



# PIMPINAN PUSAT GERAKAN PEMUDA ANSOR

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## Global Unity Forum

From the Battleground of Religious Radicalism  
to the Common Ground of Peaceful Coexistence:  
Realizing the Unity of Mankind (*Ummah Wahidah*)

### I. Background

As the world stumbles to the brink of chaos, those who grasp the paradoxical nature of religion have a unique responsibility to help stem the tide of communal hatred and violence that threatens to engulf humanity.

Since the devastating attacks of 9/11, few political leaders—in either the Muslim world or the West—have displayed the courage and wisdom required to acknowledge an obvious truth: that the teachings of religion may serve to either build or destroy civilization.

Throughout history, the noble values of religion have inspired individual and civilizational greatness. Yet history also demonstrates that religion may serve as an effective tool of self-aggrandizement and conquest. The history of Islam, like that of Christianity, provides ample proof of this fact. Current events in Myanmar, and the Japanese conduct of World War II, illustrate how Buddhism and Shintoism have been employed for a similar purpose, as did Gandhi's Hindu assassin.

Conflict has occurred in the name of religion again and again throughout the ages. The "root cause" of this problem is human nature itself, and in particular, the all-too-human tendency of religious adherents to view themselves as an exclusive group, altogether distinct from, and superior to, those who adhere to other sects. Whenever and wherever this view predominates, religion may become the cause of, or serve as a convenient excuse for, conflict.

An exclusivist view of religion gives rise to self-segregation. When wedded to political power, it also inspires discrimination against those who adhere to other faiths. ISIS, al-Qaeda and the current religious cleansing of the Middle East are merely the contemporary manifestation of this ancient phenomenon, which has reaped a bitter harvest of tears and sorrow throughout human history.

Governments' refusal to acknowledge and confront the religious worldview of ISIS and al-Qaeda—i.e., their supremacist Wahhabi interpretation of the Qur'an, Sunnah and classical Islamic law—renders these governments incapable of defending their own citizens from the metastasizing threat of religious extremism and its mirror phenomenon in the West, Islamophobia.

Double standards are common on both sides of any religious divide. For example, wherever Muslims find themselves in the minority, they seek freedom, justice and equality before the law. Yet whenever they constitute a majority, Muslims tend to discriminate against religious minorities, as is obvious throughout the Muslim world and even on the streets of many European cities today. This behavior arises from the conflation of religion and group identity, which creates a psychological and emotional boundary between oneself and "others."

If we are to pull back from the brink of chaos, we need to tear down the walls of religious segregation and renounce our own sectarian abuse of faith, which is so often employed to justify hatred, discrimination and violence towards others. Instead, we must view religion as the source of noble teachings that enjoin us to develop virtue (*akhlaqul karima*) and to serve as a blessing for all creation, or *rahmatan li al-'alamin* (Qur'an 21:107).

This is the spiritual aspect of religion that calls us to become truly human (i.e., humane), and to humanize—rather than demonize—others.



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“And if God had so willed, He could surely have made you all one single community (*ummah wahidah*); but [He willed it otherwise] in order to test you by means of what He has vouchsafed unto you. Vie, then, with one another in doing good works! Unto God you all must return, and then He will make you truly understand all that on which you were wont to differ” (Qur’an 5:48).

This verse, which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (saw.) during his final year in Medina, indicates that it is neither possible nor desirable for any group of human beings to compel all others to embrace a single religion.

Every human being is “the child of Adam,” and together we constitute a single community (*ummah wahidah*) united in having been called to serve as God’s vice-gerents upon the earth (*khalifah fil-ard*, or caliphs)—a term that the Qur’an (2:30) uses to denote a state of spiritual, rather than political, mastery.

If we wish to end the primordial cycle of violence in the name of religion, we must acknowledge that many orthodox religious traditions encourage their adherents to practice self-segregation and, often, to discriminate against others. Such teachings are deeply embedded within classical Islamic law (*fiqh*) itself.

*Fiqh* constitutes the response of Muslim jurists, and rulers, to the chaotic and often brutal circumstances of their time and place. As circumstances change, *fiqh* should respond accordingly. As *usul fiqh* (the theory of classical Islamic law) teaches: *al-hukmuyaduruma’a ‘illatihiwujudanwa ‘adaman*. “Law co-exists with, and is inseparable from, the reason for its existence.”

Youth are the primary targets of ISIS and al-Qaeda recruitment. We cannot shield Muslim youth from the siren call of “violent extremism” without altering our very perception of religion itself, and the obligations that it imposes upon us.

The stakes are high. The rapidly metastasizing threat of religious extremism, which is polarizing Muslim and non-Muslim populations throughout the world—combined with mass urbanization, nuclear proliferation and the vulnerability of today’s global economy to severe disruption—demand responsible action from those in a position to avert disaster. For if we continue to understand and practice our religion without adapting to the realities of the present, there may be no future for many of us.

## II. The GP Ansor Call

Certain that Islam was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (saw.) to serve as a “blessing for all creation,” and as a means to perfect noble character and virtue, the Ansor Youth Movement calls for an end to conflict in the name of religion, and for qualified *ulama* (Muslim religious scholars) to carefully examine and address those elements of *fiqh* that encourage segregation, discrimination and/or violence towards anyone perceived to be “non-Muslim.”

## III. Action

We the undersigned hereby proclaim our joint commitment to develop an effective plan of action and to engage in the concrete activities required to successfully end involuntary segregation, discrimination, enmity and conflict in the name of religion at all levels of society, including local, regional and national, and to extend these activities globally.

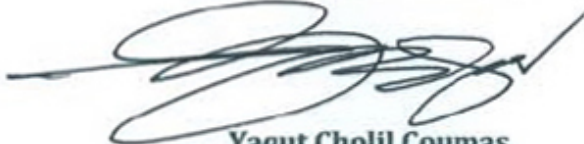




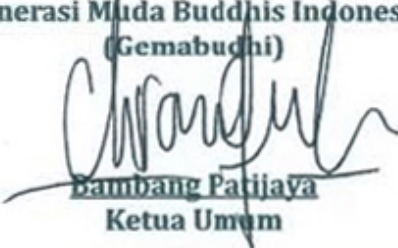
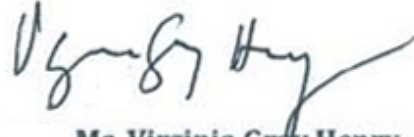


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*Signed by*

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