



Speech for G20 Interfaith Forum, Bologna, Italy

**By the Honorable H. Yaqut Cholil Qoumas
Minister of Religious Affairs, Republic of Indonesia**

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh

May the peace and blessings of God be upon you.

I wish to thank the government of Italy, and the hosts of this ministerial conference for the opportunity to address you today. In preparing for this event, I was struck by the theme of this year's G20 Interfaith Conference, and the commitment it invites religious leaders to make:

We shall not kill each other
We shall succor each other
We shall forgive each other

These words express a vision that lies at the heart of Indonesian society and our way of life. I believe they also express a vision and a set of fundamental values essential to the emergence of a peaceful and harmonious global civilization in the 21st century.

Although on June 26, 1945 Indonesia was not yet an independent nation state, our founding fathers shared the vision that underlay and animated the United Nations, as expressed in the Preamble to its Charter.

Three weeks earlier — on June 1, 1945 — the Indonesian statesman Soekarno, who was soon to become our first president, delivered a speech to the Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Independence. In that speech, he articulated what became the official foundational ideology of Indonesia, known as *Pancasila*.

In its final form, as incorporated in the Preamble to our Constitution, *Pancasila* consists of five principles that we regard as inseparable and interrelated:

Belief in Almighty God;
A Just and Civilized Humanity;
The Unity of Indonesia;
Democracy Guided by Inner Wisdom Arising from Deliberation Among Representatives;
and
Social Justice for All the People of Indonesia.

Being natives of the Dutch East Indies and having experienced, their entire lives, the systematic discrimination, indignities and injustice perpetrated by Dutch colonialism, our founding fathers sought to establish a system of government founded upon the principle of respect for the equal rights and dignity of every human being.

Their wisdom and ability to perceive the distant future — and their ingenuity in synthesizing the ideas necessary to establish a principled basis for our national life — has spared us, in this turbulent era, the appalling circumstances and dire threats that afflict so many other nations and peoples.

The post-World War Two rules-based international order constitutes a remarkable departure from the general pattern of historic relations between differing peoples and cultures. It also remains fragile.

In 1945 Indonesia's founding fathers developed, and offered to the world, a set of universal principles that can help preserve and strengthen this rules-based international order. These principles include:

First, to treat others justly and as equals — without regard to ethnicity or religion; without enmity or hatred; and without seeking to marginalize or eliminate others;

Second, to accept and respect the sovereign nation state as a political system that binds the people of each and every nation, without propagating or pursuing a supremacist agenda vis-à-vis other nations;

Third, to accept and respect a nation's laws as binding upon all its inhabitants, which provides no space for anyone to cite religion as justification for inciting violence and/or participating in armed rebellion against the duly constituted authority of the nation state; and

Fourth, to preserve and strengthen a rules-based international order founded upon justice, freedom and enduring peace.

By enshrining these principles at the heart of the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, Indonesia's founding fathers demonstrated their commitment to preserving the great Islamic civilization established by our ancestors, which is rooted in the principles of *rahmah* (universal love and compassion), justice and other noble values of religion.

When the G20 Interfaith Forum convenes next year in Indonesia, this vision, and these principles, will lie at the heart of its agenda and serve as our contribution to the shaping of global civilization in the 21st century.