areas in West Java, to work together effectively and stay for long periods in the SPJB secretariat to manage the organization.³⁰ Peasant leaders assigned to the SPJB were in a difficult position: if they decided to stay longer at the SPJB and dedicate their time fully for this organization, they couldn't feed their families (*'Berjuang untuk Tanah'* 2003: tape no. 5).

By the end of the 90s, SPJB had declined along with the fading of LPPP as its main supportive organization. As mentioned above, several 'urban educated activists' who originally came from various student organizations and NGOs in a voluntary basis formed LPPP. As middle class activists, their main interest was to build rural mass-based movement organization, which was led by peasants themselves. Their other political concern, namely fighting for democracy against the Soeharto dictatorship, was done mainly through their own individual organizations. They weren't concerned if the LPPP disappeared, they had achieved what they wanted, namely to form a rural mass-based

³⁰ Practically only one young cadre, a Cimerak leader, was available to stay in Bandung to represent peasant leaders on a day-to-day basis at the SPJB secretariat. The other leaders came and went, and were never in Bandung at the same time, so only met together at scheduled meetings.

movement organization. Several years after the formation of SPJB, but prior to 1998, some ex-student activists involved in the LPPP became concerned about the need to consolidate inter-city social movement coalitions in order to topple Soeharto; while others spent their time building a national movement coalition for agrarian reform, which will be described later in the section 5.2.

Along with the lack of funding faced by the LPPP-SPJB, according to Saman, an ex SPJB leader from 'the NGO fraction', distrust and internal conflicts among '*tokoh petani*' in the SPJB leadership and between '*tokoh petani*' and the non-peasant activists occurred. It seems the lack of funding was harming the consolidation of the organization and communication among the leaders who lived far afield in West Java. Then Saman continued his evaluation by saying 'SPJB was strong because of the external political momentum; it declined after loosing that momentum. When it bases were oppressed by the military, SPJB was stronger; when the oppression was reduced, the organization lost its momentum for consolidation (Lucas' interview notes with Efendi Saman, Bandung 19 April 2000).

Subsequent evaluations and reflections by the ex-leaders of the SPJB came to the same conclusion. The strategy to develop the SPJB had depended completely on the dominant role of the urban-based activists in LPPP and still rested on the '*tokoh petani*' or charismatic peasant leaders of land conflict cases. Ironically, this was despite the original aim that was to form an autonomous peasant organization. But they failed to transform the SPJB into a true mass-based peasant organization when the transition to democracy occurred in 1998 following the fall of the authoritarian Soeharto regime ('*Berjuang untuk Tanah*' 2003: tape no. 6; interviews with ex LPPP activist and Garut-based movement organizer, Garut 11 January 2008 [No.: P-05] and Tasikmalaya 23 December 2008 [No.: P-01]; and personal communication with Noer Fauzi, 13 October 2009). Fauzi's conclusion is important, coming from one of the founders of both LPPP and SPJB, who shifted his activism from LPPP to

the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA) from 1994³¹. He concluded that the main reason for SPJB's failure was because its peasant leaders and activists did not see that the SPJB's organizational model could not be maintained when the transition to democracy came in 1998. 'They should have changed its organization model, leadership and mass consolidation to meet the political challenge at that time' (personal communication with Noer Fauzi, 13 October 2009).³²

In all the SPJB evaluations, one issue that was missing is about peasants' interests to be active in a movement organization after they got control over land. Prior to 1998, almost all local *de facto* SPJB bases involved in land conflicts had succeeded in reclaiming their land. Based on personal observation at that time,³³ local community consolidation meetings held to discuss the future of peasant movements were becoming difficult to conduct in these bases. Local people, who were easy to organize to fight for land, did not have the same interest in politics and the future of peasant struggle; they just wanted to cultivate their reclaimed land and rebuild their livelihoods that had been partly destroyed after they lost land during the 'struggle period'.³⁴ They were hoping SPJB, LPPP, student movement groups and other NGOs, especially legal aid institutes, could help them obtain formal recognition of their land rights through ownership certificates from the land authorities (BPN). But LPPP activists and the SPJB core leaders had limited interest in land certification.

³¹ Section 5.2 will describe more about the formation of KPA.

³² Fauzi and other ex-LPPP activists were then involved in maintaining another West Java based peasant organization, namely the Pasundan Peasant's Union (SPP, Serikat Petani Pasundan), to implement their idea of change within mass-based rural organizations, that had failed with SPJB. While Erpan Faryadi, another ex-LPPP activist and ex-member of SPJB's collective student leadership, preferred to build his own coalition of peasant struggle for agrarian reform namely the Alliance for Agrarian Reform Movement (AGRA, Aliansi Gerakan Pembaruan Agraria). AGRA and SPP will be discussed in Chapter VI, VII and IX.

³³ As a member of the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA) leadership team from 1995 to 2001, I had many opportunities to visit land conflict areas, including almost all the SPJB bases, and conduct discussions with those involved in these conflicts.

³⁴ To some extent the success in regaining control of land and the subsequent loss of enthusiasm for peasant struggles and peasant organizations among those involved in land struggles was repeated in other times and places, as will be described below in chapters VII to IX.

In the economic sphere, LPPP wanted to develop collective economic units (KUB, *Kelompok Usaha Bersama*) in the SPJB bases to help the production of their crops. But they failed firstly because of limited capacity to implement these KUB. Secondly, too many activists were involved in the intercity consolidation of social movements to topple the Soeharto regime, while others were involved in organising a new national coalition for agrarian reform (see below).

Another local voice, which can shed some light on the decline of SPJB, comes from a SPJB cadre who was a prominent peasant leader of the Cimacan land dispute, who had signed the 1992 West Java Peasant's Charter. Amir became less enthusiastic about being active in the SPJB after he saw this political experiment could not lead to the success of his Cimacan peasants in reclaiming back their lost land.³⁵ For him the SPJB experiment was too political, a long road taken, and far from the original interests of local peasants who wanted to get back their lost land or get fair compensation as soon as possible (see Bachriadi and Lucas 2001: 72).

These impressions from peasant activists show they had different aspirations compared to 'urban-educated activists'. The latter wanted to build a movement for broad political and economic rights of the poor rural communities and to bring mass-politics back in the dynamic of post-'65 Indonesia. However peasants in land conflict areas, which were SPJB bases, had a short-term interest namely regaining access to land and/or fair compensation. As long as SPJB remained a political experiment, it could not resolve these conflicting interests.

³⁵ Up to 1998 Cimacan was one of the SPJB bases that was unable to get back control of their lost land; in contrast to the other SPJB bases, such as Badega and Cikalong Kulon that *de facto* did get back their lost land. This was due to the different characteristics of the land conflict in each area. What made the Cimacan case different was that the land grabbed by the developers was use for non-agricultural purposes, in this case a golf course (see Bachriadi and Lucas 2001). As in many other land disputes, where land use has been transformed into non-agricultural uses such as golf courses, housing estates, industrial facilities, and even public facilities, the evicted local people have difficulty reclaiming their land. The maximum they will get is a fair compensation, even though in many cases what peasant farmers get is unfair compensation. On the unfair Cimacan compensation issue see Bachriadi and Lucas 2001: 15-41.

In other words, the Cimacan leader argued that SPJB failed to lead the land struggle in Cimacan because the cadre building in SPJB was not developed as originally expected by its founders. Ironically the urban-based activists in the LPPP itself failed to recognise the strength of peasants who were originally organizing to defend their own land conflict cases (interview with ex LPPP activist and current peasant's organization in West Java, Garut 11 January 2008 [No.: P-05] and Tasikmalaya 7 January 2007 [No.:P-01]). In fact, as we have already noted, the initial consolidation of local peasant movements around various land conflicts in West Java, always began to weaken soon after they were successful in regaining the land, for which they had fought for so long. The urban-based activists had been using the issue of struggle for land rights and/or access to lost land as a way of consolidating the peasants into continuous local organizations. The original organizers of the SPJB had thus failed to transform this embryonic 'autonomous peasant organization' in the aftermath of the regime change post-1998. They also tried but failed to create new political and economic ties for local people to link with the organization.

By the time of the 4th SPJB Congress in 1998, only 12 groups of land cases remained involved (Serikat Petani Jawa Barat 1998) and the number of bases continued to decline. Entering the first years of the 21st century, SPJB finally disintegrated. It was replaced by a variety of emerging organizations.³⁶ These new organisations concentrated more on political struggles for land at district level along with involvement in the politics of decentralization in the reformation era following the fall of the New Order regime. We will discuss these two factors particularly on Chapter VII-IX.

³⁶ Such as the Pasundan Peasant's Union (SPP, Serikat Petani Pasundan); the Pakidulan Peasant and Fisherfolk's Union (SPNP, Serikat Petani dan Nelayan Pakidulan); the Subang Peasant's Struggle Front (PPRTS, Persatuan Perjuangan Rakyat Tani Subang) which later changed its name to the North Pasundan Peasant's Union (SPP-U, Serikat Petani Pasundan Utara); the Sumedang Populist Peasant's Union (STKS, Serikat Tani Kerakyatan Sumedang) and the Karawang Peasant's Union (SEPETAK, Serikat Petani Karawang).

5.1.2 The 1993 Lembang Meeting: A Cornerstone of the New National Consolidation for Peasant and Pro-Agrarian Reform Movements

Through the mercy of God Almighty, the Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, we the peasants of Indonesia hereby declare that we will unite in the Indonesian Peasant's Organization in order to carry forward the noble idea [*melanjutkan cita-cita mulia*] of the Republic of Indonesia. Bandung, 11 November 1993. [signed] We the Indonesian Peasantry (Organisasi Petani Indonesia Declaration, 11 November 1993)³⁷

Formally 'the 1993 Lembang Meeting' was a workshop to discuss the future of organizing activities in land conflict areas/communities. It was attended by hundreds of participants (both peasant leaders and urban-based activists) involved directly in organizing various land conflicts, which had occurred since the 80s. The significant outcome of this meeting was an agreement of participants to formalize their community organizing into the formation of local peasant's organizations in order to build a national coalition of peasant movements.

However, activists as movement entrepreneurs are always looking for opportunities to express their leadership, and political interests, which in some cases led to the development of the movements but also created tension, conflicts and competition among themselves, over leadership and control, as we will see in this and following chapters. Thus along with its significance as a cornerstone of national consolidation of the peasant and pro-agrarian reform movements in the midst of an authoritarian regime, the 1993 Lembang Meeting was also a reason for developing different processes of national consolidation, namely 'the first way' and 'the second way' mentioned earlier in this chapter.

After the founding of the SPJB in 1991, LPPP activists widened their network by establishing other local peasant organizations outside West Java who had similar ideas. As mentioned above, the LPPP wanted to make SPJB the 'engine of consolidation' of peasant movements at the national level. Together

³⁷ This was part of a declaration declared on the last day of the 1993 Lembang Meeting.

with activists of the *Sintesa* Foundation of North Sumatra³⁸ and the Rode Group in Yogyakarta,³⁹ the influence of the Bandung-based LPPP activists gradually grew.

Between 8-11 November 1993 they gathered with 120 other activists and peasant leaders⁴⁰ from other regions of Java, Madura, Sumatra, Bali and Lombok in Lembang, West Java, to discuss the development of land conflict advocacy work conducted so far by NGOs and student movement groups.⁴¹ Besides reflecting on their previous land advocacy work, this meeting aimed to revive a national coalition of peasant movements in Indonesia. Participants at the meeting considered that such a coalition had been missing in the land struggles of the 80s; while a majority also believed that the existence of deeply - rooted, peasant organizations were important in long struggles for land, and that, despite New Order repression, it was possible to re-build rural organizations. Others were inspired by the concrete example of the revived local peasant organization in North Sumatra, the Struggle Front of the Penunggu People of Indonesia (BPRPI, Badan Perjuangan Rakyat Penunggu Indonesia). This had been originally formed in 1953 and had survived after

³⁸ At that time this group had intensive contact with Imam Yudhotomo, the son of M. Tauchid a prominent leader of the 1950s socialist peasant movement. M. Tauchid was one of the founders and leader of both the Indonesian Peasant Front (BTI, Barisan Tani Indonesia) and the Indonesian Peasant Movement (GTI, Gerakan Tani Indonesia). Tauchid developed GTI when the BTI moved closer to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). As led by Tauchid, the GTI then became affiliated to the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI, Partai Sosialis Indonesia). He wrote a two volume work *Masalah Agraria sebagai Masalah Penghidupan dan Kemakmuran Rakyat Indonesia* [Agrarian Issues as the Problem of People's Livelihoods and Prosperity] (Jakarta: Penerbit Tjakrawala, 1952 and 1953), which is still used as an important reference for agrarian questions in Indonesia since the colonial period. These volumes were reprinted as one volume in 2007 and 2009 as two different editions by the Nasional Land Academy (STPN, Sekolah Tinggi Pertanahan Nasional) and PEWARTA, Yogyakarta (see Tauchid 2007 and 2009).

³⁹ Such as M. Yamin and Rajiku, who had already formed LEKHAT, and Dedy Mawardi, alumnus of the Indonesian Islamic University in Yogyakarta, who went back to his birthplace in Lampung, South Sumatra, and there led the Bandar Lampung branch of the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute Foundation (YLBHI Pos Bandar Lampung). Some Rode members had a close relationship with the group of activists involved in the formation of the People's Democratic Party (PRD, Partai Rakyat Demokratik). See Chapter IV.

⁴⁰ 51 of 122 participants were local peasant leaders, the rest from NGOs and/or student activists.

⁴¹ Formally the meeting was coordinated by the so-called 'Axis of Kisaran-Lampung-Bandung-Yogya' consisting of four organizations: the LPPP of West Java, YLBHI Pos Lampung of Lampung, LEKHAT of Yogyakarta and the Sintesa Foundation of North Sumatra.

1965, to struggle for 300,000 hectares of land in the Deli region that it claimed belonged to the local *Penunggu* people, in a case known as the *jaluran* land dispute.⁴²

The Lembang meeting aimed to build a new agreement between two groups who had been involved in rural community organizing; ‘the urban-educated activists’ (or what the meeting called the *kalangan tengah*, the ‘middle class’) and ‘groups of peasants’, in order to form a more solid peasant’s organization operating from local to national level. Like the SPJB, it was agreed that the appropriate organization for this purpose was one in which ‘the urban-based middle class activists’ should be involved. As the first step, provincial or inter-district peasant organizations consolidating several local communities must be formed, some of whom had been involved in various land conflict cases, as the base for this coalition (discussion notes with initiators of the Lembang meeting, 10 October 1994⁴³; see also ‘Laporan Pelaksanaan Lokakarya Antar Wilayah Kasus-kasus Tanah’ 1993: 52-58).

The debate at the 1993 Lembang meeting on methods of urban-based land conflict campaigns and advocacy during the 80s, led to the recommendation that the formation of another organisation (1) should have direct links to peasants in order to defend their rights; (2) should have mutual

⁴² The origin of this case dates back to when the Sultan of Deli leased a large parcel of land of the local Malay people of Deli to foreign plantation companies in East Sumatra to grow tobacco in the middle of the 19th century. At that time local people were still allowed to use land to plant food crops between the rows of tobacco plants (known as *jaluran*, strip cultivation), which was then called *jaluran* land. The right to use this land was ignored when the nationalization of foreign plantation estates was implemented in 1958; it had been an issue there since the East Sumatran social revolution of 1945-46. All land rights were then claimed by State-owned plantation estates. The BPRPI had been formed in 1953 by local people who were fighting to get their strip cultivation rights back. This organization had taken an important step when it had formed a coalition with a local political party, the Nationalist People’s Party (PRN, Partai Rakyat Nasionalis). BPRPI was then the only peasant organization fighting for indigenous people’s rights to land. During the New Order, BPPRI was led by the charismatic leader Abah Afnawi Nuh who had connections with students and NGO activists both in Sumatra and Java. See Pelzer 1982: 54-57, Nuh 1995, and Agustono, Tanjung and Suharsono 1997 for the story of BPRPI’s struggle.

⁴³ In October 1994 as a researcher at the Akatiga Foundation (a center for social analysis), the author was involved in discussions with several initiators of the Lembang meeting, including Noer Fauzi, Boy Frido and Airianto, to start a joint project to develop provincial level peasant organizations in several areas in Indonesia.

relationships between the peasants and urban-based activists/organizations, avoiding what had occurred in previous land conflict advocacies which, as we have seen, had made peasants dependent on urban-based activists; (3) should be rural-based even with the involvement of urban-based activists and organisations; and (4) should continue to foster peasant radicalization against the non-democratic and non pro-poor regimes.

One of the participants was Henry Saragih of the *Sintesa* Foundation who subsequently became a main actor in the North Sumatra Peasant Union (SPSU, Serikat Petani Sumatera Utara) and then in the national coalition of peasant unions, the Indonesian Federation of Peasant's Unions (FSPI, Federasi Serikat Petani Indonesia); both these organisations will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Here we need to note that in reporting his group's experience in grassroots organizing of land conflicts, Saragih, observed that the problem of land conflict advocacy was that it is not conducted in a continuous way:

By the time a [land conflict] case is closed, and more often before it has been resolved, activists have frequently departed... This happens because activists are students that are mostly affiliated with temporary movement groups, which were formed around specific disputes with specific actions in mind... The weakness of most NGOs is that they don't have specific programs for organizing and defending peasant's rights. Because they are usually focused only on legal aid and those NGOs that are willing to join land conflict advocacy are small NGOs with limited resources (Saragih 1998: 53 [originally 1993]).⁴⁴

Noer Fauzi (of LPPP) and Agus Edi Santoso (of PIPHAM), two other prominent participants who attended this meeting, argued that a passive attitude had developed among the peasants while trying to express their aspirations and struggle for their interests. The middle-class urban-based activists who assist them were treated as 'the heroes' who bring knowledge and direction about what the peasants should do. Their advocacy in a broader sense

⁴⁴ His and other written arguments were originally presented during the 1993 meeting, but the proceeding of the meeting was only published 5 years later in 1998. To indicate when the original comments were made the reference note will be written as 1998 followed by the original year of presentation in brackets.

made the peasantry dependent on them (Fauzi 1998 [originally 1993]; see also Fauzi 1995: 3-4)⁴⁵ partly because they wanted to keep their position as ‘advocates’. As a consequence the relationship model between the urban-based protest groups and the peasants, particularly the victims of evictions, was established as a relationship of lawyers and their clients (Santoso 1998: 82 [originally 1993]) or as we have mentioned earlier, as a ‘doctor-patient’ relationship (Fauzi 1995: 3-4).⁴⁶

Moreover, according to Fauzi, there was the idea ‘that students, who will help them [the peasants] escape from catastrophe, had appeared among them ... [as the consequence] this kind of “messianic” perception led them to wait for the results of their advocacy’ (Fauzi 1998: 93 [originally 1993]) conducted by their ‘messiah prophet’. While the students and their movement, namely the ‘committees of defenders of peasant’s rights’ that appeared in the 80s, considered they should be the ‘guardians of societal morality’. Much student involvement in actions to defend peasants’ rights was based on ‘humanism of an educated people who *pitied* the peasants, or felt *touched* by their plight and that sort of thing’ (Fauzi 1998: 90 [originally 1993]). This made these student movement groups unable to be defenders of peasants on a permanent basis, only appearing when advocacy was undertaken on particular cases.

A way had to be found to overcome the negative impacts of the urban-based activists on the peasant groups, and the limitations of the NGOs as well. It so happened that at the same meeting a scholar-activist from Satyawacana Christian University, George Junus Aditjondro, proposed that the movement’s struggle for radical political and economic democratization should be based on ‘autonomous people-based organizations’ (1998: 31-32 [originally 1993]). This opened a new path for peasant movements, and strengthened activists to take

⁴⁵ ‘Advocate’ here is not referring merely to a person who held power of attorney from the peasants to act as their defender in court. It covers also a person who organizes the community and campaigns for peasant’s rights outside the judicial system, sometimes called ‘paralegal’ in the Indonesian legal aid system.

⁴⁶ See on this topic section 5.1.1 above.

initiatives to develop local bases for a national coalition, which would shift the role of urban-based social movement groups from speaking on behalf of the peasants' interests. The meeting concluded with all participants agreeing by acclamation to form an embryonic independent federative national peasant organization, to be known as the 'Indonesian Peasant's Organization' or 'Organisasi Tani Indonesia'. This agreement was inserted into the declaration (quoted at the beginning of this section⁴⁷), which became the foundation for further initiatives leading to the formation of a national federation of peasants several years later (1998), namely the Indonesian Federation of Peasant's Unions (FSPI, Federasi Serikat Tani Indonesia).⁴⁸

In fact, before the 1993 Lembang meeting, there had been only one case recognized by participants as a 'regional collective of peasants' from a consolidation of peasant movements originally based on local groups involved in land conflict cases. This had been the formation in West Java of the SPJB in 1991 (as we have already discussed see section 5.1.1 above). That is why during 1994-1995 some initiators of the Lembang meeting encouraged others to form new local peasant organizations. This led to the formation of the North Sumatra Peasant's Union (SPSU, Serikat Petani Sumatera Utara)⁴⁹; the Lampung Peasant Union (PTIL, Persatuan Insan Tani Lampung)⁵⁰; and the Central Java Independent Peasants Association (HPMJT, Himpunan Petani Mandiri Jawa Tengah)⁵¹ (see also Bachriadi and Fauzi 2001; Lucas and Warren 2003: 101, especially note 59). These three local peasants' organizations, together with the SPJB and BPRPI, became a form of social capital of pro-peasants activists to

⁴⁷ The original handwritten declaration said: 'Dengan Rahmat Tuhan yang Maha Esa dan atas dasar amanah Pancasila dan UUD 1945, kami Petani Indonesia dengan ini menyatakan menghimpun diri dalam sebuah Organisasi Tani Indonesia guna mewujudkan cita-cita luhur Republik Indonesia. Bandung, 11 November 1993. Kami, Petani Indonesia.' ('Laporan Pelaksanaan Lokakarya Antar Wilayah Kasus-kasus Tanah' 1993: 58).

⁴⁸ The formation of the FSPI will be described in detail in Chapter VI.

⁴⁹ SPSU formed in June 1994. See also Chapter VI, section 6.2, for more detail about this organization.

⁵⁰ PTIL formed in May 1995.

⁵¹ HPMJT formed in September 1995.

consolidate the various movements at the national level through the formation of the FSPI in 1998.

In order to develop these peasant organizations the 'Lembang group' formed a committee to draft a manual for rural organizing and cadre building in peasant communities from local to national levels. The 'ABC Organisasi Tani' (ABC of Peasant Organizations) was published and circulated exclusively by the LPPP (Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pengembangan Pedesaan 1994a). In 1998 KPA published this document with some additional material more widely in a series of 14 manuals titled 'Seri Panduan Organisasi Tani' (Manuals for Peasant's Organization) (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998b). Their publication triggered a counter reaction from anti-communist Islamic groups (Tim Cidesindo 1999),⁵² which accused KPA's manuals as an attempt by Indonesia communists to revive their power (Tim Cidesindo 1999: iv). The editors of this book asserted that KPA's manuals '... contained some agitation and attempts to twist historical facts' (Tim Cidesindo 1999: iv). In 2000-2001 anti-communist groups in Indonesia coordinated in the Anti Communist Alliance (AAK, Aliansi Anti Komunis), targeted KPA's *Seri Panduan Organisasi Tani*, published in 1998, in their 'sweeping'⁵³ because they contained communist ideas⁵⁴ (*Suara*

⁵² The book was published by the Center for Information and Development Studies (CIDES) in collaboration with the Association the Indonesian Islamic Students (Perhimpunan Keluarga Besar-Perhimpunan Islam Indonesia). CIDES was formed in 1993 by Islamic intellectuals and pro-democracy activists connected to the Indonesian Moslem Intellectuals Association (ICMI, Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia), who were unhappy with the undemocratic political situation at that time. One of CIDES' leaders was Adi Sasono, a former Bandung-based student activist of the 60s involved actively in NGOs since the 70s and 80s (see note 74 of Chapter IV). The Indonesian Islamic Students (PII, Pelajar Islam Indonesia) was founded in 1947. In 1965-1966 it was actively involved in demonstrations against Soekarno, and demanded the abolishment of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI, Partai Komunis Indonesia). The PII was a founder and dominant actor in the Indonesian Student Youth Action Front (KAPPI, Kesatuan Aksi Pemuda Pelajar Indonesia), which supported the New Order regime when it took over the state power in 1966. However in 1985 the PII challenged Soeharto when his New Order regime implemented Law No.8/1985 which required all mass-based organizations in Indonesia to have the same foundation (*asas tunggal*) namely Pancasila, in order to gain legal recognition. The PII rejected this regulation and preferred to become an illegal ie underground organization. But it changed its political standpoint in 1995 from opposition to acceptance of *asas tunggal*. The PII's political line was very close to that of Masyumi (Majelis Syura Muslimin Indonesia), an Islamic political party founded during the Japanese occupation and led by a charismatic Indonesian Moslem political leader, M. Natsir. About the history of PII see for instance Hanan 2006.

⁵³ Here, 'sweeping' means illegal investigation and inspection conducted usually by certain mass organizations to find anything or anybody that can be accused of causing 'social or political disorder'

Pembaruan 22 May 2001; and the 'Liputan-6' afternoon news of the SCTV, 10 May 2001 01:41 PM⁵⁵).

In fact not all Islamic groups during the *reformasi* era were antipathetic to peasant struggle and rural protests. The Islamic organization Nahdlatul Ulama (NU, the Revival of Islamic Scholars) showed its support for the peasants' struggle and rural protests against land evictions. In the 30th Mukhtamar (congress) of NU in Lirboyo Kediri in 2000, NU released a *fatwa* (religious advice) about land problems.⁵⁶ In its *fatwa*, NU *ulama* (scholars) stressed the importance to put peasants' interests on land to resolve land conflicts (Suplemen Wahid Institute XII, 2007: 1). Moreover, one of NU leaders, Salahudin Wahid, said that peasants should occupy State Land if the government did not respond to their demands immediately (*Pembaruan Tani* 28, June 2006, p. 5). However, NU's support for peasant struggles on land occurred publicly only after the fall of Soeharto, it was not evident during the New Order era.

Both the ABC of Peasant Organization and the KPA Manuals for Peasant Organization indeed did contain an overview of capitalist exploitation in

according to the perspectives of the 'sweepers'. 'Sweeping' can be conducted by force on the streets, in public or even in private places.

⁵⁴ In May 2001 the AAK conducted symbolic actions in Jakarta, burning books accused of containing communist and Marxist-Leninist thought. Then this anti-communist group went 'sweeping' for the same or similar books and materials in bookstores and student accommodation. If any materials were found, they burnt them on the spot. AAK is an alliance of 33 mass organizations including the Islamic Youth Movement (GPI, Gerakan Pemuda Islam); Front Hizbullah; Red and White Front (Front Merah Putih); the Betawi Youth Forum (Forum Pemuda Betawi); and the Communication Board of Indonesian Mosque Youth (BKPRMI, Badan Komunikasi Pemuda Remaja Masjid Indonesia) among others. This alliance wanted to destroy the Peasant Monument (*Tugu Tani*) in Jakarta as well because they said this monument, erected by Soekarno, was a symbol of the communist 'fifth force' (fifth column) (see 'Asvi Warman: Pembakaran Buku Kiri, Seperti Tindakan Komunis', available at www.berita.liputan6.com).

⁵⁵ Available at <http://berita.liputan6.com/sosbud/200105/12668> (accessed on 4 October 2009).

⁵⁶ In Islamic law a *fatwa* is part of *ijtihad* or interpretation by Islamic scholars (*ulama* and/or *mufti*) about contemporary problems that are not addressed directly by the two highest sources of Islamic law, the Qur'an and Hadits (the Prophet Muhammad's words and acts). Within various categories of *ijtihad*, *fatwa* is advice given by *ulama*, *mufti* or related authorities to resolve problems, usually *fatwa* are requested by *umma* (Moslem people). In Indonesia, the most authoritative institution that gives *fatwa* is the Indonesian Council of Islamic Scholars (MUI, Majelis Ulama Indonesia). NU as an organization of Islamic scholars also releases *fatwa* on contemporary problems faced its followers.

Indonesia from the colonial period until the New Order, which it was argued were the causes of agrarian problems, poverty and exploitation of the peasants, and land conflicts. The manuals also said that peasants needed to resist capitalist exploitation. They included a short and simple description of rural class relations taken from a general overview of Mao's analysis of rural class, which had been used by the Indonesian Communist Party to analyze Indonesian rural society.⁵⁷

Perhaps the AAK and ant-communist groups interpreted KPA's Manuals for Peasant Organization as Marxist materials, because they used words such as 'class', 'feudalism', and 'imperialism' and frequently used the term 'Rakyat Tani' instead of 'Petani Miskin' for 'poor peasants'. Merely looking at the titles and covers might have given this impression to those who had no interest in looking at their contents. Rather than a Javanese or Sumatran peasant, the cover of each manual has a picture of a Chinese peasant (!)

Actually KPA publicly circulated these published manuals in 1998, immediately after the fall of Soeharto, to test the post-Soeharto political openness including reaction from the military, in the context of the re-emergence of local peasant organizations and the increasing number of direct land occupation actions.⁵⁸ The post-Soeharto regime and its military forces did not show any reaction to these manuals, but the anti-communist Islamic mass organizations did. This was a different situation compared to the repression

⁵⁷ The titles of these series of 13 peasant organizing manuals are: (1) *Land Reform Berdasarkan Inisiatif Rakyat* (People-based and Initiated Land Reform); (2) *Tentang Kelas Petani* (On the Peasant Class); (3) *Kaum Tani di Bawah Penindasan Feodalisme dan Imperialisme* (Peasantry Under the Exploitation of Feudalism and Imperialism); (4) *Rakyat Tani Menentang Feodalisme dan Imperialisme* (Poor Peasants Oppose Feudalism and Imperialism); (5) *Pergerakan Kaum Tani di Masa Bung Karno* (Peasant Movements during the Era of Bung Karno); (6) *Kaum Tani di Bawah Penindas Orde Baru* (The Peasantry under New Order Exploitation); (7) *Organisasi Petani* (On Peasant Organizations); (8) *Kader Tani* (Peasant Cadres); (9) *Tentang Aksi* (On Action); (10) *Penerangan* (On Campaigning); (11) *Dana Perjuangan dan Kerjasama* (On Struggle Funds and Cooperation); (12) *Cita-cita dan Program Perjuangan Petani* (Peasant Struggle Objectives and Programs); (13) *Panduan Penyelidikan Pedesaan* (Manual for Rural Investigation) (14) *Dalam Kepungan Kapitalisme Global* (Encircled by Global Capitalism).

⁵⁸ As an activist at that time, I was part of the KPA's leadership that decided to published and circulated these manuals publicly for two purposes: to support the increasing numbers of local peasant's organizations, and to test the public and military reactions to these developments.

experienced by pro-peasant organizing activities during Soeharto's time, when terms such as 'solidaritas rakyat', 'front rakyat' and 'komite rakyat' were suspect in the eyes of military. Then the village military watchdog BABINSA (Bintara Pembina Desa or Non-commissioned Officers for Village Development) could easily get a meeting of peasants or workers labelled as PKI.⁵⁹

However these manuals did not contain strategic directions for a class struggle, which usually appear in communist movement handbooks.⁶⁰ Besides, the 'Lembang group' and KPA writers considered their perspectives on peasant movements and struggles for land were different to those of contained in communist materials. These '90s materials, which the anti-communist groups alleged to be a New Left attempt to spread communist ideas, did not mention the current Indonesian peasant movement as an initial strategic step, usually called 'the bourgeois revolution' or 'the new-democratic revolution', toward the socialist revolution, nor did they mention abolishing individual property rights, nor did they refer to the dominant communist perspective on social revolution.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Thanks to Anton Lucas for his interview note with Efendi Saman, 19 April 2000, related to this subject. About the New Order's BABINSA and its role, see again Chapter II.

⁶⁰ Some examples of the strategic direction of the communist movement include works by Lenin (Lenin 1947a, 1947b, 1947c, 1947d, 1959 and 1962), Mao Tse-Tung' (for instance Tse-Tung 1965a, 1965b, 1965c, 1965d, 1965f, and 1965g), and by the PKI leaders (see for instance Aidit 1959a [originally 1954], 1959c, 1962, and 1964 [originally 1957]).

⁶¹ The communists' perspective on peasant movements and struggles for land placed those movements as supporting the revolution for democracy (the democratic revolution) and/or national sovereignty (the national revolution), even though it could be part of the bourgeois revolution. Communists should support and encourage such movements in order to strengthen the power of the national front to seize feudal and/or colonial state power in a revolutionary way. To limit bourgeois cooptation and manipulation of the revolution, Communists should lead this national and/or democratic revolution to implement the new proletarian-led democratic government or the government of proletarian-dictatorship. Communists preferred to call this democratic revolution stage as the new democratic revolution. Through the power of the state (the proletariat dictatorship government) various attempts to build the new society, the socialist society, will be implemented in which individual landed property rights might be abolished (the socialist revolution stage). The Communist line is simple: the economic progress of peasants requires the elimination of the feudalistic and capitalist landlords and an end to their exploitation, and any potential toward development of this landlordism should be limited. About Communist views on peasant movements and the need to spread rural organization and implementation of the agrarian program of the Communist Party in order to achieve the objective of social revolution, see for instance Lenin 1959: 97-141; Tse-Tung 1965g: 326-331 [originally 1939], and Tse-Tung 1965i: 247-252 [originally 1945]; and Aidit 1959a: 157-168 [originally 1954] and 1959b: 182-185 [originally 1957].

Although the Lembang group's ideas on how to develop autonomous local organizations also aimed to give the movement leadership back to peasant groups, peasant's organizations that were formed in the early and mid-90s have survived up till now (when this dissertation was written). As we have seen these organisations, such as SPSU and STaB among others, are still led and dominated by 'urban-educated activists' that are ex-student or urban-based NGO activists, and many were managed by NGOs assisted rural groups. Those 'urban-educated activists', as part of the urban middle class, on the one hand, have populist ideas for organizing the poor. On the other hand, besides having a populist spirit, the 'urban-educated activists' were aware of the importance of building bases for their political machine and to form peasant organizations as part of these bases. We will see this phenomenon more clearly in the following four chapters.

5.2 Broadening Coalitions for Agrarian Reform

During the 1970s-80s⁶² academics and/or government officials had conducted various discussions about the need to bring agrarian reform back into the public policy-making process. For instance, in 1980 a discussion on the need for land reform was held in a workshop for NGOs conducted by one of the oldest NGO focused on rural development namely Bina Desa, in collaboration with HKTI and the Indonesian Association for Agricultural Economy (PERHEPI, Perhimpunan Ekonomi Pertanian Indonesia)⁶³ An article indirectly referring to the need for agrarian reform to resolve land problems in Indonesia appeared in the 1986 YLBHI annual report (Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia 1986: 3-18).⁶⁴ A non-university-affiliated researcher conducted an in-depth

⁶² See Chapter III.

⁶³ This workshop aimed to review implementation of land laws and land reform in Indonesia, and to present research results conducted by Bina Desa about unequal land distribution and the existence of absentee lands. See Bina Desa 1980.

⁶⁴ Issues of unequal land distribution, people access of natural resources, and land conflicts from then on always appeared in these YLBHI reports every year. See again Chapter IV.

study on agricultural land-holding structures and the transformation of the rural means of production in 1990 (Setiawan 1990), which got wide appreciation from academics and scholar-activists.

On this and other occasions scholar-activists were beginning to analyze the relationship between access to natural resources, unequal land distribution, human rights (economic, social and cultural rights), and issues of democratization in which agrarian reform was part of the discussion. Pro-peasant rights movement groups who so far had concentrated more on 'local issues' of land eviction, fair compensation, and human rights violations to delegitimize the New Order administration, now adopted this agrarian reform idea, which they decided was the appropriate agenda for agrarian justice.

However, the idea of agrarian reform had not yet become a common struggle agenda with which they could consolidate their movement. Agrarian reform was put forward as the objective of peasant struggle and the social movement for democracy and social justice in two meetings in 1993, the 'Lembang meeting' described above and the 'Medan meeting' (which will be described in 5.2.1 below). The crucial moment occurred when a coalition of social movement groups and scholar-activists produced the document called 'The 1995 Statute of the Consortium for Agricultural Reform (KPA, Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria)' (*Pandangan Dasar KPA 1995*) which declared that agrarian reform would be the common agenda of NGOs, peasant organizations and individual scholar-activists. This was an important document in marking the revival of pro-agrarian reform social movements in Indonesia post-1965.

Although various local radical protests against land eviction had occurred during the 70s and sprung up again in subsequent years, the document 'Pandangan Dasar KPA 1995' (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b) marked an organized attempt to 'scale up' the local struggle on land and was intended to bring agrarian politics into a wider arena at the national level. This document had become the basis for the formation of the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA) a year earlier, in 1994. It was also used to attempt to

consolidate an agrarian reform movement, and had been produced from a series of studies and consolidation forums across the country during 1994-1995. According to Fakhri '... the document was surprising and also controversial because it challenged the mainstream dominant idea about social change which had rested strongly on economic effort, investment and large-scale land control' (Fakhri 1997: xviii).⁶⁵

Before continuing the discussion of this broadened national coalition, we have to look back a couple years to the 1993 Medan meeting. This was the first non-peasants centred initiative, which brought the agrarian reform idea into a broad consolidation of social movement groups at a regional level in Sumatra. Rather different from the 1993 Lembang meeting, which became a corner stone of the process to develop peasant's organizations and national coalition of peasant movement, the '1993 Medan meeting' was the first time that the idea of agrarian reform was used as a common struggle agenda of a coalition of NGOs and peasant groups.

5.2.1 The 1993 Medan Meeting

In June 1993, several months before the 1993 Lembang meeting was held, peasant leaders and NGO activists in North Sumatra plus several scholar-activists from Java had come together in Medan (the capital city of North Sumatra province), to analyze the causes of land problems in this province and to find solutions. Officially this event was described as 'training in social analysis' conducted between 6-13 June 1993 by the People's Information Network (WIM, Wahana Informasi Masyarakat) in collaboration with the Bandung-based Akatiga Foundation; NGO activists and movement leaders of the Sintesa Foundation; the Marhaenist People's Movement (GRM, Gerakan Rakyat Marhaen); the Indonesian Peasant Alliance (PTI, Persaudaraan Tani Indonesia); Medan Legal Aid Office (YLBHI's North Sumatra office); the Urban Studies Working Group (KSKP, Kelompok Kerja Studi Perkotaan); the Struggle

⁶⁵ The contents of 'The 1995 KPA Statute' will be discussed in more detail in section 5.2.2 below.

Front of the *Penunggu* People of Indonesian (BPRPI, Badan Perjuangan Rakyat Penunggu Indonesia) and local peasant leaders of land conflicts in North Sumatra were all involved in this 'training'.

This event which was originally aimed at capacity building for activists and peasant leaders to analyze agrarian problems in their province, instead ended with an agreement to form a movement network called the Agrarian Reform Movement of North Sumatra (GRA-Sumut, Gerakan Reforma Agraria Sumatera Utara). GRA-Sumut's objective was to push for the implementation of agrarian reform and land conflict resolution, especially in North Sumatra (Wahana Informasi Masyarakat and Akatiga 1993: 15).

The 1993 Medan meeting became the first meeting of social movement groups in the New Order period, which led to a broader consolidation of NGO networks, local peasants groups, and scholar-activists, who adopted agrarian reform as their common struggle agenda. This first step in building a movement network occurred at the provincial level. Some of the organizations and activists involved in the Medan then became important non-Java-based elements to found the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA) one year later (1994).

5.2.2 Formation of the Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria (KPA)

After the 1993 Medan and Lembang meetings, activists had agreed that NGOs in Indonesia should consolidate their campaign and advocacy on agrarian reform and agrarian policy changes. The next step was to broaden their discussions at the national level. On 5 February 1994 a meeting was held in Bandung, attended by 19 activists from 14 NGOs⁶⁶ from various places in

⁶⁶ These were YLBHI (Jakarta); Secretariat Bina Desa (Jakarta); Driya Media Studio (SDM, Studio Driya Media, Bandung); LPPP (Bandung); LBH-Nusantara (Bandung); Akatiga Foundation (Bandung); Cultural Development Foundation (YPB, Yayasan Pengembangan Budaya, Yogyakarta); LEKHAT (Yogyakarta); Pos YLBHI Bandar Lampung (Lampung); Integrated Development Consultant (INDECO, Jakarta); Gugus Analisis Foundation (Jakarta); Community Participatory Development Foundation (YPSM, Yayasan Pengembangan Swadaya Masyarakat, Jember); Sintesa

Indonesia, resulting in an agreement of form a coalition, which would become a national advocacy network for agrarian reform, the KPA or Consortium for Agrarian Reform (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b: 2). They planned to announce this network publicly at the upcoming National Peasant's Day, 24 September 1994, while commemorating 34 years of implementation of the 1960 BAL.

On 7 September 1994 when YLBHI, a member of this coalition, was conducting its own seminar in Jakarta to commemorate the BAL, the police broke up the event within an hour of its opening (*Kompas* 10 and 24 September 1994). The police said that the seminar meeting was illegal because it had no permit. YLBHI tried to continue the seminar, claiming it was an academic forum, not a political event, so did not need permission from the authorities. YLBHI also claimed the police closure of the event had no legal basis and was a violation of human rights (*Kompas* 10 and 24 September 1994). Despite these arguments the meeting was closed down.

The YLBHI seminar was to have been a warm-up event before the public announcement of the KPA on 24 September 1994. Because of the closure of the YLBHI seminar, it was announced in a private ceremony at the Bina Desa secretariat, Jakarta, on 23 September.⁶⁷ From then on, as with other NGOs, KPA was under the surveillance of the New Order's security system. Nevertheless, even though its organizational structure had still to be formalized, its ad hoc foundation committee continued its work on movement consolidation through

Foundation (Kisaran) and the Urban Studies Group (KKSP, Kelompok Kerja Studi Perkotaan, Medan).

⁶⁷ In the press release about the formation of KPA there were 13 organizations and one individual who were listed as having signed the announcement, namely LPPP (Bandung); Akatiga Foundation (Bandung); Sintesa Foundation (Kisaran); People's Information Network (WIM, Wahana Informasi Masyarakat, Medan); YLBHI (Jakarta); Institute for Human Right Studies (ELSAM, Lembaga Studi dan Advokasi Hak Azasi Manusia, Jakarta); Secretariat Bina Desa (Jakarta); Friends of the Earth Indonesia (WALHI, Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia, Jakarta); Women's Solidarity (SP, Solidaritas Perempuan, Jakarta); Institute for Development of Transformative Social Science (LPIST, Lembaga Pengembangan Ilmu Sosial Transformatif, Jakarta); LBH-Nusantara (Bandung); Indonesian Institute of the Defenders of the People (LAPERA-Indonesia, Lembaga Pembela Rakyat Indonesia, Yogyakarta); Arek Foundation (Surabaya); and Bonnie Setiawan (as the individual signatory) from Jakarta.

a series of studies and forums across the country, partly funded by overseas NGOs⁶⁸. For this purpose the country was divided into 9 regions: Northern and Southern Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Papua, Bali and Western Nusa Tenggara, and Eastern Nusa Tenggara (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995a and 1995b).

After these studies and consolidation forums had been conducted, KPA stated the following :

- (1) The BAL, the principal law on agrarian regulations, has never been acknowledged as the source and main reference for resolving agrarian problems since the New Order took power. This was because the New Order's agrarian politics were inconsistent with the aims and mandates of the BAL. The New Order did not implement such mandates, especially 'land to the tillers' and land reform principles, in some cases its officials used the BAL to deny the rights of local people, especially indigenous people, to control land and access to natural resources.
- (2) Agrarian issues such as land concentration, reduction in the number of agricultural (small farmer) holdings, increasing landlessness, increasing numbers of agricultural labourers, increasing incidence of land-grabbing and evictions, decreased legal certainty and therefore protection of people's land-holdings, fewer jobs in rural areas, and increasing migration of rural people to the cities (which created a pool of cheap labour in both areas), had not been resolved appropriately. The result has been massive poverty, marginalization, and ecological damages.
- (3) Uncontrolled exploitation over natural resources had been occurring continuously causing wide scale and increasing ecological destruction, on

⁶⁸ The series of studies and forums were conducted with financial support provided by two of the 'Oxfam family' organizations (the Oxford-based Oxfam Great Britain and Australia-based Community Aid Abroad which became Oxfam Australia) with contributions from several of KPA's foundation member associations such as YLBHI, Akatiga, ELSAM, and Solidaritas Perempuan.

one hand, while limiting local people's access to those resources on the other.

- (4) Occurring in many places across the country, these problems were signs for pro-people social movement groups in Indonesia to build a national coalition to increase their influence with the Suharto regime. A broad coalition was needed not only for advocacy work at the national level; it was needed also to develop popular education, and consolidate rural protests that were emerging in many places across the country (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b: 1-2).

The results of these studies were brought to a national workshop, followed by the 1st National Meeting (Munas, Musyawarah Nasional) of KPA, 7-10 December 1995, attended by participants from 20 provinces in Indonesia (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995a).⁶⁹ Two documents were produced at the Munas, the 'Basic Principles of KPA 1995' (*Pandangan Dasar KPA 1995*) and the '1995 KPA Statute' (*Statuta KPA 1995*). The first, already mentioned above, became the common struggle agenda for proponents of Indonesian agrarian reform for the last three years of the New Order. The second document marked a re-emergence of a national coalition of NGOs, activists and scholar-activists to promote the systematic implementation of agrarian reform for the first time since the New Order regime took power in 1966.

The 'Basic Principles' document asserted that agrarian reform meant (i) revising laws and regulations related to the control of land and natural resources to build a pro-people agrarian law system based on social justice; (ii) reforming unequal land holdings and natural resource management structures (iii) resolving agrarian disputes and conflicts caused by the pro-foreign investment political orientation of the ruling regime; and (iv) developing an adequate support system for people-based economy activities, particularly in rural areas, based on fair land utilization and fair natural resources

⁶⁹ KPA and the Faculty of Economics University of Indonesia Press later published the results of these studies presented at the Munas (see Bachriadi, Faryadi and Setiawan 1997).

management (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b: 428-435). KPA believed that agrarian reform was

... a favourable way to empower marginalised villagers to free themselves from economic exploitation and political repression from the dominant regime... to change social structures, especially in villages, in order to create a strong modern base in the peasantry; to guarantee the certainty of land tenure to local people; to create social welfare and social security systems for villagers and to encourage the support of natural resource exploitation for the benefit of people's prosperity. In order to achieve those goals, agrarian reform should function in a way that releases villagers from absolute poverty and achieves social injustice for all. Thus agrarian reform should support people's sovereignty, which includes cultural pluralism, human rights, democracy, ecological sustainability, and gender equity (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998a: point 11-14).⁷⁰

KPA believed the above principles would establish and maintain agrarian justice, with its goals being "a State where concentration of control, utilization and management of agrarian resources, which only benefits a few people, could be banished" (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998a: point 15). Therefore 'the agrarian reform movement should be made into a new pillar within the Indonesian nation's journey to realize agrarian justice' (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998a: point 22). However, KPA did not say clearly how to carry out this reform. Crucial questions such as the legal basis for this reform, ideological orientation and strategies, and technical matters relating to land redistribution, led to unfinished debates on contentious ideas amongst KPA's members until now.

Besides finalizing the new coalition, during this 1st KPA Munas there were intensive debates on forms of land reform implementation, on the position of the BAL, and on strategies of non-violence.⁷¹ The first debate about forms of land reform implementation came from an overview of indigenous people's land. Much of the land controlled by indigenous people, especially outside Java,

⁷⁰ See also Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 2002a: III-6.

⁷¹ These 1st KPA Munas debates are available in a 241 page narrative report, excluding appendices, compiled by the KPA (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b).

was over the maximum ceiling regulation,⁷² but some activists said this issue could not be treated as an object of redistribution regulated by national land law (Law No. 56/1960) because it came under the jurisdiction of customary law within these communities. Activists working with indigenous people claimed that land reform could not be implemented without recognition of the character, forms of land holdings and traditional swidden agricultural practices used by indigenous communities. Others who were asserting the need to limit the size of land controlled by indigenous communities argued that in many cases land claimed as ‘customary land’ was controlled using a feudalistic structure.

Disagreement between the two views put forward about the position of the BAL nearly split the new coalition into two opposing groups. As we have just seen, the focus of debate was about the New Order regime’s neglect of indigenous people’s rights on their customary land. While all participants agreed about this tendency, some considered the BAL was not the right law to resolve indigenous people’s agrarian problems, i.e. the BAL was part of the problem, not part of the solution.

Participants who had less interaction with indigenous groups were defending the BAL, saying that it was the one and only law in Indonesia imbued with the spirit of nationalism, which also had a clear standpoint for defending the rights of the small peasants. According to this group, the BAL’s mandate on land reform was clearly to resolve the agrarian problems in Indonesia, but ironically this mandate had never been implemented consistently, indeed had been emasculated, by the New Order regime. Being stigmatized as a product of the PKI during the first decade of the New Order in power made public acceptance of the BAL difficult during this period. According to this group of

⁷² In Indonesia, the maximum ceiling of landholding means the maximum allowable land that can be controlled by a household cumulatively based on ownership and tenancy, while the minimum ceiling of landholding means a minimum parcel of land that has to be held/controlled by a peasant household. Based on land regulations (BAL 1960, article 7 and 17, and Law No. 56/1960), the maximum land ceiling varies according to man-land ratios in certain areas. For instance, in densely populated areas, the maximum ceiling is 5 ha, while the minimum land ceiling of 2 ha is the same for all areas. See again Chapter II for further discussion of this subject.

participants, the priority was to bring back the BAL as a pillar for implementing agrarian reform in Indonesia, so advocacy addressed to the ruling regime must emphasise the need to implement the BAL consistently.

Other participants who had been working to defend the rights of indigenous people put forward a different argument. According to them, in many cases the BAL was used to deny the rights of indigenous people to land. This denial of indigenous rights was not only because of decisions made by the New Order authorities; the problem began with the BAL itself. In order to enact the principle of 'state right of control' (*Hak Menguasai Negara*) over land and natural resources (BAL, article 2), indigenous rights could be implemented only as long as they still existed and were not in conflict with the national interest (article 3).⁷³ Going further, Maria Ruwastuti, one of the defender of indigenous people's rights, stated that this denial was based on article 33(3) of the 1945 Constitution which became the constitutional basis of the 'state right of control' over land and natural resources (see Ruwastuti 1998: 4-5).⁷⁴

The debate at the KPA Meeting on the position of customary land in Indonesian agrarian law was similar to what had occurred during the formulation of the BAL itself. From 1948 to 1960⁷⁵, debates took place about

⁷³ BAL article 3 stated 'in view of the provisions in Articles 1 and 2, the implementation of the 'Hak Ulayat' (The propriety-right of communal property of an Adat-Community) and rights similar to that of Adat-Communities, in so far as they still exist, shall be adjusted as such as to fit in the National and States interests, based on the unity of the Nation and shall not be in conflict with other higher acts and regulations level' (*'Dengan mengingat ketentuan-ketentuan dalam pasal 1 dan 2 pelaksanaan hak ulayat dan hak-hak yang serupa itu dari masyarakat-masyarakat hukum adat, sepanjang menurut kenyataannya masih ada, harus sedemikian rupa sehingga sesuai dengan kepentingan nasional dan Negara, yang berdasarkan atas persatuan bangsa serta tidak boleh bertentangan dengan Undang-undang dan peraturan-peraturan lain yang lebih tinggi'*). The English translation is from a BAL provisional translation (Government of Republic of Indonesia 1960)

⁷⁴ Article 33(3) says that 'the land, the waters and the natural resources within shall be under the control of the State and shall be used to the greatest benefit of the people' (emphasis by the author to highlight Ruwastuti's critical point). Maria Ruwastuti, who was selected as a member of the KPA Expert Council, formulated her argument more fully in KPA Position Paper No. 6/1998 (Ruwastuti 1998).

⁷⁵ Successive drafts of the BAL were produced by several State Committees (*Panitia Negara*) from 1948 (the Yogya Committee) to the last committee (the Committee of the Department of Agrarian Affairs) who produced the final draft in 1960. For the results of these committees and a history of the BAL formulation see Pelzer 1982: 21-27; Harsono 1997: 122-129, Wiradi 2000: 134-138, and Soetikno 1987.

formulating a new agrarian law, acceptable to political groups with different ideological perspectives. These includes debates among the formulators of the BAL on how to make this new agrarian law a 'modern' law suitable for development and in harmony with both adat and Islamic law, while trying at the same time to eliminate the principle of legal pluralism (see Pelzer 1982: 20-27; and Gautama and Hornick 1974: 65-94). The debate about land rights based on customary laws was focused essentially on the role which customary law should play in creating national law and over whether a unified national law should be created by rapid codification or by incremental judicial reform⁷⁶ (Fitzpatrick 1997: 172, note 1). These disagreements were finally 'ended' with a compromise that regulated the conversion of customary land rights into a range of western-style statutory rights when the BAL was promulgated (See BAL article II, VI and VII on the Conversion Regulations).⁷⁷

⁷⁶ This issue appeared not only during the process of formulating the BAL; it was a main issue of all attempts to build a post-colonial Indonesian law system. The revolution of independence led nationalists to revoke most existing Dutch laws as they tried to formulate a new legal system for independent Indonesia. Their leading reference was the existing 'living' laws of various communities, which now made up what was called the 'Indonesian nation', the adat laws. But the various adat laws themselves created a 'problem' for the newly independent nation, which wanted to build unity through legal unification. Customary law codification was one attempted resolution of this problem, but it took time to do. While leaders of the new republic did not want a legal vacuum occurring in the aftermath of the struggle to form the new post-colonial state, the customary land codification during the Dutch colonial regime only covered criminal law, while modern legal management (the institutions, procedures and doctrinal principles of law enforcement) had gone too far under the Dutch colonial system to be easy to reform in a short time. In the midst of the politics of how to build the newly independent state, various kinds of syncretism could not be avoided, mixing the Dutch legal system with legal ideas grounded in customary laws. For an extensive discussion on this topic see Gautama and Hornick 1974: 65-94, Wignjosebroto 1994, especially chapter 9-10; Burns 1999: 255-308; and Lev 2000, especially chapters 2, 3, 5 and 6.

⁷⁷ Nearly 40 years later Prof. Boedi Harsono, one of the law experts involved in the BAL formulation processes, has tried to explain the functional relationship between adat law and national agrarian law in the BAL. According to him, in order to develop the national land law, adat conceptions, principles, institutions and social relations pertaining to land were used to formulate formal/written legal norms as appears in the BAL. This final position of the BAL regarding the existence of customary law was to build a unified land law, based on adat law principles. This was different from the previous draft (Soenarjo's draft 1958), which had proposed to collect all the best legal elements and institutions from both adat laws and the western land laws in one place (Harsono 1997: 171-204). However, creating a solid national land law is a long process; more than 37 years after the BAL has been promulgated, Indonesia has no consistent written land laws and regulations, so adat laws on land are needed to fill gaps. According to Harsono, adat laws are functioning as complementary laws (Harsono 1997: 191, 197-198). The BAL has a unique position as it was promulgated as the starting point to develop a unified agrarian law system in Indonesia. That's why the BAL was called a 'basic law' to which other laws would refer (Harsono 1997: 170).

In the end, the BAL became one of the laws produced in the post-independent transition period. It was imbued with contentious ideas about the realities of the time which were reflected in its ambivalence about the principles of legal pluralism and unification. Even though there was recognition of adat laws as living laws, it also tried to build a unified 'modern' agrarian law. The BAL also reflected the supremacy of 'realism of law' thinking over idealism to create a new unity in nation-and-statehood (see also Gautama and Hornick 1974: 65-94; Wignjosoebroto 1994: 201-215; and Burns 1999, particularly page x and 306-308).

Returning to the KPA Munas debates of 1995, land rights of indigenous people was discussed not in the perspective of nation building but in the perspective of human rights, especially the rights of self-determination and freedom from state domination. The main arguments of defenders of indigenous rights were that various laws and regulations following the BAL including the Forestry Law, had led to the eviction of many communities from their ancestral land. In their view, the articles regarding conversion rights over customary land regulated by the BAL were not implemented as they should have been. Many customary lands were claimed as State Land (*tanah negara*) by BPN (the National Land Agency) both at national and/or local level. Also the rights to open the forest for swidden agriculture, which automatically became 'someone's customary property' according to adat law, were no longer recognized after the promulgation of the BAL. The land authorities considered the opening and use of State Forests should follow forest resources management regulations on utilization of state land.⁷⁸ In Fitzpatrick's words, 'the BAL's syncretism, in which purportedly universal adat principles were incorporated into Western-style statutory law' failed 'when the judiciary and adat communities are subordinate to the state's drive for economic

⁷⁸ The main arguments of the defenders of indigenous rights in the 1st KPA Munas in 1995 were published as Position Paper KPA No. 6/1998 (Ruwiastuti 1998). Arguments about the loss of customary land after the implementation of the BAL also can be found in this position paper (Ruwiastuti 1998: 3-10). See also a similar argument in Fitzpatrick 1997 and 2007: 137-139.

development' (Fitzpatrick 1977: 212; see also Gautama and Hornick 1974: 91-93).

Summarising then, the defenders of indigenous people's rights in the 1st KPA Munas in 1995 demanded revision of the BAL as a KPA priority. They argued that KPA should formulate a revised agrarian law that clearly accommodated various forms of customary land holdings. The concept of 'State Right of Control' (HMN), as an important principle in the BAL, must be replaced by the principle of 'enactment of the people's rights'.⁷⁹ Also the principle of legal unification found in the BAL should be replaced by the principle of legal pluralism.⁸⁰

Those attending the 1st KPA Munas decided the next priority after indigenous rights was to formulate a civil society-initiated draft revision of the BAL. This draft still stressed mandates for agrarian reform implementation, but with acknowledgement of indigenous people's rights, gender equality, and ecological sustainability. As well the draft BAL revision should be pro-poor and small peasants, be a socially just law, while maintaining the spirit of nationalism (see 'Pandangan Dasar KPA' in *Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b*: 428-435; See also *Tim Legal Drafting KPA 1998*).

Not surprisingly given all these aims, BAL revision has since become a hot topic among agrarian reform proponents in Indonesia. The revision of BAL also came onto the agendas of multilateral development agencies such as the World Bank and other proponents of neo-liberal agrarian law reform within the BPN and Bappenas, which KPA opposed. The ideological issues around this initiative to revise the BAL thus came onto the table; KPA's move on this issue opened a Pandora's box complicating further discussions over the BAL revision.

⁷⁹ The KPA critics of the principle of 'state right of control' over land and natural resources then published Position Paper KPA No. 4/1998 (Fauzi and Bachriadi 1998). Detailed argument about the enactment of the people's rights over land and natural resources can be found in the 'Proposal for Revision of the Basic Agrarian Law' (*Tim Legal Drafting KPA 1998*: 2-19).

⁸⁰ KPA's arguments about the agrarian legal pluralism principle were formulated in Position Paper KPA No. 5/1998 (Zakaria 1998), Position Paper KPA No. 6/1998 (Ruwiastuti 1998) and also the 'Proposal for Revision of the Basic Agrarian Law' (*Tim Legal Drafting KPA 1998*: 2-19).

The next debate at the KPA Munas was over the use of violence in agrarian conflicts by KPA members in Indonesia. Some participants, referring to the draft of the 'KPA Statute'⁸¹, felt that non-violence, according to the Gandhian *ahimsa* principle, must be one of the basic principles of agrarian reform. Bonnie Setiawan, individual founder-members of KPA⁸², gave the conference steering committee's view adding that the non-violence principle in the agrarian reform context meant that the movement would not use armed struggle or equip the peasants with weapons to bring about reform (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b: 164-165).⁸³ Others, such as Asep Kusmana (a Bandung-based student activist of Padjadjaran University), Nasrul (from Taratak, in West Sumatera), Dedi Mawardi (from LBH Pos Bandar Lampung) and Stepanus Djuweng (from the IDR, Institute for Dayakologi Research and Development, West Kalimantan) questioned the inclusion of the principle of non-violence into the draft of the KPA Statute (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b: 165-166). They felt this principle reflected the views of the 'urban-based activists' and did not necessarily fit with the real conditions experienced by grass roots communities during land conflicts. They argued that violent actions were sometimes justified, in order to oppose New Order repression such as evictions, arrests and intimidation of local people., Nasrul and Stepanus Djuweng, who supported the deletion of the non-violent

⁸¹ The Statue was formulated by a 13 person steering committee namely: Noer Fauzi (coordinator) of LPPP, Dianto Bachriadi of Akatiga, Ifdhal Kasim of ELSAM, Tjita Angdangsedjati of Bina Desa, Eko Putranto of LPPS, Ayi L. Bunyamin of LPIST, Chalid Muhammad of WALHI, Efendi Saman of LBH-Nusantara, Bambang Widjajanto of YLBHI, Endang Suhendar of Akatiga, Tati Krisnawati of Solidaritas Perempuan, Boy Frido of YAR, and Bonnie Setiawan (a non-affiliated individual member).

⁸² See again note 66 above.

⁸³ Compare this meaning of the non-violence principle with the definition of non-violence provided by Zunes, Kurtz and Asher (1999). According to them, nonviolent movements are distinguished from armed struggles that they are movements of organized popular resistance to government authority, which – either consciously or by necessity – eschew the use of weapons of modern warfare. They also distinguish themselves from more conventional political movements in that their tactics are primarily outside the normal political process, such as electioneering and lobbying. Tactics may include strikes, boycotts, mass demonstrations, popular contestations of public space, tax payment refusal, destruction of symbols of government authority (such as official identification cards), refusal to obey official orders (such as curfew restrictions), and the creation of alternative institutions for political legitimacy and social organization. Its power is based on noncooperation (Zunes, Kurtz and Asher 1999: 2). See also Boulding 1999.

principle from the draft KPA Statute, argued that 'violent actions' will happen once in a while during campaigns to regain people's land rights. KPA should support groups who had no options other than conducting violent actions because they had no capacity for negotiation and/or lobbying (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b: 165).

Eventually the non-violence principle was deleted from the 1995 KPA Statute. KPA members agreed to support direct land occupation actions, whether conducted by members themselves or by other community groups, in order to fight for their rights and access to the land, for carrying out agrarian reform and to 'ground' claims for agrarian justice. Three years later, at the 2nd KPA Munas in December 1998 (conducted not long after the fall of Soeharto), support for land reclaiming actions were more strongly worded in a new KPA Resolution thus: 'land claim actions conducted by the people now must be treated as attempts to regain rights which had been seized by the State' (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998c: 93, point no. 7). So organizing land occupations in order to reclaim stolen land was now one of KPA's programs (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998c: 82).

Even though KPA now formally recognised land occupation actions, its national secretariat never released a clear political call to member organisations or poor peasants groups to take actions on land occupation. Its national secretariat put the advocacy on agrarian policy changes, including revision the BAL, as its main priority. Even though KPA initiated training for activists about agrarian reform that covered strategies for land reclaiming, actions. The crucial question of what should be done after the land returns to community control was never explained by KPA.⁸⁴ This was because the KPA

⁸⁴ The courses for social movement activists on agrarian reform were conducted by KPA for the first time in 1996, and were continued regularly each year (see Badan Pelaksana KPA 1998 and 2002). In 2000 it conducted a more intensive course, 45 days (four and half weeks longer than the previous two weeks training), to improve the capacity of young activists to develop an agrarian reform movement network to cover rural communities rather than urban-based organizations. This course also urged land occupation actions and to strengthen local peasant organizations to implement the 'agrarian reform by leverage' struggle concept (about the KPA's perspective on 'agrarian reform by leverage' see section 5.2.3 below).

national secretariat felt it was up to member organisations to decide what their post land occupation strategy and tactics would be. KPA did not have a role in organizing or coordinating such actions. In fact KPA never used long land reclaiming actions for its campaigns. Instead they used advocacy campaigns on a case-by-case basis, focusing on getting press releases into public media after violent protest had occurred.

After the 2nd KPA Munas, a document was issued which summed up experiences of members in land reclaiming actions, written by lawyer-activists of the oldest legal aid institution in Indonesia and a founder-member of KPA, the YLBHI. It contained arguments with legal, and human rights perspectives about land reclaiming actions.⁸⁵ This document filled a gap in the formulation of campaign strategies for land reclaiming. Although the YLBHI was a founding member of KPA, it produced the document without KPA collaboration, having initiated it outside the 2nd KPA Munas.⁸⁶ It became apparent from this document that the signed-up member associations of the KPA were not prepared to operate only within the KPA framework.

One impact of the slow response of KPA leaders in formulating an overall campaign strategy on reclaiming actions, was a new debate at an internal meeting at the end of 2000 about the performance of the KPA national secretariat. KPA national secretariat members were questioned by participants for giving too much attention to agrarian laws and policy advocacy, including the proposed revision the BAL, rather than implementing other mandates as

⁸⁵ This document was an outcome of the YLBHI's project 'Land for the Tiller: Finding Legal and Policy Solutions for Land and Natural Resources Conflicts', which had been supported by a USAID funded organization, BPS-Kemala. It was distributed widely as a book by YLBHI and the RACA Institute (or Institute for Rapid Agrarian Conflict Assessment). See Widjardjo and Perdana 2001. The RACA Institute was an NGO, which grew out of this project; while the BSP or Biodiversity Support Program is a consortium of the World Wildlife Fund, the Nature Conservancy and the World Resource Institute. USAID funds BSP under a cooperative agreement, which is managed by USAID's Global Environment Center. BSP has a program in Indonesia, which is known as KEMALA (<http://www.worldwildlife.org/bsp/kemala>).

⁸⁶ In YLBHI's proposal to BSP-Kemala as the potential funding agency for the project, as reported openly by BSP-Kemala on its website (available at <http://www.worldwildlife.org/bsp/kemala/lbh.htm>), it stated that it would conduct the project in collaboration with KPA. In fact, YLBHI then conducted this project by itself.

determined in the KPA 1999-2002 program. They demanded that KPA put land occupation and reclaiming actions first in its campaign activities and that it should act as 'the instigator and coordinator' of attempts to spread land occupation and reclaiming actions conducted by its members (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 2000: 35-37). But because this meeting was a consultation not a decision-making forum, no clear program could be binding on KPA leaders about how the land occupation and reclaiming actions should be conducted.

Land occupation actions, especially on plantation estates and forestry lands, were already occurring in Indonesia before 1998, and still continue until today.⁸⁷ Peasant groups, whether or not members of KPA, were involved in these actions. In some places violent physical clashes broke out between the occupants and state security forces and/or paramilitary hired by the managers or owners of the plantation estates (see for instances Lucas and Warren 2000; Bachriadi and Lucas 2001 and 2002; Bachriadi 2001b, 2004 and 2008; Suryaalam 2003; Perdana 2003; Wahyudi 2005; Supriadi *et al.* 2005; Mustain 2007; Safitri 2010; and 'Berjuang untuk Tanah, Penghidupan, dan Kebebasan', oral history interviews records, 2003).

The fall of Soeharto's authoritarian regime in 1998, although replaced by more democratic regimes, did not see a reduction in violent actions against land claimants and occupants (see for instance Mismuri and Supriadi 2002, *Tempo* 04-10 August 2003, Bachriadi 2004, Embu and Mirsel 2004, Perhimpunan Rakyat Pekerja 2006, Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 2005 and 2007, Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria *et al.* 2007, and Serikat Petani Indonesia 2009). Violence experienced by peasants or local communities who claimed or occupied State Land and State Forests was the motivation for revising the Statute to remove the reference to non-violence. However there were limits to

⁸⁷ One of the most recent occupation actions occurred in South Sumatra province. Hundreds of local peasants from Rengas Village, Ogan Ilir District, occupied disputed land on the PTPN VII State-owned plantation estate in the first week of January 2010. They planted rubber, coconut, pineapple and banana trees in between PTPN's sugarcane crops (*Kompas* 11 January 2010).

advocacy work for pro-poor agrarian reform, because landlords had more political access to policy-making processes than social movement groups had.⁸⁸ But the pro-agrarian reform movement in Indonesia have should been doing more than advocacy work and lobbying of policy makers. They needed to gain more power to ensure the implementation of pro-poor agrarian reform policies.

Again, in the 3rd KPA Munas 2002 this issue it was again stressed, namely that KPA, claiming as it did to be a national coalition, should coordinate land occupations and methods used in reclaiming actions. While doing this, KPA should encourage coalition members to work for agrarian justice. At the same it called on the agrarian reform movement in Indonesia to take more radical action, instead of being mostly involved in campaigning for policy change. But the 3rd Munas forum rejected this call for more coordination of land occupation actions. The reason officially given was that as a technical matter, the plenary session of the Munas at that time could not address this topic more deeply (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 2002b: 455-457). Besides this technical reason, it seems many activists at that time believed that a more democratic post-Soeharto regime would provide opportunities for the implementation of agrarian reform in Indonesia, as long as KPA could influence policy making processes in this new political era (see Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998a and 2002b, annex 3 and 4).

The military was another issue addressed at the 3rd KPA Munas in 2002. According to a former chairperson of KPA, 'controlling state power is important to repress the anti-reform forces... it makes possible a change in the attitude of military forces towards the agrarian reform program' (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 2002b: 455). He argued that military support is a key to successful agrarian reform implementation. This has been shown to be the case in

⁸⁸ In fact, an overview of the alliance between business and the State apparatus to produce public policies against poor peasants' interests had been the KPA's perspective since its formation in 1995. See Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995a, 1998a, and 1998c: 92-93. The 2002 3rd KPA National Meeting had stressed this point again in the document '*Pandangan Politik KPA*' (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 2002b, Annex 2: ii).

countries that have implemented agrarian structural change programs since World War II, such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 2002b: 455).⁸⁹

KPA had been concentrating more on campaign and policy advocacy activities. These had been growing since its formation in 1994⁹⁰ with relatively less suppression from the New Order regime. This was in contrast to repression experienced by members of local organizations who had initiated land reclaiming actions directly. Besides being relatively safe from direct state repression, either during the New Order or after, the KPA's strategy to concentrate more on campaigns, policy advocacy and development discourses on agrarian reform implementation, successfully made it one of the strongest national voices advocating agrarian reform in Indonesia (Lucas and Warren 2003: 101-116, Di Gregorio 2006: 6), even though this was not correlated with the number of policy changed directly. Table below showed the KPA 'success story' in campaigning for agrarian reform and policy changes, as claimed by KPA, and its direct consequences on the policy changed from 1995 to 2007.

⁸⁹ These arguments referred to the successes of governments such as in China, Mexico, Japan and South Korea to implement land reform programs in the early and mid-1990s because they had support from the military. On land reform implementation related to State power, peasant movements and mobilization in China, see for instance Wolf 1969: 103-158, Shillinglaw 1974, King 1977: 252-278, and Moise 1983; for Mexico see Tannenbaum 1929, Senior 1958, Tuma 1965: 107-128, Wolf 1969: 3-50, King 1977: 92-114, Otero 1989, and Bartra 1993; for Japan see Kondo 1952, Chang 1956, Owada 1956, Dore 1959, Tuma 1965: 129-146, Gilmartin and Ladejinsky 1972, Parsons 1972 particularly pages 75-77, and King 1977: 192-206; for South Korea see Mitchell 1952 and 1972, and King 1977: 219-232. See also Huizer 1999 for an extensive discussion about peasant mobilization for land reform with case studies including Mexico, China, and Japan. While Tai 1974 provides an extensive comparative analysis on the relation between land reform and politics in some Asian and Latin American countries including Mexico. Tai also discussed specifically the role and interests of the military and urban middle-class in these programs.

⁹⁰ See Table 5.2 below for details of the increasing KPA membership since its formation in 1995 until its 5th National Meeting in 2009.

Table 5.1 KPA's Main Campaign and Advocacy on Agrarian Reform Policies and Consequences for Policy Changes, 1996-2007

Year	Campaign and Advocacy Issues	Targeted Policy and Regulation Changes	Consequences of Policy Changes
1996 - 2006	Revision of the BAL 1960	BAL 1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BAL was not revised as proposed by KPA Proposals and drafts formulated by the government's team were dropped
1996-1997	Opposition to World Bank and AUSAID funded Land Administration Project (LAP)	Implementation of the LAP	LAP was implemented, no significant changes on this project implementation
1999 - 2001	Strengthening agrarian reform mandates	Decree of the People's Consultative Assembly (Ketetapan MPR) on Agrarian Reform	MPR passed Decree IX/2001 on Agrarian Reform and Natural Resource Management
2002	Promoting the National Committee on Agrarian Reform (KNRA, Komite Nasional untuk Reforma Agraria)	Establishment of KNRA	The campaign was stopped by KPA itself based on its political calculation and weak support from other NGOs. Then KPA changed its campaign issue to the establishment of the National Commission for Agrarian Conflict Resolution (KNUPKA, Komisi Nasional untuk Penyelesaian Konflik Agraria)
2002-2004	Agrarian conflict resolution	Establishment of the National Commission for Agrarian Conflict Resolution (KNUPKA)	KPA, KOMNAS HAM and other NGOs proposal to establish KNUPKA was rejected by President Megawati and then President Yudhoyono
2004	Revoking the new plantation law	Law No. 18/2004 on Plantations	Targeted law was neither revoked or revised
2004 - 2007	Promoting agrarian reform implementation to the Yudhoyono regime	Agrarian reform implementation by Yudhoyono's regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yudhoyono responded in a presidential speech on 'land for the prosperity of the people' BPN proposed the National Program on Agrarian Reform (PPAN, Program Pembaruan Agraria Nasional) that had little support from other departments; PPAN has no legal basis
2006	Abolishing new regulation on land allocation for public interests (<i>'tanah untuk kepentingan umum'</i>)	Presidential Regulation (Perpres, Peraturan Presiden) No. 36/2005 and No. 65/2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perpres No. 36/2005 was revised by Perpres No. 65/2006 Perpres No. 65/2005 was implemented without significant changes
2007	Abolishing new law on investment	Law No. 25/200 concerning investment	Article related to the period of commercial right use (HGU) was abolished by the Constitutional Court (MK, Mahkamah Konstitusi) decision

Sources: Badan Pelaksana KPA 1998 and 2002, Sekretaris Jenderal KPA 2005, and Dewan Nasional KPA 2009

There were five reasons why the New Order regime did not give specific attention to KPA. Firstly because KPA activities did not directly attack the power and vested interests of 'the palace', even though the advocacy and campaign voices of the movement network using the idea of agrarian reform had contributed to delegitimizing the authoritarian regime. Secondly it seems that the New Order regime was confident it could sink the struggle agenda of KPA about land rights, agrarian reform and justice under accusations they were a communist influenced movement. Thirdly, especially since the Left was totally destroyed in '65-'66, the idea of agrarian reform, whether as a political struggle agenda or development theme, was an abstract idea that had already lost broad social support in Indonesia and was surviving only among a few social movement groups and scholar-activists. Lastly struggles of local communities to regain their land rights directly through reclaiming actions were considered more dangerous than the movement's advocacy at the national level.

Only one attempt to suppress the KPA occurred at the beginning of its formation, in 1996-1997, when the New Order Minister of Agrarian Affairs and the Head of National Land Agency (BPN, *Badan Pertanahan Nasional*), Soni Harsono, accused KPA of 'hampering national development and conducting a black campaign against national land policies' (*Kompas* 25 September 1997). At that time the KPA has been campaigning for the revision of the BAL, recognition of indigenous people's rights to land, and reduction of state domination of land control under cover of the implementation of the 'State Right of Control' (Hak Menguasai Negara) over land and natural resources mentioned earlier, along with the national campaign against the New Order's 1995-2000 Land Administration Project (LAP) funded by the World Bank and AusAid.

Minister Soni Harsono accused the KPA of 'selling the peasants' sufferings in land conflict cases to foreign donors', intending to keep land conflicts going to get financial support and attention from the these international aid donors (*Kompas* 25 September 1997, *Suara Pembaruan* 3 October 1997). The Minister

also believed that KPA had a strong interest in stopping the land certification project of the Land Administration Project because, according to him, certification would reduce land conflicts; and if all lands in Indonesia could be certified through this project, the KPA could not use its criticism of land conflicts against the government anymore (*Republika* 30 August 1996 and 2 September 1996, *Kompas* 25 September 1997, *Suara Pembaruan* 3 October 1997).

In his statements on national television and in Jakarta newspapers, Soni Harsono found KPA's campaign against LAP 'disturbing' because people needed land certification (TVRI News at 19:00, 2 September 1997; *Media Indonesia* 3, 6 and 7 September 1997; *Kompas* 25 September 1997), which can strengthen legal certainty of land ownership and attract investors (*Media Indonesia* 1 August 1997, *Kompas* 25 September 1997). He exaggerated the impact of KPA's initiative to revise the BAL, by emphasizing its negative social impact by proposing reimplementing of land regulations based on adat, autonomous local government (*pemerintahan swapraja*), and other past laws (*D&R* 27 September 1997: 92-93, *Kompas* 25 September 1997). All these assertions went beyond the KPA's actual ideas on these issues.⁹¹ His allegations went too far when he reported to Soeharto that KPA had been involved in counterfeiting land certificates with financial support from foreign donors (*Media Indonesia* 3 September 1997 and *Kompas* 3 September 1997).

The core of the KPA criticism against the first phase of LAP (1995-2000) were that while this project would substantially strengthen unequal land distribution and control in Indonesia, the project could not even resolve existing agrarian conflicts (see KPA 1996a, 1996b, 1997a and 1997b, also *Republika* 6 September 1997, *Suara Pembaruan* 6 September 1997 and *Kompas* 8 September 1997). In practice the project consisted of three components, systematic land registration, agrarian policy review and study to develop certification on customary lands. In the KPA view these fundamental agrarian

⁹¹ See interests and arguments of KPA members about the BAL revision on page 196-201 above.

problems could not be resolved through land registration and certification only; instead they must be resolved through the implementation of genuine agrarian reform. The massive land registration and certification was needed and perfectly appropriate if it took place within a genuine agrarian reform implementation framework. KPA also considered the Land Administration Project would add burdens to Indonesia's foreign debt (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1996a, 1996b, 1997a and 1997b).

The New Order's 'powerful mantra' of anti-communism was never abandoned by its authoritarian apparatus even if it used a confusing logic, as when Soni Harsono accused the KPA of being '... 65 NGOs who attempted to change the BAL by using World Bank facilities ... [and] their strategy is similar to the People's Democratic Party (PRD)' (*Media Indonesia* 29 August 1996; see also *D&R* 13 September 1997). The PRD⁹² at that time was in trouble, accused as being one of the new Indonesian communist organizations, mastermind and provocateur of the 1996 riot in Jakarta known as the 'July 27 Affair'.⁹³ In other words, the Minister Soni Harsono was implying that the KPA was also a communist-oriented organization. Several months after Soni Harsono's accusation, a national newspaper reported President Soeharto's warning that the Indonesian people should be alert to several groups that wanted to mess up the country using Mao Tse Tung's strategy of 'encircling the cities from the

⁹² For more information about the People's Democratic Party see Chapter IV, subsection 4.2.1.

⁹³ This riot, also known as the 'KUDATULI incident' (*peristiwa Kerusuhan Dua Puluh Tujuh Juli*) or the '1996 July Darkness incident' (*Peristiwa Juli Kelabu 1996*), originated in an internal political disagreement within the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI, Partai Demokrasi Indonesia), about which the New Order was always making a fuss. Megawati, Soekarno's daughter, was elected chairperson of the PDI in 1993 but was removed in a New Order-supported and manipulated 1996 Congress, to be replaced by Soerjadi, a Soeharto-backed politician. Instead of giving up control of the PDI headquarters in Jakarta to the new chairperson, Megawati's followers transformed it into their base of resistance. Together with other supportive groups, especially the Indonesian Student Solidarity for Democracy (SMID, Solidaritas Mahasiswa Indonesia untuk Demokrasi) and the PRD, they built a 'democratic camp' in front of the PDI headquarters and conducted daily democratic forums (*mimbar demokrasi*) allowing many informal PDI leaders, Soeharto's challengers and other social movement activists to speak about democracy and the New Order's authoritarianism. On July 27, troops and Soerjadi's followers brutally attacked their camp. Soon after the crowd scattered, running battles and widespread rioting took place in several parts of Eastern Jakarta. See Aspinall 2005: 184-193, Luwarso *et al.* 1997, and Supriatma *et al.* 1997: 3-26. About the internal political conflict and among PDI elites steered by the New Order regime see Aspinall 2005: 145-178.

countryside' (*'desa mengepung kota'*) (*Bisnis Indonesia* 18 January 1997).⁹⁴ While Soeharto did not point his finger directly at KPA or other organizations by accusing any particular groups of implementing the 'encircling the cities from the countryside' strategy in order to 'create instability to disrupt the development processes' (*Bisnis Indonesia* 18 January 1997). However, KPA assumed the next targets of his 'anti communism mantras' would have been the pro-poor, peasants and agrarian reform movement groups.

Soeharto's statement lead to a stream of statements from his officials sounding like an old New Order chorus about the existence of 'groups who want to replace the Pancasila, the Constitution, and the legitimate government'

⁹⁴ 'Encircling the cities from the countryside' was Chairman Mao's strategy for winning the revolutionary war against colonialism and feudalism in China, which had specific characteristics, including geography, the structure of society and colonialism, as well as the political relationship between the cities and countryside. In essence this strategy was based on the peasants, rural proletariat and countryside as the revolutionary forces and bases. It is different from 'classic western' communist revolutionary strategy, which was based on urban workers and proletariats. According to Mao, the small Red Army could not defeat the strong colonial and feudal power, which concentrated in the cities. The revolutionary army should use (a) the geographic condition of mainland China where the cities are far from each other even if the colonial and feudal power controlled the transportation and communication infrastructure; (b) the weak political structures and relationships among the ruling elites in different cities and weak relationship between the cities and countryside power holders, caused by feudal rivalries. The Red Army should look to the suffering peasants and rural proletariats to build revolutionary bases in the countryside that were could not be controlled by colonial and feudal urban ruling elites. The revolutionary forces should build these areas as territorial bases before attacking the principal cities. However, stressing the work in rural areas did not mean abandoning the work in the cities and in the vast rural areas, which were still under the contra-revolutionary power; on the contrary, without the work in the cities and in these other rural areas, the revolutionary bases would be isolated and the revolution would suffer defeat. Actually the final objective of revolutionary guerrilla war was the capture of the cities, the Kuomintang's main bases, but this objective could not be achieved without adequate work in the cities. See Tse-Tung 1965b [originally 1929], 1965c [originally 1930], 1965d [originally 1936], 1965e [originally 1938], and 1965f [originally 1938]; see also Po Ta 2000: 31-37 [originally 1951], and Schram 1969: 288-290. According to Po Ta, one of the great interpreters of Mao's thought, control in the countryside did not mean merely military and political control, it included the development of 'backward' people and other areas to be developed into strong rural communities in terms of military strength, politics, economy and culture (Po Ta 2000: 31-32 [originally 1951]; see also Tse-Tung 1965h [originally 1945]). According to Po Ta (2000: 31-37), this is the essence of Mao's thought about 'encircling the cities from the countryside' as reflected on one of Mao's famous writings written at the beginning of 1930, 'A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire' (Tse-Tung 1965c: 117-128 [originally 1930]; see also Tse-Tung 1965g, particularly pages 314-318). In September 1965, Lin Piao, a major architect of Chinese Communist policies and former heir designate to Mao, was promoting the Chinese Communist revolutionary 'encircling the cities from countryside' strategy to be used by other under-developed countries. The rural areas of the world, Lin Piao wrote, would gradually expand to surround the world's cities in capitalist-imperialist countries (Piao 1965). Since that time the phrase 'Maoist revolutionary strategy' has been used, frequently in a negative sense, to refer to any kind of peasant community organizing especially in conflict areas.

which were blown up in the media after riots occurred in several cities in Java including Jakarta (27 July 1996) and Tasikmalaya (26 December 1996). PRD activists who had been involved in various peasant struggles, labour and urban poor movements since the 1980s, were accused of being masterminds and provocateurs of the 'July 27 Affair' in Jakarta⁹⁵; while a Garut-based social movement leader, Agustiana, who had been organizing poor people since the beginning of the 90s and had been involved in the 'Lembang group' (with its declaration of the 'Organisasi Tani Indonesia'⁹⁶, see above) afterwards becoming a prominent founder of the Pasundan Peasant Union (SPP, Serikat Petani Pasundan), was accused of masterminding the 1996 riot in Tasikmalaya.⁹⁷

Although Soni Harsono never produced any proof about KPA involvement in counterfeiting land certificates, KPA rejected his accusations that this organization, like the PRD, wanted to regenerate the communist movement in Indonesia (see *Republika* 6 September 1997, *Suara Pembaruan* 6 September 1997, *Media Indonesia* 7 September 1997, and *D&R* 13 September 1997).⁹⁸ Bambang Widjajanto, Chairperson of the YLBHI at that time (YLBHI was a founding member of KPA), also defended KPA by describing Soni Harsono's accusations as 'nonsense allegations' (*Kompas* 4 September 1997). He suspected the allegations were an attempt by the government apparatus to stop the NGO push for changes to agrarian laws and policies, in other words to repress people's land rights (*Republika* 12 September 1996).

⁹⁵ Some PRD activists were arrested after this Jakarta riot incident. About the 'July 27 Affair', see again note 93 above; and about the arrest of PRD activists see Tim Relawan 1996.

⁹⁶ For the Organisasi Tani Indonesia see section 5.1.2 above; while for Agustiana's involvement in social movements against Soeharto and in organizing peasant struggles in Indonesia see Chapter IV. Chapters VII will discuss in more detail the Agustiana-led peasant organization, the Pasundan Peasant's Union (SPP).

⁹⁷ For the 1996 Tasikmalaya riot, Agustiana's 'involvement', and detail of this case, see LBH Nusantara and Forum Pemuda Pelajar dan Mahasiswa Garut 1997, and Hadad *et al.* 1998.

⁹⁸ To respond formally to this allegation, especially of being a communist-oriented organization, the KPA and some its founding members formally reported this allegation to the National Commission of Human Rights (Komnas HAM, *Komisi Nasional Hak Azasi Manusia*) (*Kompas* 7 September 1996), but the Komnas HAM did not follow up this complaint.

5.2.3 KPA at the Crossroads: Rediscovering Conditions for Agrarian Reform or Strengthening Peasant's Organizations?

The idea of strengthening peasant organizations at the local level and developing a national coalition of peasant movements had overshadowed KPA's existence since its formation in 1995. Activist founding members believed only a strong peasant organization could protect agrarian reform implementation from political manipulation.⁹⁹ KPA's standpoint on the need for strong peasant organizations concurred with their intention to implement the concept of 'agrarian reform by leverage'.¹⁰⁰ The KPA believed agrarian reform should not be fully implemented as a gift from the government that Powelson and Stock (1987) called 'land reform by grace':

Land reform by grace is bestowed upon peasants – without their having participated in forming it – by a gracious government, which may have conquered the old order – the landowning aristocracy – in a revolution, or which may have been elected by an intellectual minority with compassion for the peasantry (Powelson and Stock 1987: 3).

In KPA's original perspective, any attempts to change non-populist agrarian politics should be done along with efforts to strengthen people-based organizations, particularly in rural areas, to build capacity to control change in agrarian justice. In the document '*Pandangan Dasar KPA 1995*' it was stated:

The Consortium for Agrarian Reform urges that all agrarian resources should be used as far as possible for the prosperity of the people. To reach this objective an agrarian politics that can reform the unjust agrarian structures is needed. Agrarian reform is a fundamental claim ... [an] inevitable demand. This strategic agrarian reform should be realized through:

- a. Changing agrarian politics which contain populist ideals, namely basic rights, social justice, gender equality, ecological balance, and sustainable livelihoods according to perspectives of indigenous people;

⁹⁹ They had learnt from studying the experiences of other countries as mentioned by Powelson and Stock (1987), and been involved from the early 90s in the first attempts to form autonomous peasant organizations such as SPJB, SPSU and others (see section 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 above).

¹⁰⁰ This concept originally introduced by Powelson and Stock (1987), was promoted in KPA by Gunawan Wiradi just before the 1st KPA Munas 1995 (see Wiradi 1997; see also Hardijanto 1998 for the first KPA interpretation of this concept, published as KPA Position Paper No. 001/1998).

- b. Replacement of state control and utilization of agrarian resources, with people's control over these resources;
- c. Empowerment through the development of people-based organizations, and a new critical awareness to strengthen the political position of the people;
- d. Implementation of independent land courts to resolve broader agrarian conflicts;
- e. Revitalizing democratic adat law and institutions along with the struggle for the rights of indigenous people (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1995b: 434).

Powelson and Stock (1987) called making the interests of the people the subject of reform, which can be implemented directly through their own organizations, as 'land reform by leverage'.

This is a reform by which peasants, in organizations they have formed and which they manage, bargain with overlords or government from strength they have already achieved... Only through reforms by leverage does the peasant acquire, in the long run, an equitable distribution of welfare and adequate political representation (Powelson and Stock 1987: 3-4).

The KPA's perspective on 'land reform by leverage' was not meant to reject a role for the state in the process of reform. This perspective is in line with Barraclough's (1999: 1) argument that 'land reform without the state's participation would be a contradiction of terms'. The political authority of the State is needed to implement agrarian reform, but it must be under joint control of peasant organizations. This control can be vested in NGOs, scholar-activists or other political groups together with peasant organizations (Badan Pelaksana KPA 1996: 1-3, 1997: 7-8 and 1998: 14-15; see also Bachriadi 2001c).

The change from the anti-reform New Order regime to a new pro-reform ruling regime was needed before KPA's conception of 'land reform by leverage with state participation' could be implemented in Indonesia (Badan Pelaksana KPA 1998: 1, Badan Pelaksana KPA 2000: 2; see also Bachriadi 1996). The overthrow of the Soeharto regime in 1998 provided an opportunity to

introduce agrarian reform as part of the transition to democracy. The beginning of KPA's 1998 Agrarian Reform Declaration reflected this perception:

Now we are in a time of transition symbolized by the fall of New Order domination. Its supporting pillars have come tumbling down and lost their functions, while the new system of division of power has not yet been formed in this country. The crisis has opened up the opportunity for a show of force, a rejection of the old regime's domination. But the agrarian movement is also very susceptible to being manipulated and broken (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998a: point 1-2).¹⁰¹

At the earliest opportunity, a couple of months before the first session of the 1999 elected parliament, KPA began campaigning for the post-New Order People's Consultative Assembly (MPR, Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat) as the highest state institution in Indonesia, to promulgate a decree on agrarian reform.¹⁰² KPA believed that if agrarian reform decree could be put back the government's policy agenda, via a decree of the People's Consultative Assembly (Ketetapan MPR), this would have more authority under the Indonesian legal system.¹⁰³ Under the constitution, all state institutions (the executive,

¹⁰¹ See also KPA's optimism about the implementation of agrarian reform in the post-Soeharto era in its internal communiqué No. 02/1998 (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998e).

¹⁰² KPA launched this national campaign through a public seminar held in Jakarta on 22 September 1999, organized collaboratively by KPA, ELSAM (Lembaga Studi Hak Azasi Manusia), and the Laboratorium of Sociology and Anthropology of the Bogor Agricultural Institute. The seminar, to celebrate National Peasant Day, invited people representing local peasant organizations, NGO activists and younger social movement activists from various parts of Indonesia, including representatives of the top six political parties in the 1999 general election: Golkar, Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle (PDI-P, Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan), Nation Awakening Party (PKB, Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa), National Mandate Party (PAN, Partai Amanat Nasional), Crescent-Star Party (PBB, Partai Bulan Bintang), and the Justice Party (PK, Partai Keadilan).

¹⁰³ In the Indonesian political system, before the reforms of 2004, the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR,) was the highest state institution that represents citizens. The MPR consisted of all members of the legislature chosen by general election and a group of people appointed by the president directly (not by election). Rhetorically this group of appointed people were representing religious and ethnic groups, regional representatives (*utusan daerah*), the military, and other 'non political' social organizations that are influential in the social life of Indonesia, but which cannot contest elections because their organizations are not officially recognized as political organizations. In 1999, after the first general election in the post-Soeharto period, the composition of the 770 members MPR was 470 people elected members of the legislature (DPR, Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat) plus 300 appointed people representing those 'non political groups'. Since 2004 constitutional amendments have abolished military seats in the parliament, and created a new upper house (DPD, *Dewan Pemerintah Daerah*) consisting of four elected members from each of Indonesia's provinces. This new body, together with the DPR, will henceforth constitute the MPR. However, based on the 1945 constitutional amendments, the recent MPR no longer has authority to produce decrees as part of the legal system.

legislative and judicative institutions of democracy) would be bound by this decree (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 2001).

When the decree was finally promulgated in 2001 (MPR Decree No. IX/2001 concerning Agrarian Reform and Natural Resource Management), KPA leaders were convinced that this was an important stage in the Indonesian agrarian movement's attempt to implement reform again, after it was halted in the aftermath of the 1965 attempted coup. At the 2002 KPA 3rd National Meeting its leaders said, 'the KPA believed implementation of land reform without the state's participation is impossible ... Land reform without the state's participation is a *'contradictio in termini'*... As the source of public authority, the power of the state must be used step by step to implement agrarian reform ...' (Badan Pelaksana KPA 2002: 12 and 17). However, the very opposite has happened, the dynamics of the post-Soeharto policy changes overturned KPA's expectation.

To some extent the TAP MPR was hijacked by government departments as well as parliamentary and business interests, which, following a neoliberal agenda, wanted to exploit Indonesia's natural wealth more efficiently.¹⁰⁴ On the one hand, this occurred because of the failure of agrarian reform proponents to consolidate the implementation of the MPR Decree while, on the other hand, the pro-status quo, business-minded and pro-neoliberal politicians and business interests succeeded in hijacking the post-1998 reformation (Bachriadi 2008: 7-8; see also Robison and Hadiz 2004, Sidel 2003, Nordholt 2004, and Törnquist 2000 and 2004).

That this could happen is partly explained by a split that occurred among the proponents of agrarian policy change during the process of campaigning for this decree. One group, initially supportive of the KPA's national campaign on the MPR Decree when it was launched in 1999, then changed their mind, refusing to participate in KPA's campaigning in a national coalition of peasant

¹⁰⁴ See again Chapter II, section 2.2 about this subject.

organizations consolidated in the Indonesian Federation of Peasant's Unions (FSPI, Federasi Serikat Tani Indonesia) led by Henry Saragih.

Henry Saragih of the Sintesa Foundation and the North Sumatra Peasant Union (SPSU, Serikat Petani Sumatera Utara) was one of the founding-members of KPA. He was also intensively involved in the 1993 Lembang Meeting, which produced the Declaration 'Organisasi Tani Indonesia' (see section 5.1.2 above). In the beginning, he expected efforts to build a national coalition of peasant movements through the KPA would achieve concrete results. But two years after the KPA's formation, he expressed his disappointment that the organisation was still dominated by NGOs rather than peasant organizations.¹⁰⁵ He believed that KPA leaders were not serious about implementing the Lembang agreement, even though they were the main initiators of this meeting. Saragih suspected that key persons in the KPA leadership at that time were not consistent in their commitment to strengthen peasant movements in Indonesia: or as he put it colourfully 'the peanuts have forgotten their skins' (*'kacang lupa pada kulitnya'*) meaning that KPA leaders had forgotten their origins (personal discussion with Saragih, 15 October 1997).¹⁰⁶

Saragih's comment wasn't entirely fair. In 1997, leaders of the KPA released a document entitled 'KPA di Persimpangan Jalan' ('KPA at the Crossroads') (Badan Pelaksana KPA 1997).¹⁰⁷ The main substance of this

¹⁰⁵ See Table 5.2 below for the NGOs domination on the composition of KPA membership.

¹⁰⁶ Henry Saragih repeated his criticism again when we met in València, Spain on 7 December 2004 at the conference 'Fòrum Mundial Sobre la Reforma Agraria' and had an opportunity to discuss the progress of agrarian reform movements in Indonesia. On this occasion Saragih mentioned his and KPA's leaders' joint efforts to campaign for a peasant movement at the international level, particularly when they attended the 2nd International Peasant Conference held in Tlaxcala, Mexico, in 1996 that led to the establishment of an international peasant organization, namely La Via Campesina. About this international forum and the attendance of an Indonesian delegation see for instance Bachriadi 2005a: xxvi-xxx. Since 2001, Saragih has limited his interaction with KPA leaders except with Gunawan Wiradi – a Bogor-based scholar-activist, member of KPA's Panel of Experts and one of Indonesia's acclaimed agrarian reform gurus.

¹⁰⁷ This was a report of the Executive Body of the KPA (Badan Pelaksana KPA) to the KPA National Consultative Assembly (RKN, Rapat Konsultasi Nasional) held in Jatiningor, Sumedang of West Java, 11 October 1997.

document was a statement by the then KPA leaders¹⁰⁸ to reconsider the national coalition's strategies in the midst of intense pressure from movements, which were against the New Order regime. KPA leaders at that time, represented by the executive body, stated '...agrarian reform ... does not rely on the State/government's goodwill but can only rest on mass-based organizations' (Badan Pelaksana KPA 1997: 2). For that purpose, 'mass peasant organizations must be rebuilt, and strengthened if already formed' (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998e and 1998f).

On the contrary, the leaders said that 'KPA is not a mass organization – at least it is not an alliance of mass-based organizations... On the one hand, most members of the alliance are NGOs that put the people only as an object of their programs. If there are peasant mass-based organizations, as members of KPA, they are still weak organizationally. On the other hand, those within the KPA believe that members don't want to be treated just as the masses' (Badan Pelaksana KPA 1997: 8). As an organization, members of KPA are independent and autonomous entities and most of them are elitist and pragmatic NGO's with no base in grass roots communities. This restrains the style and character of the work of the KPA as a national coalition (Badan Pelaksana KPA 1997: 4 and 1998: 5 and 2002: 24).

Although the number of local groups who had become members of KPA increased rapidly since its formation as a national coalition in 1994, as shown in Table 5.2 below, the membership composition of this coalition which mixed organizations (NGOs, peasant and other people-based organizations) and individual scholar-activists, was still considered as a weakness. Some activists believed the 'agrarian reform by leverage' ideologically should be fully reliant on the power of mass-based peasant organizations.

Table 5.2 also shows a decline all categories of membership from 259 (in 1995-2008) to 185 (2008-2012), a drop of 29 per cent. While the numbers of

¹⁰⁸ Noer Fauzi and Dianto Bachriadi were Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of KPA at that time.

People Organisations have remained roughly the same (and have actually increased in Sulawesi as the consequences of 'success' of the KPA regional Central Sulawesi activists who brought some people-based organizations to the 3rd KPA Munas in 2002), the decline in total membership is almost entirely due to the fall in NGO memberships. Many NGOs registered as members of KPA no longer existed, either because their activists had moved and/or they had created new other institutions or because of the loss of external financial support. This became evident when KPA national secretariat organizers conducted pre-registration activities before the 5th KPA Munas in 2009.

In fact, the disappearing tendency of NGOs, which registered as KPA members, had already overshadowed KPA since the 3rd KPA Munas in 2002. But during the 3rd and the 4th KPA Munas in 2002 and 2005, a majority of participants asked that a record of participating member organisations be kept for several reasons. Politically it was part of KPA's 'show of force' as a 'big nation-wide movement coalition'. Internally there is perception amongst other NGO activists in Indonesia, that KPA is a 'closed shop' i.e. not inclusive of all activists who are interested or want to be part of agrarian reform but are excluded perhaps (they think) on ideological grounds. Some activists also had the perception that KPA always had heaps of money.

Table 5.2 Development of the KPA Membership, 1995-2009

Region	1995-1998			1998-2002			2002-2005			2005-2008			2009-2012		
	PO	NGO	Indiv.	PO	NGO	Indiv.	PO	NGO	Indiv.	PO ¹⁾	NGO	Indiv.	PO ²⁾	NGO	Indiv. ³⁾
Java	2	28	6	5	25	6	54	20	20	39	43	14	34	39	-
Sumatra	4	10	-	7	19	-	9	35	2	30	26	7	24	15	-
Kalimantan	-	7	-	-	8	-	-	12	--	2	9	3	3	2	-
Sulawesi	-	2	-	3	9	1	28	24	12	26	17	11	34	22	-
Bali	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	2	--	-	2	-	-	2	-
Nusa Tenggara	-	10 ⁴⁾	-	4	6	1	7	14	2	10	16	3	5	5	-
Maluku ⁵⁾	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	6	--	-	-	-	-	-	-
Papua ⁵⁾	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	2	--	-	-	-	-	-	-
Outside Indonesia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
Total	6	60	6	19	72	9	99	115	37	107	113	39	100	85	-
	71			100			251			259			185		

Sources: Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria 1998d, 2003, 2008, 2009a

Note: **PO** = People Organizations, mass-based organizations; **NGO** = Non-Government Organizations, including student groups/organizations; **Indiv.** = Individual. Changes in numbers indicated some organizations dispersed or no longer existing, or the consolidation of peasant organisations at national level, which are restricted from holding double memberships.

¹⁾ Prior to the 4th National Meeting 2005 some original indigenous group members were expelled because the KPA leadership in the period 2002-2004 preferred members of the 'people-based organization' category to come from peasant organizations, as part of a 'correction move' within KPA.

²⁾ Prior to the 5th Munas 2009 some peasant organizations were prohibited from being KPA members by their affiliated national organizations. Some national peasant organizations had regulations that their members cannot hold double-memberships.

³⁾ At the 5th Munas 2009 individual membership was not considered, but some scholar-activists who were members of the KPA in previous periods plus some other academics were appointed as members of the KPA Expert Council that now consists of 10 people (Gunawan Wiradi, SMP Tjondronegoro, Maria SW Soemardjono, Maria R. Ruwastuti, Sandra Moniaga, Boedi Wijardjo, Noer Fauzi, Dianto Bachriadi, Bonnie Setiawan, and Erpan Faryadi).

⁴⁾ Including one member from the previous East Timor province which since the 2nd National Meeting 1998 was no longer included and/recorded as a member of the KPA out of respect for the liberation movement of Timor Leste which at the time did not accept that it was a province of Indonesia.

⁵⁾ Since the 3rd Munas 2002, some members from Maluku and Papua have never attended KPA National Meetings because of the cost of travel, while attendance at these national meetings is important for KPA membership verification. Therefore since 2002 some organizations from Maluku and Papua have not been recorded in the KPA membership list.

Leaders were very aware that movement organizations formed like the KPA are similar to social movement organizations which Offe (1985) called 'new social movement organizations': open and fluid, based on inclusiveness and non-ideological participation.¹⁰⁹ 'Members' were united by short-term events or programs rather than ideological ties, in which the 'life or death' of the organization rested on the shoulders of the leaders in the national secretariat, their creativity and expertise determining the sustainability of the coalition (Badan Pelaksana KPA 1997: 6 and 1998: 5-6). Many KPA members have never been involved in any activities of the organisation except to attend the triennial national meetings. Others just record their organization's name as a member to identify their support of the idea of agrarian reform, and to identify their existence (or wish to exist) as a movement organization (Badan Pelaksana KPA 1998: 5-6 and Sekretaris Jenderal KPA 2005: 13).

KPA's leaders have never made an effort to resolve the problems of internal consolidation among its members except in the period 2002-2005 when they launched a 'correction move' (*gerakan pembetulan*) within the coalition (Sekretaris Jenderal KPA 2005) to revise a spirit of inclusiveness, plurality and a non-class membership orientation had planted at the beginning of KPA's formation. This was an effort to reconsolidate KPA as a people-based organization, with more focus on political education for the peasants and peasant meetings to discuss ideology and struggle strategies of the Indonesian agrarian reform movement (Sekretaris Jenderal KPA 2005: 7).

However, this 'correction move' conducted by several KPA leaders at this period crossed the border of the spirit of inclusiveness maintained since its formation in 1994. Through this 'move', KPA leaders in this period limited their work to issues related to and with indigenous people. One of its leaders, Erpan Faryadi, argued that issues related to indigenous people, including advocacy on

¹⁰⁹ According to Della Porta and Diani, social movement organizations have characteristics like being (i) segmented, 'with numerous different groups or cells in continual rise and fall', (ii) polycephalous, 'having many leaders each commanding a limited following only', and (iii) reticular, 'with multiple links between autonomous cells forming an indistinctly bounded network' (1999: 140).

indigenous people's rights to land, could open the opportunity for feudal landlords to use this issues to restore their feudalistic power (personal communication with Erpan Faryadi, 10 January 2004). Faryadi and his clique's position on the issue of indigenous people struggles led the KPA to lost it's connection with allies of indigenous groups, including the Indigenous People Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN, Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara) and the pro-indigenous people scholar-activists.

Another part of this 'correction move' was to abolish the Expert Council (*Dewan Pakar*) within KPA. Originally the Expert Council was created to pool several individual and scholars-activists who had strong commitments to agrarian reform but cannot represent their organizations, and be a member or be involved in KPA.¹¹⁰ Reasons to limit individual involvement of KPA members to one organization are based on an argument that KPA membership should be based on organizational representativeness in order to respect organized people struggles and to limit individual 'middle-class' domination of the movement (personal communication with Erpan Faryadi, 10 January 2004). In this context, Faryadi as the leader of the 'correction move', said that KPA still respected some agrarian scholar-activists in Indonesia, and would maintain consultation and discussions with them to strengthen the movement, but it should be arranged outside the organization's decision-making process (personal communication with Erpan Faryadi, 10 January 2004).

Then KPA leaders at this time also created an embryonic national peasant movement called the Alliance of Agrarian Reform Movements (AGRA, Aliansi Gerakan Reforma Agraria), an attempt to reconsolidate agrarian reform movements in Indonesia (which will explore more in Chapter VI). In fact this 'correction move' made KPA leadership unpopular amongst many KPA

¹¹⁰ Because of this 'move' to delete individual basis of KPA memberships, some activists and scholar-activists such as Gunawan Wiradi, SMP Tjondronegoro, Bonnie Setiawan, Noer Fauzi, Dianto Bachriadi, Maria R. Ruwastuti, R. Yando Zakaria and Dadang Juliantara among others who had made significant contributions to the development of agrarian reform discourse and strengthening the movement during the New Order period, lost their direct connection to this national coalition; because they cannot represent any other organizations and be members of this coalition at the same time .

members, and Faryadi lost his position as KPA General Secretary at the 4th KPA Munas in 2005. Almost all ex-KPA leaders those were pro the 'correction move' then 'migrated' to their new home in AGRA.

To summarise here, since its formation, it was intended that KPA be a coalition with the following roles: (1) as an instrument to propel the development of rural-based autonomous movements for agrarian reform through political education and community organization training activities not only to members; (2) to be the leverage machine which pushed the new frontiers of political opportunity for agrarian reform implementation through advocacy campaigns and mass mobilization; (3) to be a 'centre of excellence' to explore and discuss appropriate ideas for agrarian reform implementation in Indonesia¹¹¹ (Badan Pelaksana KPA 2002: 24).

These roles were designed specifically to enable KPA to work as an inclusive movement organization, to influence changes both in policy and in society, and to create conditions for agrarian reform implementation in Indonesia, as stated in one of KPA's documents:

Our main task, again, is to urge some changes in society and in policies to create the conditions for agrarian reform implementation. From Sein Lin's study (Lin 1972), we can see what the necessary conditions are for the success of land reform implementation: a clear constitutional basis; strong land reform law; a solid implementing organization; reliable land administration; adequate court instruments; accurate planning, research and evaluation; precise objectives of education and training; a proper budget; effective local administration; and pro-active peasant organizations (Badan Pelaksana KPA 2002: 18).

KPA considered the state had authority to implement the necessary conditions related to the legal basis and administration of agrarian reform, while research, education and training could be provided either by state or non-state actors; the last one, the proactive peasant organization was to be fully located in the society. KPA's advocacy, campaign and mobilization had been

¹¹¹ See 'Pandangan Dasar' and 'Statuta KPA' in KPA 1995b: 428-435 and 439-444, Badan Pelaksana KPA 1998 and 2002, Sekretaris Jenderal KPA 2005 and Dewan Nasional KPA 2009 for details about these roles, tasks and programs of KPA since its formation.

conducted essentially to push the State into fulfilling these conditions, while its efforts to strengthen peasant organizations had been conducted to fulfil the last condition.

Although KPA emphasized the implementation of ‘agrarian reform by leverage’, there were gaps between the rhetoric and practice in KPA’s actions. Firstly the KPA had no clear strategic formulation on how to reach its objectives behind the generic concept of ‘agrarian reform by leverage’ and the necessity for State participation in the implementation of agrarian reform. Secondly KPA paid too little attention to improving its capacity to deal with various political and state institutions (particularly the Presidential office), in order to argue ‘the necessary state participation in the implementation of agrarian reform’, relying too much on the power of short duration (one day) mass mobilizations. Thirdly KPA was too busy trying to be an agent of leverage to do more on advocacy of legal and technical matters needed for agrarian reform (see Table 5.1). Fourthly, as an instrument to propel the emergence and development of rural-based autonomous leverage organizations, the KPA failed to continue previous efforts to develop strong peasant organizations in direct ways.

This was reflected in Henry Saragih’s criticism (see page 218-219 above) and the emergence of internal ‘correction moves’ in 2002-2005. Saragih considered that KPA did not pay enough attention to strengthening one of the most important pre-conditions for agrarian reform implementation, namely a strong peasant organization at the national level, which is why he set up the FSPI. Likewise, as we have noted above, other activists led by a former KPA General Secretary Erpan Faryadi, created the Alliance for Agrarian Reform Movements (AGRA, Aliansi Gerakan Reforma Agraria)¹¹² which tried to conduct a ‘purification’ of KPA’s membership and push through a ‘correction move in the Indonesian agrarian reform movement’.

¹¹² A group of left-activists led by Erpan Faryadi had taken over the KPA leadership during the 3rd National Meeting in 2004. AGRA will be discussed in Chapter VI, subsection 6.3.2.

Nevertheless, how to build strong peasant organizations at local and national level to fulfil the last condition mentioned in various KPAs documents on agrarian reform implementation, has haunted KPA's entire existence. In other words, some KPA's activists and leaders made having pro-active peasant organizations the crucial requirement for agrarian reform implementation since the formation of this national coalition. Even Usep Setiawan, a 2005-2008 General Secretary of KPA and currently Chairperson of the 2009-2012 KPA National Council, who believed that the current Yudhoyono regime¹¹³ would implement agrarian reform in Indonesia rhetorically said that '.... agrarian reform can only be implemented if people's organizations become stronger ... agrarian reform cannot be pushed only by the alliance of NGOs. One day, KPA should become a union of people's forces, rather than the loose network s it is now' (Setiawan, 29 June 2009).¹¹⁴

A decade and a half after KPA was formed, New Order authoritarian politics have become more liberal. However, KPA's expectation of agrarian reform has not yet been realized, while pressure from a pro-market global neoliberal regime have become stronger, and KPA is still struggling with its consolidation process. The shadow at the crossroads - to be coalition of exclusively people-based organizations or an inclusive coalition of various organizations and agrarian scholar-activists - still haunts this national social movement coalition.

¹¹³ President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and his Vice President Jusuf Kalla launched their 'Vision, Mission and Program of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and M. Jusuf Kalla for the 2004 Presidential Election' during the campaign (Yudhoyono and Kalla 2004: 55-69). During their first five-year period agrarian reform was never implemented as promised. It should be noted that his second campaign leading up to the 2009 presidential election, Yudhoyono did not mention implementation of agrarian reform if elected to a second period of office in 2009-2014 (see Yudhoyono and Boediono 2009). See again Chapter II, subsection 2.2.3 about this subject.

¹¹⁴ Remarks made during his unwritten speech just after being elected as Chairperson of KPA National Council (DN-KPA, Dewan Nasional Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria) 2009-2012. DN-KPA is new name of legislative body within KPA implemented after the 3rd KPA Munas 2002. Previously its name is the National Consultative Assembly (RKN-KPA, Rapat Konsultasi Nasional KPA).

5.3. Concluding Remarks

One criticism of the 1980s middle class pro-democracy movements supporting peasants against land evictions are how limited in scope they were in challenging the New Order regime. Critics said that these movements were centred on local land rights and/or fair compensation for evicted groups. Besides, the distance in geographical position between the conflict cases (rural) and centres of regime power (big cities and especially Jakarta) meant that they did not address national political issues (see for instance Culla 1999: 129-134; Denny J.A. 1989, and Siswowihardjo 1995). Although these movements succeeded in exposing issues of structural violence,¹¹⁵ maladministration and authoritarianism behind the violation of peasants' rights to land, they were powerless to push political change at the national level.

Urban-educated middle class people – activists involved in organising peasants and in solidarity movements – can be categorized into three groups with different political orientations: Firstly, those involved in protest and solidarity movements who based their social morality against the violations suffered by rural communities; secondly, those who wanted to enlarge their movement bases into rural areas in order to build linkages between urban-rural social forces to challenge the New Order's authoritarianism; and thirdly, urban-educated activists with a strong populist orientation who want to bring the populist idea of development back into politics and policy-making processes. Of course the end of the New Order authoritarian regime was an important pre-condition for such a populist political orientation to be implemented.

This chapter has shown how the third category of urban-educated activists revived the idea of agrarian reform in the 1990s for two purposes.

¹¹⁵ Structural violence has limited groups of people to develop their quality of life because of pressures from authoritative apparatuses and/or certain elements within the social structure. Usually certain interests (political, economic and/or cultural) of small groups of people that can mobilize or use authoritative apparatuses were hidden within mechanisms of structural violence. See Galtung (1980) for an extensive discussion about characteristics and mechanisms of structural violence.

Firstly they used agrarian reform as a binding struggle issue to develop a movement network and coalition at the national level away from the entrapment of local land rights struggles against evictions. They brought the agrarian reform theme in as a new objective to justify a consolidation of existing land struggles. These struggles were also used to support more radical agrarian policy changes relating to both the rights of evicted people and the rights of other peasant groups especially landless and small peasants. Secondly, they used the promotion of the agrarian reform idea to link many social movement groups who had worked in agrarian issues already. They wanted to share and implement their pro-poor social change ideas, in the context of a new consolidated national coalition of social movements.

Meanwhile the shared self-criticisms of some urban-educated activists and some peasant leaders led to a realisation of the need to strengthen the bases of agrarian reform movements in rural areas through the formation of local peasant organizations. The objective in forming these local peasant organizations was to transform the previous orientation of peasant activities, from just protesting against land evictions. The new orientation meant rebuilding stable and structured mass-based rural organizations that would have broader struggle agendas than just fighting for the return of land lost because of evictions. Somewhat naively it was expected that these organisations would develop step by step into a national coalition of peasant movements.

Various attempts were made from the formation of the first genuine local peasant organization in the New Order period, the West Java-based SPJB, to the formation of an embryo for a national coalition of peasant movements, the 'Organisasi Tani Indonesia', as an attempt to formulate future 'guidelines' for the development of genuine local peasant organizations in other areas of Indonesia. These initiatives to revive mass-based peasant organizations then led the activists to a fork in the road. One direction led to building a broadened coalition for an agrarian reform movement consisting of NGOs, people-based

organizations, scholar-activists and other individuals. The other direction led to the empowerment of a national coalition of peasant movements. Thus the original debate had actually departed from the shared idea of building strong peasant organizations to protect the implementation of agrarian reform.¹¹⁶

In fact the initiative to build a broadened coalition for an agrarian reform movement grew from the reality that building strong peasant organizations was still in the early phase. Outside this initiative to revive mass-based peasant organizations, there were some NGOs that had already generated the ideas that lead to the formation of a national coalition for agrarian reform. Some activists who were involved in both initiatives, tried to bring together their work in both areas of consolidation, which lead to the formation of KPA. But they failed to maintain this consolidation effort because some activists only wanted to achieve a consolidation of peasant groups. These efforts will be described further in the next chapter.

An escalation of the movements and protest actions to defend peasants' rights against land evictions occurred continuously after the '80s until the formation of the KPA as a national movement coalition in 1994. KPA then tried to coordinate the agrarian reform movement in Indonesia. But the formation of the KPA itself led to a crossroads in the agrarian reform movement. Some activists firmly believed that the KPA could not fully represent the 'agrarian reform by leverage' movement, which would have to be reliant primarily on strong peasant organizations. This crossroad then opened new pathways caused by the contending views of the activists disagreeing about the correct ideological foundations and strategies of the movement.

The development from local peasant's organizations to national movement networks reflected the capacity of activists to transform the eighties and nineties rural radicalism into more organized movements. Although it

¹¹⁶ This chapter has concentrated on the original pathway to build a broadened coalition for an agrarian reform movement, while the other pathway towards building a national coalition of peasant movements will be explained in the next two chapters.

departed from self-criticism about the significance of developing deeply rooted agrarian reform and rural social movements, internal contestation among pro-agrarian reform activists about strategies to develop the movement was reflected in their interest to control the movement as well. Actually they did not really change what they did, but perhaps added some activities when they thought it might gain them additional support, while still maintaining their opinions about which previous interpretations and priorities were correct and which were not. This phenomenon will come up again when we discuss in more detail about peasant-based movement organizations in the next four chapters.