



**DECREE OF THE XXIST NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
GERAKAN PEMUDA ANSOR, APRIL 2017**
Number : 04/KONBES-XXI/IV/2017

On

**Gerakan Pemuda Ansor's View
Regarding the Republic of Indonesia's
Strategic Interests and National Security Agenda,
Within the Cauldron of Current Geopolitical Dynamics**

Bismillahirrohmanirrohim

In the Name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Compassionate

- CONSIDERING:**
1. That the XXIst National Conference of Gerakan Pemuda Ansor, held in April of 2017, represents an important forum at which to determine the organization's agenda;
 2. That as [the primary kinetic element within the Nahdlatul Ulama and, hence,] the nation's loyal cadres, and to meet its responsibilities in regard to international political developments that may threaten Indonesia's national security, it is necessary to formulate Gerakan Pemuda Ansor's View Regarding the Republic of Indonesia's Strategic Interests and National Security Agenda, Within the Cauldron of Current Geopolitical Dynamics; and
 3. That, in order to serve and defend our nation, it necessary that the XXIst National Conference of Gerakan Pemuda Ansor publish a decree that explicitly articulates Gerakan Pemuda Ansor's View Regarding the Republic of Indonesia's Strategic Interests and National Security Agenda, Within the Cauldron of Current Geopolitical Dynamics;

- REFERRING TO:**
1. The basic ordinances (by-laws) of Gerakan Pemuda Ansor;
 2. The regulations of Gerakan Pemuda Ansor; and
 3. Resolutions adopted at the XVth Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Congress held in 2015;

- CONSIDERING:**
1. A draft proposal submitted by the Steering Committee of the XXIst National Conference of Gerakan Pemuda Ansor, about Gerakan Pemuda Ansor's View Regarding the Republic of Indonesia's Strategic Interests and National Security Agenda, Within the Cauldron of Current Geopolitical Dynamics;

2. Input provided by participants at the Session of Commission C held at the XXIst National Conference of Gerakan Pemuda Ansor, which discussed Gerakan Pemuda Ansor's View of the Republic of Indonesia's Strategic Interests and National Security Agenda, Within the Cauldron of Current Geopolitical Dynamics; and
3. A resolution adopted at the Second Plenary Session of the XXIst National Conference of Gerakan Pemuda Ansor, on 18 April 2017;

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED AND

DECREED:

1. To ratify and adopt Gerakan Pemuda Ansor's View of the Republic of Indonesia's Strategic Interests and National Security Agenda, Within the Cauldron of Current Geopolitical Dynamics, as attached to this Decree;
2. To issue a mandate that Gerakan Pemuda Ansor's Central Board replicate Gerakan Pemuda Ansor's View of the Republic of Indonesia's Strategic Interests and National Security Agenda, Within the Cauldron of Current Geopolitical Dynamics, and socialize its contents throughout the ranks of Gerakan Pemuda Ansor [down to the grassroots level], and to outside parties as deemed necessary;
3. This Decree shall become valid upon the date of its enactment. Should any error(s) occur, they shall be corrected as necessary and appropriate.

Enacted in: Jakarta

Date: **21 Rajab 1438 H.**
18 April 2017 CE

**XXIST NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
GERAKAN PEMUDA ANSOR, APRIL 2017**

Leaders of the Second Plenary Session

Chairman



ABDUL ROCHMAN

Secretary



HASAN BASRI SAGALA

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**Gerakan Pemuda Ansor's View
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Background Considerations

As a result of current geopolitical dynamics, and the consequent rise of global instability and chaos, Indonesia faces a number of major threats to its strategic interests and national security. These dangerous and alarming developments have the potential to rend the fabric of our social harmony; disrupt the tranquil continuity and development of our national life; and jeopardize the very unity and integrity of Indonesia as a sovereign nation.

In light of the Nahdlatul Ulama's profound and unwavering loyalty to the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), Gerakan Pemuda Ansor (GP Ansor) is obliged to closely monitor these complex security threats and develop a concrete strategy to address them. The stability and welfare of our nation is of critical importance not only to the people of Indonesia, but also to humanity at large. For if Indonesia can successfully navigate the perils identified in this decree—while consolidating its position and growing ever stronger—it will be seen to exemplify a profound civilizational heritage, whose wisdom and experience in addressing these threats enable it to make a significant contribution towards resolving the crisis that is now sweeping the world.

GP Ansor recognizes two primary threats to Indonesia's national security that are closely associated with current geopolitical developments. *First*, a threat that emanates from the escalating crisis within the Islamic world; and, *second*, a threat posed by the political and military agenda of the People's Republic of China, as it seeks to achieve regional hegemony in East and Southeast Asia.

The crisis in the Islamic world is visibly and rapidly metastasizing, with no sign of remission. The most obvious manifestations of this crisis are: the brutal conflicts raging in the Middle East and many other hot spots; the rampant social turbulence that prevails almost everywhere in the Muslim world; the spread of religious extremism and terrorism, which pose a global security threat; and a rising tide of Islamophobia among non-Muslim populations, in response to these developments in the Muslim world.

The political and military actors engaged in these conflicts—whether national governments, economic stakeholders or armed rebel groups, including both local actors and world powers that seek to advance their strategic interests in the Middle East—have a tendency to pursue the fulfillment of their self-serving agendas without regard to humanitarian values. Rather

than seek a decisive means to end these conflicts, rulers and other political decision-makers are obsessed with the pursuit of their egocentric interests, while unconscionably permitting the demons unleashed by war to reap a mounting harvest of innocent victims. It is only a question of time before these violent conflicts centered in the Middle East spill out in every direction and further undermine the security of every nation on earth, including Indonesia.

Moreover, the crisis that engulfs the Islamic world is not limited to armed conflicts raging in various and sundry regions. Whether conscious or not, willing or not, the world's 1.6 billion Muslims find themselves in the midst of a profound *religious* crisis. How they respond will determine the future not only of Muslims worldwide, but also of human civilization itself. Among the key issues that lie at the heart of this complex religious crisis, which require extremely delicate handling, are:

- Normative practices governing relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, including the rights, responsibilities and role of non-Muslims who live in Muslim-majority societies, and vice versa;^[1]_[SEP]
- Relations between the Muslim and non-Muslim world, including the proper aims and conduct of warfare;
- The existence of modern nation states and their validity—or lack thereof—as political systems that govern the lives of Muslims; and^[1]_[SEP]
- State constitutions and statutory laws/legal systems that emerged from modern political processes, and their relationship to *shari'ah*.

When Muslims seek religious guidance in regard to these and other matters, the most widely-accepted and authoritative reference source—indeed, the standard of Islamic orthodoxy—is the corpus of classical Islamic thought that reached its peak of development in the Middle Ages and was then frozen in place, virtually unchanged to the present day.

Wide-ranging difficulties—including political, economic, religious and socio-cultural tensions—result from the discrepancy that exists between the structure of Islamic orthodoxy and the context of contemporary reality, due to fundamental and dramatic changes that have occurred since the era in which the teachings of orthodox Islam became ossified.

In contrast to the disjunct between key tenets of Islamic orthodoxy and the actual reality that exists in much of the Muslim world, Indonesia has been blessed by the historic example of those, known as the *Wali Songo* (or “Nine Saints”), who proselytized *Islam Nusantara* (“East Indies Islam”). These “Nine Saints” and their followers stressed the need to contextualize Islamic teachings and adapt these to the ever-changing realities of space and time, while presenting Islam not as a supremacist ideology or vehicle for conquest, but rather, as one of many paths through which humans may attain spiritual perfection.

In line with their teachings, Islam gradually took root throughout much of the East Indies Archipelago, contributing to the depth and beauty of preexisting Nusantara civilization while preserving, rather than disrupting, social harmony.

The Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and its young adults movement, GP Ansor, stand heir to this noble tradition. For nearly a century, NU theologians have developed an extensive body of religious discourse that not only secures the legitimacy of Indonesia as a multi-religious and pluralistic nation state, but may also serve as a “pilot project” that demonstrates the feasibility of cooperation between *ulama* (Islamic scholars) and statesmen to develop theologically-legitimate modern socio-political systems that promote the welfare of Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

During its 27th national congress held in Situbondo, East Java in 1984, the elected chairman of the NU Supreme Council, KH. A. Siddiq, established a theological framework for the concept of brotherhood that was not limited to Muslims (*ukhuwwah Islamiyah*), but also encompassed all the citizens of a nation (*ukhuwah wathoniyah*) and, indeed, the brotherhood of all humanity (*ukhuwah basyariyah*).

In 1992—at a National Gathering of Religious Scholars held in Lampung, under the leadership of H.E. Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid—the NU explicitly acknowledged that the changing context of reality *necessitates* the creation of new interpretations of Islamic law and orthodox Islamic teaching.

At this same Congress, the NU issued a formal decree stating that if the Muslim community cannot find individuals who meet the exacting criteria of a *mujtahid* (one qualified to exercise independent reasoning to create Islamic law), then *ulama* must assume the burden of responsibility and perform collective *ijtihad* (the use of independent reasoning to formulate Islamic law), which is called “*al-istinbath al-jama‘iy*.”

Ulama have endowed the Indonesian nation state (NKRI) with profound theological legitimacy, by advancing a number of strong religious arguments in its favor. The theological rationale that Indonesian *ulama* employed to legitimize NKRI were the product of new *ijtihad*, which cannot be found within the authoritative texts of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) from the canon of classical Islamic thought.

Moreover, this new *ijtihad* succeeded at securing the support of an overwhelming majority of Indonesian Muslims, while simultaneously helping to shape their religious views and mentality.

One may search in vain for a similar development in other parts of the Muslim world.

The Republic of Indonesia’s Strategic Interests

For over seven decades the Nahdlatul Ulama and Gerakan Pemuda Ansor have played a decisive role in securing Indonesia’s independence and defending its sovereignty as a multi-religious and pluralistic state founded upon the principle of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (“Oneness Amid Diversity”).

Although Indonesia is the world’s largest Muslim-majority nation and democracy, its constitution guarantees equal rights, responsibilities and dignity to all its citizens, without regard to ethnicity or religion.

GP Ansor bears witness to the fact that Indonesia's peace, stability and security—as well as our traditional understanding and practice of Islam—are threatened by geopolitical developments linked to the behavior of certain nations acting in pursuit of an expansionist and/or supremacist foreign policy agenda. As point 9 of the 2016 International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL) Nahdlatul Ulama Declaration states:

For many decades past, various governments in the Middle East have exploited religious differences, and a history of enmity between sects, without regard to the consequences thereof for humanity at large. By “weaponizing” sectarian differences, these governments have sought to exercise both soft and hard power, and exported their conflict to the entire world. These sectarian propaganda campaigns have deliberately nurtured religious extremism, and stimulated the spread of terrorism throughout the world.

The governments in question include Saudi Arabia, Iran and Qatar. The transnational extremist ideology and movements they support pose a clear and present danger to NKRI, UUD-45, Pancasila and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika.

A second grave threat to Indonesia's long-term peace, stability and security stems from the People's Republic of China's clear intent to militarize the South China Sea and project military power through Indonesian territorial waters to the Middle East and Africa—as part of its “Maritime Silk Road” policy. Yuan and Ming Dynasty pursuit of a similar agenda in the 14th and 16th centuries entailed a policy of deliberately undermining political unity throughout the Malay Archipelago, which in turn led to the collapse of the Singhasari and Majapahit dynasties.

Important Points from the 2016 Nahdlatul Ulama Declaration:

4. From the perspective of Islam Nusantara [East Indies Islam], no conflict exists between religion and nationalism. *Hubul watan minal iman*: “Patriotism is integral to faith.” Whoever lacks patriotism either has no native land, or is devoid of attachment to it. Those who lack a native land will be devoid of history.
5. Within the worldview of Islam Nusantara, Islam does not enjoin its adherents to conquer the world, but rather, to engage in the continuous development of *akhlaqul karimah*, or noble character and virtue, for it is only through *akhlaqul karimah* that Islam can manifest as Divine Grace for all creation.
6. Islam Nusantara firmly adheres to, and enlivens, the fundamental teachings and values of Islam, including *tawassuth* (following the middle path, i.e., the path of moderation), *tawaazun* (balance; harmony), *tasaamuh* (gentle and loving rather than harsh and violent behavior, i.e., tolerance rather than compulsion) and *i'tidaal* (justice).
7. As the world's largest *ahlussunnah wal jamaah* (Sunni Muslim) organization, the Nahdlatul Ulama shares the concern felt by the vast majority of the world's Muslims, and

non-Muslims, about the unchecked spread of religious extremism, terror, conflict in the Middle East and a rising tide of Islamophobia in the West.

8. The Nahdlatul Ulama regards specific modes of interpreting Islam (*tafsir*) as the most significant factor causing the spread of religious extremism among Muslims.
11. Certain governments in the Middle East derive their political legitimacy from precisely those problematic interpretations of Islam that underlie and animate religious extremism and terror. These governments need to develop an alternate source of political legitimacy if the world is to overcome the threat of religious extremism and terror.
12. The Nahdlatul Ulama is prepared to help in this effort.
15. The Nahdlatul Ulama calls upon people of goodwill of every faith and nation to join in building a global consensus not to politicize Islam, and to marginalize those who would exploit Islam in such a way as to harm others.
16. The Nahdlatul Ulama will strive to consolidate the global *ahlusunnah wal jamaah* (Sunni Muslim) community, in order to bring about a world in which Islam, and Muslims, are truly beneficent and contribute to the well-being of all humanity.

National Security Agenda

Given the strategic interests enumerated above, GP Ansor believes it is vital that the Republic of Indonesia incorporate the following points as key elements of its national security agenda:

- Explicitly acknowledge and address the enormous discrepancy (i.e., “paradigmatic asymmetry”) that exists between the structure of orthodox Islam and the actual reality of our present age, due to the fact that profound changes have occurred since the establishment and subsequent “ossification” of Islamic orthodoxy—and in particular, classical Islamic law, or *fiqh*—during the Middle Ages;
- Assume a leadership role in a global movement to promote Humanitarian Islam (*al-islam li al-insaniyyah*), by developing and operationalizing a strategy to recontextualize (i.e., reform) the teachings of orthodox, authoritative Islam and thereby address certain problematic elements of *fiqh*, such as:
 - Normative practices governing relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, including the rights, responsibilities and role of non-Muslims who live in Muslim-majority societies, and vice versa;
 - Relations between the Muslim and non-Muslim world, including the proper aims and conduct of warfare;
 - The existence of modern nation states and their validity—or lack thereof—as political systems that govern the lives of Muslims; and

- State constitutions and statutory laws/legal systems that emerged from modern political processes, and their relationship to *shari'ah*;
- Participate in an international effort to counsel, encourage—and, if necessary, pressure—the Saudi government to stop funding Wahhabi/extremist proselytism efforts, and offer to assist the Saudi government develop an alternate form of political/theological legitimacy;
- Facilitate efforts to mobilize the global Sunni Muslim community to peacefully block Iran's expansionist/supremacist agenda, without encouraging sectarian hatred or eliciting the extremist blowback associated with Saudi policy over the past four decades, which led to the emergence of al-Qaeda, ISIS, Boko Haram, Jemaah Islamiyah and countless other terrorist groups;
- Develop global recognition and respect for the Indonesian view of Islam, whose default mode is to recontextualize Islamic teachings in accord with ever-changing circumstances and to cooperate with people of good will of every faith and nation in building, rather than destroying, civilization; and
- Develop and execute a concrete strategy to prevent the People's Republic of China from establishing military supremacy within the South China Sea, and the consequent ability to infringe upon Indonesian sovereignty as it seeks to project military power through Indonesia's territorial waters to the Middle East and Africa;
- Increase Indonesia's defense capacity, including the ability to ensure proper surveillance and control of its territorial waters;
- Consolidate relations and coordinate foreign policy and security deliberations with like-minded countries in the region and with major powers that have an interest in preventing the militarization of the South China Sea—and subsequent infringement of Indonesian sovereignty—including ASEAN Member States, India, Japan, Australia, the U.S., UK, the European Union and its Member States.