



2018_10_26_Second Global Unity Forum

Multi-Faith Vanguard Unites to Adopt *Nusantara Statement* and Join Global Humanitarian Islam Movement

YOGYAKARTA, Indonesia: A coalition of international religious and political figures joined leaders of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)—the world’s largest Muslim organization—in signing the [*Nusantara Statement*](#) at the Second Global Unity Forum (GUF II), held on October 25 – 26, 2018 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Signatories “call[ed] upon people of goodwill of every faith and nation to join in building a global consensus to prevent the political weaponization of Islam, whether by Muslims or non-Muslims, and to curtail the spread of communal hatred by fostering the emergence of a truly just and harmonious world order, founded upon respect for the equal rights and dignity of every human being.”

Reverend Johnnie Moore—described by the *Washington Post* as “the White House’s evangelical gatekeeper” and “the guy who can make things happen... exuding warmth and collaborative energy during one of the most divisive periods in modern America”—said the *Nusantara Statement* marks “a new spirit of friendship and cooperation emerging among the most influential leaders of the world’s largest religious communities, in the active promotion of peaceful coexistence, [and] in unrelenting opposition to extremism.” Maulana Umer Ahmed Ilyasi—head of the All-India Organization of Mosque Imams, whose membership exceeds 500,000 religious leaders—described the *Nusantara Statement* as “a very timely move... that must not only be extended to America, but to India as well.”

The Second Global Unity Forum constitutes another step within a [long-term, systematic and institutional](#) effort by key elements of the NU—including its 5-million-member young adults organization, GP Ansor, and its international affiliate, Bayt ar-Rahmah—to address obsolete and problematic tenets within Islamic orthodoxy that threaten international peace and security. The *Nusantara Statement* also builds upon the legacy of late Indonesian President and NU Chairman [KH. Abdurrahman Wahid](#). President Wahid’s eldest daughter, Alissa, addressed the Forum and a heavily-attended press conference, stating: “We must unite the world around noble values and prevent religion from being weaponized for political purposes, in ways that denigrate rather than uplift humanity.”

[KH. A. Mustofa Bisri](#), former Chairman of the NU Supreme Council and Bayt ar-Rahmah Chairman, called upon Muslims to “embrace an understanding of Islam that is compassionate and bring it to life—demonstrating to the world that not all Muslims are wolves devouring each other and humanity at large.” He also entreated Forum participants to “join us in blocking the political weaponization of Islam and instead ensure that religion functions as a blessing for all creation.”

The Second Global Unity Forum coincided with the final stage of a 5-week [nationwide campaign \(Kirab Satu Negeri\)](#), which united millions of Indonesians of different faiths and ethnicities around their nation’s heritage of religious pluralism and tolerance—including a 100,000-person rally scheduled to be addressed by Indonesian President Joko Widodo on October 26 in Yogyakarta. In developments that dominated Indonesian media coverage for days, this nationwide campaign was systematically [targeted by extremist groups](#) backed by political forces invested in swinging the outcome of Indonesia’s 2019 presidential elections. In order to prevent loss of life, [Ansor postponed](#) the October 26 rally, and instead concluded the Second Global Unity Forum with a [musical celebration](#) held at PP (*Madrasah*) Pandanaran in the presence of over 5,000 Islamic boarding school students, who enthusiastically received the international delegates and the *Nusantara Statement*.

Archbishop D’Souza, President of the All India Christian Council, [hailed](#) “the NU’s efforts to create a unified movement within Islam to oppose radicalism and promote humanitarianism,” saying “There’s no more logical place for a Statement of this significance to emerge but from the ancient capital of the world’s most populous Muslim country, a country that has historically represented the best of Islam.”