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Indonesia Experiences Worst Terrorist Violence in a Decade

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1. Most serious terrorist violence in ten years.
2. Foreigners were not specifically targeted, but the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta warned that terrorists may target places of worship, tourist locations, police stations, and transportation hubs.
3. Resident Americans and those traveling to Indonesia can contact the Embassy (JakartaACS@state.gov) to receive electronic security updates. Indonesia's Chief of Police Tito Karnavian said **a series of bombings against three churches in the port city of Surabaya in East Java on Sunday and the Surabaya police headquarters on Monday killed at least 15 people and injured at least 40 others.** Karnavian claimed that supporters of the Indonesian terrorist groups Jamaah Ansharud Daulah (JAD) and Jamaah Anhsarut Tauhid (JAT), both **supporters of ISIS, were responsible** for organizing the bombings.

The church attacks were carried out by one family that recently returned from Syria. Indonesians were shocked that two girls ages 9 and 12 were among those with suicide vests strapped to their bodies. **An estimated 500 Indonesians, including women and children, traveled to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS,** a relatively low number for a country of 250 million people, most of whom are Muslim.

ISIS has experienced difficulties organizing in Indonesia. Indonesia's strong democracy includes several Islamic parties. The economy has averaged growth rates of between 5 and 6% for the last decade, providing job opportunities and hope for the country's young people. Finally, Indonesia has strengthened considerably its counter-terrorism capabilities, in part through strong cooperation with the U.S.

Although foreigners were not specifically targeted, the **U.S. Embassy in Jakarta warned that terrorists may target places of worship, tourist locations, police stations, transportation hubs** and other public venues. The Embassy urged Americans to monitor local media for updates. **Americans living in Indonesia and those traveling to Indonesia can contact the Embassy (JakartaACS@state.gov) to receive electronic security updates.** The Embassy security officer will also address a meeting of the Overseas Advisory Committee organized by the American Chamber of Commerce in Jakarta on Wednesday May 18 at 0730 (contact functions@amcham.or.id to register).