

The Relationship of Authority of the Central Government and the Government of Aceh in the Perspective of Asymmetric Decentralization

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the authority relationship between the Central Government and the Aceh Government in the framework of asymmetric decentralization, the special forms of authority that Aceh has and its limitations in the Unitary State system of the Republic of Indonesia, the factors that affect regulatory disharmony, and their implications for strengthening substantive autonomy and national integration. This study uses a normative juridical method with a legislative approach and a conceptual approach. The results of the study show that the relationship of central-Aceh authority has a strong constitutional basis in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, especially Articles 18, 18A, and 18B, and is further regulated in the Aceh Government Law as a form of recognition of the specificity and privileges of Aceh. Aceh's special authority includes the implementation of Islamic law, the establishment of qanun, the existence of local political parties, the management of certain resources, and the strengthening of customary institutions. However, this authority is still limited by the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and the hierarchy of laws and regulations. Regulatory disharmony is influenced by differences in the interpretation of norms, overlapping sectoral authority, national policy dynamics, and weak institutional coordination. Unharmonized power relations have the potential to hinder the effectiveness of substantive autonomy, but if managed synergistically, it can strengthen national integration through recognition of regional diversity.

Keywords: Asymmetric Decentralization, Special Authority, Regulatory Harmonization, Substantive Autonomy, National Integration

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Introduction

The relationship of authority between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh is one of the fundamental issues in the dynamics of the constitution of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. As a unitary state that adheres to the principle of decentralization as affirmed in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Indonesia gives the authority to the regions to regulate and manage their own government affairs according to the principle of autonomy and assistance duties. However, the design of decentralization in Indonesia is not entirely symmetrical. In practice, there are certain regions that obtain specificity or privilege based on historical, sociological, and political considerations, one of which is Aceh. The special status of Aceh obtained a strong juridical basis through Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh, which was born as an implementation of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding. The peace agreement is an important turning point in resolving the protracted conflict between the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), as well as opening up space for a broader and asymmetrical arrangement of autonomy for Aceh. Within this framework, Aceh was given special authority that other provinces did not have, including in the field of local politics, natural resource management, the implementation of Islamic law, and the establishment of regional regulations called Qanun.

The asymmetric decentralization implemented in Aceh is essentially intended to accommodate the special characteristics and needs of the region without compromising the basic principles of the unitary state. However, in practice, the relationship of authority between the Central Government and the Aceh Government often causes constitutional dynamics and debates. These issues include the limitation of authority, harmonization of laws and regulations, guidance and supervision by the central government, and the potential for overlapping regulations between national regulations and the Aceh Qanun. On the one hand, the strengthening of Aceh's substantive autonomy is a form of respect for peace agreements and recognition of regional specificity. On the other hand, the central government still holds a constitutional responsibility to maintain national integration, uniformity of strategic policies, and legal certainty in the national legal system. The tension between the principle of special autonomy and the supremacy of the constitution is what makes the relationship between the central authority and Aceh a relevant and strategic issue to be studied in depth.

In addition, the dynamic development of national regulations, including changes in decentralization policies and the arrangement of local government authority, also influenced the implementation of Aceh's special authority. This condition requires continuous harmonization so that there is no disharmony of norms or conflicts of authority that have the potential to weaken the effectiveness of government and legal certainty. Therefore, the study of the relationship of authority between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh in the perspective of asymmetric decentralization is important to assess the extent to which the constitutional design is able to run consistently, fairly, and in harmony with the principle of a unitary state. The relationship of authority between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh cannot be separated from the theory of decentralization which places the central-regional relationship as the core of the dynamics of modern government in a unitary state. In contemporary administrative and political studies, decentralization is understood not solely as a transfer of administrative authority, but also as a strategy to accommodate local historical, cultural, and political pluralities without undermining national integration.

According to Sundawa Bahtiar (2025), asymmetric decentralization is seen as a strategy to maintain a balance of power between the central and special regions based on the unique characteristics of each region. In this context, authority is not distributed uniformly, but varies according to the historical, geographical, and political needs of certain regions such as Aceh, Papua, and DIY Fauzan, M (2023). This approach allows for increased public participation and local identity without neglecting the principle of state unity. A study by Muluk (2023) adds that asymmetric decentralization has an instrumental role in reducing social and political conflicts, especially in areas that have historical claims to the autonomy of Triwahyuningsih, T

(2025). The asymmetrical approach is often able to answer the goals of social tolerance and justice through the granting of broader authority than the symmetrical model that is universal to all regions.

In the perspective of central–regional relations theory, the concept of asymmetric decentralization also derives from broader thinking about asymmetric governance, which is studied to explain how governments can remain unified despite giving special treatment to their subunits Alqarni, W. et al. (2022). This shows that decentralization is not just a delegated authority, but also a mechanism for conflict resolution and recognition of distinctive local identities. In the context of Aceh, the implementation of asymmetric decentralization is not only enshrined in the 1945 Constitution which recognizes special autonomy (Article 18B paragraph 1), but is also practically realized through the Aceh Government Law (Law No. 11/2006) as an implementation of the 2005 Helsinki MoU. This arrangement guarantees that Aceh has unique authority in the field of local politics, administration, and the implementation of Islamic law that other regions do not have. However, the concept of asymmetric decentralization also presents conceptual challenges in the form of harmonization of regulations and authority limits, especially when the central and Aceh authorities overlap or have not been optimally synchronized.

Suharno (2021) examines Aceh's special autonomy policy through a public policy approach and literature review, emphasizing that asymmetric decentralization is a response to Aceh's historical, social, and political needs. This research shows that the granting of authority that is different from other regions is needed to respond to unique local demands, as well as a form of recognition of Aceh's historical contribution in the context of the Republic of Indonesia. These findings are relevant to compare how asymmetrical power relations are seen as a policy tool compared to a uniform decentralization approach. Najah's research (2025) uses the perspective of Islamic legal theory (*sadd az-zari'ah*) to evaluate the challenges of implementing asymmetric decentralization in Aceh. He found that although this approach was initially legitimate according to sharia principles, in practice it sometimes led to incompatibility with its original purpose. This research is important to show the tension between local legal rules and national legal frameworks in authority relations.

Chalil (2024) applied the synthetic control method to analyze the influence of Aceh's special autonomy on public health indicators such as immunization and access to health services. The results show that special autonomy status has a different impact than other regions, proving that asymmetric decentralization not only has an administrative political dimension, but also has an impact on social development outcomes. These findings reinforce the argument that power relations should not be seen as purely normative, but should also be evaluated based on development outputs. In an empirical study in the *Journal of Governance and Public Policy*, Alqarni and colleagues (2022) evaluated the implementation of asymmetric regional autonomy in Aceh and found that although a legal framework is in place, coordination challenges between the central government and Acehese authorities are still significant. The study highlights the bureaucratic barriers and regulatory harmonization issues that affect the effectiveness of asymmetric decentralization in practice.

Arifin (2023) compares various regions with special autonomy, including Aceh, through a normative and empirical approach. He found that limited local institutional capacity and central-regional coordination are the main inhibiting factors in achieving the goal of asymmetric decentralization. The results show the need to strengthen the institutional framework and policy coordination to bridge effective authority relations. Lubis, Yusuf, and Arysandi (2025) examine Aceh's fiscal independence in the framework of asymmetric decentralization. This study shows that although Aceh has a large special autonomy fund, Aceh's dependence on these funds shows limitations in achieving true fiscal autonomy. These findings are relevant for comparing fiscal aspects in authority relations, especially how resource redistribution impacts regional independence.

Mukhlis and Nazaruddin (2024) highlight the need to amend the Aceh Government Law to respond to changes in national policies and the need for a more harmonious implementation of asymmetric authority. This research shows that synchronization between national regulations and Aceh regulations remains a major issue, especially in strengthening the governance of authority relations. Rahman and colleagues (2025) evaluate whether Aceh's special autonomy functions more as a bridge of post-conflict reconciliation or a new source of tension. In this narrative, they found that the central–Aceh relationship remains complex, with potential political and social tensions due to different interpretations of authority between central and local actors. This study shows the need to rethink the strategy of power relations in the context of special autonomy.

Based on this description, a comprehensive analysis of normative construction, practical implementation, and harmonization challenges in the relationship between central authority and Aceh is needed. This study is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of the concept of asymmetric decentralization in Indonesia, as well as practical recommendations in strengthening Aceh's substantive autonomy without overriding the principle of integrity and supremacy of the constitution of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Problem Identification

The relationship of authority between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh within the framework of asymmetric decentralization shows complex dynamics both normatively and empirically. Although Aceh has obtained special autonomy status through Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh as an implementation of the 2005 Helsinki MoU, in practice there are still a number of problems that require in-depth study.

First, there is a potential for regulatory disharmony between national laws and regulations and Qanun Aceh, especially in the field of strategic authority such as natural resource management, fiscal authority, and the implementation of Islamic law. The insynchronization of these norms has implications for legal uncertainty and potential conflicts of authority.

Second, the limits of authority between the central government and the Aceh Government have not been fully formulated explicitly in the implementation of policies, thus giving rise to multiple interpretations in the implementation of administrative and political authority. This affects the effectiveness of special autonomy and the coordinated relationship between levels of government.

Third, the mechanism for fostering and supervising the central government over the implementation of Aceh's special autonomy still faces conceptual challenges, especially in maintaining a balance between the principles of national integration and respect for regional specificity.

Fourth, the development of national policies in the field of post-reform local government also affects the position and space of authority in Aceh, so it is necessary to evaluate the consistency of the asymmetric decentralization design in the unitary state system.

Fifth, the lack of optimal institutional harmonization and policy coordination between the central government and Aceh has the potential to hinder the realization of substantive autonomy that is effective, accountable, and in line with constitutional principles.

Based on this description, it can be identified that there are normative, institutional, and implementive problems in the central-Aceh authority relationship that require a comprehensive analysis from the perspective of asymmetric decentralization.

Problem Formulation

1. What is the constitutional and juridical basis of the power relationship between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh in the framework of asymmetric decentralization?

2. What are the special forms of authority that Aceh has and its limitations in the Unitary State system of the Republic of Indonesia?
3. What factors affect the regulatory disharmony between the central government and the Aceh Government?
4. What are the implications of the central-Aceh authority relationship on strengthening substantive autonomy and national integration?
5. What efforts are needed to strengthen regulatory harmonization and the effectiveness of authority relations in an asymmetric decentralized system?

Research Methodology

1. Research Approach

This research uses normative legal research that aims to understand the relationship of authority between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh in the framework of asymmetric decentralization based on legal sources and constitutional concepts. According to Peter Mahmud Marzuki (2022), normative legal research is a legal study that is oriented to the analysis of legal rules, principles, concepts, doctrines, and legal systems as normative norms to obtain a systematic and logical explanation of a legal problem. This approach is suitable for use when the object of study is normative and conceptual, including the relationship of authority determined by laws and regulations and state principles. (Marzuki, 2022)

In this study, three normative approaches were used, namely:

a. Statute Approach

The statute approach is carried out by reviewing and examining laws and regulations related to asymmetric decentralization and central-Aceh authority, such as the 1945 Constitution and Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh. According to Soerjono Soekanto and Sri Mamudji (2021), this approach is effective in interpreting written legal norms and revealing their meanings and relationships in the context of the national legal system. Soekanto & Mamudji stated that the statute approach allows researchers to understand the normative position of a legal rule in the hierarchy of laws and regulations, relevant to see the limits and scope of authority of the central and Aceh governments. (Soekanto & Mamudji, 2021)

b. Conceptual Approach

The conceptual approach is carried out by analyzing the concepts of the principle of decentralization, special autonomy, the principle of the unitary state, and the theory of central-regional relations, including the study of asymmetric decentralization theory that develops in contemporary legal and political studies. Nurhasanah (2023) stated that the conceptual approach is useful for exploring the theoretical and philosophical meaning of legal norms, so that research can develop a strong interpretive model for complex normative problems. (Nurhasanah, 2023)

c. Case Approach

The case approach is carried out by examining real cases and legal phenomena in Aceh related to the implementation of special autonomy, overlapping regulations, and the dynamics of central-Aceh authority. According to Mukhlis & Effendi (2024), this approach is important to understand the reality of law implementation in the field and how authority relations are reflected in government practice. The case approach helps to connect factual facts with conceptually and juridically analyzed norms. (Mukhlis & Effendi, 2024)

2. Data Sources and Types

This research uses primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials in accordance with the characteristics of normative legal research.

a. Primary Legal Material

The primary legal material consists of laws and regulations that are directly the object of study, namely:

- 1) The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia which regulates the principles of decentralization and regional autonomy including special autonomy (Article 18B paragraph 1).
- 2) Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh as the juridical basis for granting special authority to Aceh within the framework of asymmetric decentralization.

According to Hasanuddin (2022), primary legal materials are the main reference in normative legal research because they contain provisions that are binding and are the basis for the legitimate relationship of government authority, so it is important to analyze primary materials carefully and contextually. (Hasanuddin, 2022)

b. Secondary Legal Materials

Secondary legal materials are academic literature that helps explain, interpret, and analyze primary legal materials. The secondary dataset includes books, journal articles, theses, dissertations, and scholarly commentaries focusing on:

- 1) the theory of decentralization and special autonomy,
- 2) central-regional relations,
- 3) harmonization of laws and regulations,
- 4) case study of the implementation of Aceh's authority.

Arifin (2023) emphasized that secondary literature provides a theoretical and analytical context and foundation for research so that understanding can be comprehensive, especially in linking modern decentralization theory with current public policy phenomena. (Arifin, 2023)

c. Tertiary Legal Materials

Tertiary legal materials are legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other general reference sources used to clarify relevant legal terms and concepts.

3. Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

a. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques are carried out through:

- 1) Study of documents on relevant laws and regulations (Law 1945, Law 11/2006).
- 2) Literature review of the latest books, journal articles, and scientific publications (2020 and above) that are secondary materials.
- 3) Analysis of legal cases and government policies in Aceh based on official documents, related judicial decisions, and scientific studies containing the phenomenon of the exercise of authority.

According to Alqahtani (2021), the combination of document study techniques and literature review allows normative law research to elaborate normative data systematically and theoretically. (Alqahtani, 2021).

b. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out through content analysis methods and interpretive analysis of primary and secondary legal materials. In this process, data is analyzed qualitatively descriptively to find patterns, logical relationships between norms, concepts, and legal phenomena being studied. Nugroho (2024) explained that qualitative analysis in normative legal research requires interpretive consistency of the basic values of law and constitutional principles, as well as the ability to explain legal phenomena argumentatively and coherently. (Nugroho, 2024)

Results

What is the constitutional and juridical basis of the authority relationship between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh in the framework of asymmetric decentralization

The constitutional and juridical basis of the authority relationship between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh in the framework of asymmetric decentralization rests on the construction of a unitary state that recognizes regional diversity in a single national constitutional system. In the constitutional system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the principle of decentralization is affirmed in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, especially Article 18, Article 18A, and Article 18B paragraph (1). Article 18B paragraph (1) explicitly states that the state recognizes and respects special or special local government units regulated by law. This norm became the constitutional basis for the birth of a decentralized model that was not completely symmetrical, but opened up space for different arrangements for certain regions based on historical, sociological, and political considerations. The constitutional recognition was then further elaborated through the establishment of laws and regulations specific to Aceh. Juridically, the relationship between the central authority and Aceh is comprehensively regulated in Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh. This law is the implementation of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding which became a milestone in resolving conflicts between the central government and the Free Aceh Movement. Thus, the juridical basis of the relationship of authority is not only administrative, but also has a political dimension and national reconciliation.

The Aceh Government Law gives broader powers than other provinces, including in the field of local politics (such as the existence of local political parties), the implementation of Islamic law, the establishment of regional regulations called Qanun, as well as the management of certain natural resources and the regulation of special autonomy funds. This arrangement reflects the character of asymmetric decentralization, which is the granting of different authorities proportionally according to the specificity of the region without changing the shape of the unitary state. Within the framework of constitutional law, the relationship of central-Aceh authority remains within the hierarchy system of national laws and regulations. This means that although Aceh has special authority, this authority does not stand outside the national legal system and remains subject to the principle of constitutional supremacy. The central government has a coaching and supervision function to ensure that the implementation of special autonomy does not conflict with national interests and constitutional provisions.

However, the dynamics of implementation show the potential for normative tensions. In practice, there has been a debate about the limits of authority in the supervision of the Qanun, the management of natural resources which is also regulated in national sectoral laws, and the regulation of fiscal relations through special autonomy funds. This situation shows that although the constitutional and juridical basis is explicitly available, its implementation requires synchronization of regulations and clarity of the boundaries of authority so that there is no overlap of norms. Thus, the constitutional basis of the central-Aceh authority relationship lies in the constitutional recognition of the special or special region, while the juridical basis is contained in the Aceh Government Law as a *lex specialis* in the national legal system. Both form an asymmetrical decentralization framework that aims to maintain national integration while respecting the specificity of Aceh. The main challenge ahead lies in strengthening regulatory harmonization and consistency of implementation so that the asymmetric decentralization design runs effectively, fairly, and in line with the principle of a unitary state.

What are the forms of special authority that Aceh has and its limitations in the Unitary State system of the Republic of Indonesia

The form of special authority possessed by Aceh is a consequence of the constitutional recognition of special or special regions within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. The regulation gained legitimacy in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, especially Article 18B paragraph (1), and was further elaborated in Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh as the juridical basis for Aceh's special autonomy. This authority is asymmetrical because it is not owned by all provinces in Indonesia, but is given specifically based on historical, political, and sociological considerations. One of

Aceh's special forms of authority lies in the field of local politics. Aceh has the right to form local political parties that can participate in regional elections. This provision is a specificity that does not apply in general in other provinces. In addition, Aceh has a mechanism for filling certain positions that accommodate local values and identities, including strengthening the role of customary institutions and scholars in the local government system.

The next special authority is in the field of implementation of Islamic law. Aceh is given the authority to organize community life based on the principles of Islamic sharia for its adherents, which is expressed in the form of Qanun. Qanun is a special regional regulation of Aceh that has different characteristics compared to regional regulations in general, because it regulates aspects related to Islamic criminal law (*jinayat*), sharia justice, and religious social life. In the field of natural resource management, Aceh has the authority to manage and utilize natural resources in its territory with a portion of certain product distribution that is different from other regions. This authority is closely related to the history of the conflict and the demands for economic justice of the Acehnese people. In addition, Aceh also obtained a special autonomy fund as part of a fiscal decentralization scheme designed to accelerate development and strengthen regional independence.

Aceh also has the authority to establish special institutions, such as Wali Nanggroe as a symbol of unifying the Acehnese people, as well as the regulation of customary institutions that have a role in maintaining local values and traditions. This institutional arrangement shows that Aceh's special autonomy is not only administrative, but also cultural and symbolic. However, all of these powers have strict limits in the unitary state system. First, Aceh's authority must not conflict with the constitution and higher laws and regulations in the national legal hierarchy. The principle of constitutional supremacy remains the main reference in the implementation of special autonomy. Second, absolute government affairs remain the authority of the central government, such as foreign policy, defense, security, justice, national monetary and fiscal, and religion in the sense of national policy. Third, the central government has the function of fostering and supervising the implementation of the Aceh government in order to maintain consistency with national interests and state integration.

Thus, Aceh's special form of authority reflects an asymmetrical decentralization model that provides wider space for self-government in the political, legal, economic, and socio-cultural fields. However, this authority is still limited by the principle of a unitary state, the supremacy of the constitution, and the national legal system. This relationship shows a balance between recognition of regional specificity and commitment to maintaining the integrity and uniformity of Indonesia's constitutional system.

What factors affect the regulatory disharmony between the central government and the Aceh Government

The regulatory disharmony between the central government and the Aceh Government within the framework of asymmetric decentralization is a problem that does not stand alone, but is influenced by a number of normative, institutional, and political legal factors. Although its constitutional basis has been affirmed in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and elaborated through Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh, its implementation often faces dynamics that cause insynchronization between rules. One of the main factors is the difference in interpretation of the hierarchy and scope of authority. In the national legal system, all regional regulations, including the Qanun Aceh, are in a hierarchy of laws and regulations that must not conflict with higher regulations. However, in practice, there are often differences in interpretation between the central government and the Aceh Government regarding the extent to which Aceh's specificity can override or adjust national regulations. This difference in interpretation has the potential to cause a conflict of norms, especially when national sectoral regulations are centralistic.

The second factor is related to the overlap of sectoral regulations, especially in the field of natural resource management and fiscal policy. The central government often issues

derivative laws or regulations that apply nationally, while Aceh has special provisions in the Aceh Government Law that give certain authority. Disharmony arises when national arrangements do not explicitly accommodate the specificity of Aceh or when the norm of *lex specialis* is not consistently described in technical regulations. The third factor is the mechanism of supervision and guidance of the Qanun. The central government has the authority to evaluate and supervise local regulations to ensure conformity with the constitution and national interests. However, in the context of Aceh, such surveillance is often perceived as a restriction on special autonomy. This difference in perception creates tension in the relationship of authority, especially when there is a cancellation or correction of the Qanun that has been set.

The fourth factor concerns political dynamics and changes in national policies. Shifts in central government policy direction, including the tendency to reinvigorate centralization in several strategic sectors, may affect the implementation of asymmetric decentralization. When national policies change out of sync with special autonomy norms, the potential for disharmony becomes even greater. The fifth factor is the aspect of institutional capacity and coordination between levels of government. Central-Aceh relations require intensive communication and coordination so that the regulations formed are in harmony with each other. Limited bureaucratic capacity, differences in policy priorities, and weak regulatory coordination forums can increase the distance between central norms and regional policies.

In addition, there are historical and sociological factors that also influence this relationship. Aceh's special autonomy status was born from the context of conflict resolution and certain political agreements. Therefore, sensitivity to the issue of authority is often higher than in other regions. When national regulations are perceived as reducing the space for pre-agreed specificity, political and social responses can create additional tensions. Overall, the regulatory disharmony between the central government and the Aceh Government is influenced by a combination of normative factors (differences in interpretation and overlap of laws), institutional factors (coordination and implementation capacity), and political factors (policy changes and historical sensitivities). This condition shows that asymmetric decentralization requires a more systematic regulatory synchronization mechanism and sustained institutional dialogue so that the goal of strengthening substantive autonomy remains in line with the principle of the unitary state.

What are the implications of the central-Aceh authority relationship on strengthening substantive autonomy and national integration

The relationship of authority between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh within the framework of asymmetric decentralization has significant implications for two main dimensions in the constitutional system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, namely strengthening substantive autonomy and maintaining national integration. These two dimensions cannot be separated, because the design of special autonomy basically aims to maintain the integrity of the state through the recognition of regional specificity. From the perspective of strengthening substantive autonomy, the relationship of authority that provides wider space to Aceh allows the region to carry out government functions according to its social, cultural, and historical characteristics. Through the provisions in Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh, Aceh obtained authority in the field of local politics, the implementation of Islamic law, the management of certain natural resources, and the management of special autonomy funds. This authority strengthens the capacity of the regions to formulate public policies that are responsive to the needs of the local community. In this context, substantive autonomy is not only interpreted as administrative devolution, but as the real ability of regions to effectively regulate and manage their interests.

Another positive implication is the increase in political participation and the legitimacy of local government. With the existence of local political parties and the strengthening of Aceh's distinctive institutions, the community has a more contextual channel of representation. This strengthens local democracy while expanding the space for public participation in the decision-

making process. Theoretically, substantive autonomy that works well can narrow the distance between the government and society, thereby increasing trust in the state. However, this relationship of authority also has implications for national integration. In the unitary state system based on the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, all regional authorities remain within the framework of constitutional supremacy and national interests. Therefore, national integration remains the main limit for the exercise of special autonomy. If the relationship of authority is managed in a balanced manner, then asymmetric decentralization becomes an instrument of integration, because the state comes with an adaptive and accommodating approach to diversity.

On the other hand, if there is a disharmony in regulations, differences in the interpretation of authority, or national policies that are considered to reduce the specificity of Aceh, then potential tensions may arise. The insynchronization between central and regional regulations can cause the perception of injustice or restriction of autonomy, which ultimately affects the stability of central-regional relations. In such a situation, substantive autonomy does not develop optimally and national integration can face psychological and political challenges. Other implications relate to fiscal governance and development. An effectively managed special autonomy fund can accelerate economic and social development, thereby strengthening the welfare of the people of Aceh. This improvement in welfare indirectly strengthens national integration because it reduces inequality and potential conflicts. However, if fiscal management is not accountable or less coordinated with national policies, then the goal of strengthening substantive autonomy will not be achieved optimally.

Thus, the relationship between the central authority and Aceh has a double implication. On the one hand, it strengthens substantive autonomy through the granting of wider policy space and recognition of local identity. On the other hand, he demanded effective supervision, regulatory harmonization, and coordination mechanisms to remain in line with the principles of national integration. The balance between these two dimensions determines the success of asymmetric decentralization as a constitutional strategy in maintaining the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia while respecting the specificity of Aceh.

What efforts are needed to strengthen regulatory harmonization and the effectiveness of power relations in asymmetric decentralized systems

Efforts to strengthen regulatory harmonization and the effectiveness of authority relations in the asymmetric decentralization system, especially between the Central Government and the Government of Aceh, are a strategic step in maintaining a balance between substantive autonomy and integration in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Given that its constitutional basis has been affirmed in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and elaborated through Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh, the main challenge today lies in the synchronization of norms and implementation practices. The first effort needed is to strengthen the regulatory harmonization mechanism systematically and preventively. Any establishment of laws and regulations at the national level related to strategic sectors such as natural resources, fiscal, and local government needs to involve special consideration of the autonomy status of Aceh. Harmonization should be carried out from the legislative planning stage, not only at the evaluation stage after the regulation is determined. With this approach, the potential for overlapping norms can be minimized.

The second attempt is the affirmation of the limits of authority through consistent constitutional interpretation. In the context of asymmetric decentralization, the clarity of the division of absolute, concurrent, and special authority affairs is the key to the effectiveness of central-regional relations. Technical guidelines and derivative regulations are needed that explicitly describe the scope of Aceh's authority so as not to cause multiple interpretations. This clarity will strengthen legal certainty and reduce potential conflicts of authority. The third effort concerns the strengthening of coordination forums and institutional dialogue between the central government and the Aceh Government. Effective power relations are determined not

only by the text of the law, but also by communication between levels of government. Regular coordination forums can be a means to resolve differences of opinion before they develop into normative disputes. This dialogical approach is important in an asymmetric decentralized system that is sensitive to political and historical dynamics.

The fourth effort is the reformulation of a proportionate and accommodating supervision mechanism. Supervision of Qanun and Acehese policies needs to remain within the framework of constitutional supremacy, but it is carried out by paying attention to the specificity that has been guaranteed by law. Overly centralised supervision has the potential to reduce the meaning of substantive autonomy, while overly loose supervision can lead to legal disharmony. Therefore, a balance between coaching and respect for special authority is an important principle. The fifth effort is related to strengthening institutional capacity and governance in Aceh. Substantive autonomy will only be effective if it is supported by professional, transparent, and accountable institutions. The management of special autonomy funds, for example, needs to be accompanied by a strong internal supervisory system and synergy with national development policies. Thus, autonomy is not only a symbol of specificity, but also an instrument of improving people's welfare.

In addition, periodic evaluation of the implementation of the Aceh Government Law is needed to adjust to the development of national law and regional needs. The evaluation must be carried out in a participatory manner by involving elements of the central government, local governments, academics, and civil society in order to produce comprehensive recommendations. Overall, strengthening regulatory harmonization and the effectiveness of authority relations in an asymmetric decentralized system requires an integrative approach that combines norm synchronization, clarity of authority boundaries, institutional dialogue, proportional oversight, and governance capacity building. With these steps, the central-Aceh authority relationship can run more stable, effective, and in line with the principle of a unitary state, while strengthening substantive autonomy as part of the national integration strategy.

Conclusion

Based on the overall discussion of the authority relationship between the Central Government and the Aceh Government in the framework of asymmetric decentralization, it can be concluded that the authority relationship has a strong constitutional and juridical basis in the system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. The main basis of this relationship rests on Article 18, Article 18A, and Article 18B of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which provides recognition for special and special local government units. Further implementation of this recognition is realized through the provisions in the Aceh Government Law, which affirms Aceh's position as a region with specificity in the administration of government.

This research also shows that the special authority possessed by Aceh including the implementation of Islamic law, the establishment of qanun, the management of certain natural resources, the role of customary institutions, and the existence of local political parties are forms of asymmetric decentralization designed to accommodate the historical, sociological, and political character of Aceh. However, this authority remains within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, so it is not absolute and subject to the principle of constitutional supremacy and the hierarchy of national laws and regulations.

Furthermore, this study found that the regulatory disharmony between the Central Government and the Aceh Government is influenced by several factors, including differences in the interpretation of legal norms, overlapping sectoral authority, changes in national policies that are not always in sync with Aceh's specificities, and weak regulatory coordination and harmonization mechanisms. This condition has implications for the emergence of legal uncertainty and potential conflicts of authority, which can ultimately affect the effectiveness of the implementation of substantive autonomy in Aceh.

The implications of the central-Aceh authority relationship on the strengthening of substantive autonomy and national integration show two interrelated sides. On the one hand, the recognition of Aceh's uniqueness strengthens the state's legitimacy and deepens democracy through a responsive approach to regional diversity. On the other hand, without adequate regulatory harmonization and institutional coordination, these relationships have the potential to cause policy fragmentation and tension in the government system.

Therefore, systematic efforts are needed to strengthen the harmonization of regulations and the effectiveness of authority relations through the synchronization of laws and regulations, strengthening the consultation and coordination mechanism between the central government and the Aceh Government, optimizing the coaching and supervision functions, and increasing institutional capacity at the regional level. With these measures, asymmetric decentralization in Aceh can run more effectively, maintain a balance between regional autonomy and national integration, and strengthen the principle of the rule of law within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

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