2016
INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT
OF MODERATE ISLAMIC LEADERS
(ISOMIL)

NAHDLATUL ULAMA DECLARATION
AND
SAMPLE MEDIA COVERAGE
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INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT OF MODERATE ISLAMIC LEADERS (ISOMIL)

NAHDLATUL ULAMA DECLARATION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَمَا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ (الأنباء: 107)

“And We sent you (Muhammad) for no purpose other than to be a blessing for all creation.” (QS. Al-Anbiya’: 107)

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَني آدَمَ وَحَمَّلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنِ الدِّيَانَاتِ وَفَضْلَانَا عَلَى كُلِّ مَلِكٍ مَّعْلُومٍ خَلِيفًا تَفْضِيلًا (الإسراء: 70)

“We have honored the children of Adam and carried them by land and sea; We have provided good sustenance for them and favored them specially above many of those we have created.” (QS. Al-Isra’: 70)

وَمَا جَعَلْ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَّمٍ (الحج: 78)

“And He has laid no hardship upon you in [anything that pertains to] religion.” (QS. Al-Hajj: 78)

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأُنْعِمَ مَكَارِمَ الْاْخْلَاقِ (رواية البيهقي)

“I have been sent only to perfect moral character and virtue.” (Hadith, Sunan Al-Baihaqi)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يُبْعِثْ مَنْ مَعْطَنُ مَعْطَنًا وَلَا مُعْلَمًا، وَلَكِنَّكَ بَعْثْتُ مَعْلُومًا مَّيْسِرًا (رواية مسلم)

“God did not send me (Muhammad) in order to create difficulties for his servants. Rather, He sent me as a guide who eases [the path to God].” (Hadith, Sahih Muslim).
A true Muslim is one who does not injure any human being, either verbally or physically; a believer is one who makes others feel secure in their lives and property.” (Hadith Sunan An-Nasai)

“In truth, God loves gentleness in all things.” (Muttafaq ‘Alaih)

God loves those who love their fellow creatures. Embrace all inhabitants of the earth with loving compassion, so that those who dwell in the heavens will love you.” (Hadith Sunan At-Tirmidzi)

In regard to this tradition, Ibn Batthal said: “This hadith strongly encourages loving and compassionate behavior towards all creatures, whether believers or infidels, domesticated animals or wild beasts, and this includes a personal commitment to provide food and drink to those in need, to lighten others’ burden, and to avoid committing violence against any other creature.” (Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, Fath al-Bari bi Syarhi Shahih al-Bukhari, Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Ma’rifah, 1379 H, chapter XI, p. 440)

As is universally acknowledged, human beings are inherently social creatures, mingling with others; for no one can fulfill his or her every need by acting alone. Willing or not, every person must interact socially, which interaction should ideally contribute to the well-being of all other members of society while preserving them from danger.

“The unity of human hearts, and minds, as people help one another achieve a common goal, is the most important source of human happiness and the strongest factor inducing human beings to love one another.
“Because of this principle, many nations have become prosperous. Servants have become rulers, fostering widespread development. Nations have become advanced; the rule of law enforced; transportation networks constructed, enabling economic and cultural exchange to flourish. Countless other benefits arise from social unity, for social unity is the highest virtue and most powerful instrument for promoting the common good.” (Rais Akbar Jamiyah Nahdlatul Ulama Hadratus Syaikh Hasyim Asy’ari, Muqaddimah Qonun Asasi)

The Nahdlatul Ulama hosted an “International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders” (ISOMIL) from 9 to 11 May, 2016 in Jakarta, Indonesia. After extensive consultation and discussion with numerous experts in a variety of related fields who participated in the Summit, Nahdlatul Ulama has determined to promulgate “The Nahdlatul Ulama Declaration,” as follows:

1. Nahdlatul Ulama offers the insights and experience of Islam Nusantara (East Indies Islam) to the world, as a salutary paradigm of Islam in which religion contributes to civilization, by respecting pre-existing cultures and prioritizing social harmony and peace.

2. Nahdlatul Ulama does not seek to “export” Islam Nusantara to other regions of the world. Rather, it is simply inviting others to recall the beauty and dynamism that emerged from the historic encounter of the spirit and teachings of Islam with the reality of local cultures throughout the world, which gave birth to numerous great civilizations, including that of the East Indies, or Malay, Archipelago.

3. Islam Nusantara is not a new or distinct religion. Rather, it is the expression of Islam that spontaneously flourished amid the culture of Nusantara, and does not conflict with Islamic shari’a, as understood, taught and practiced by the traditional ahlussunnah wal jamaah (Sunni Muslim) community worldwide.

4. From the perspective of Islam Nusantara, 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.

9. 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.

10. This spread of religious extremism, and terrorism, is directly contributing to the rise of Islamophobia throughout the non-Muslim world.

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.

13. The realities of economic and political injustice also contribute to the spread of religious extremism and terror. Mass poverty and injustice are often cited to legitimize the propaganda narrative of extremist and terrorist groups—both to justify their existence and to render more attractive, to others, the illusory future they promise to create through their actions. Thus, the issues of poverty and injustice cannot be divorced from any comprehensive effort to address religious extremism and terrorism.
14. Although the widespread conflicts that afflict countless human beings in the Middle East may appear to be nearly insoluble, we should not turn our backs to the problem, nor abandon those who are suffering. The Nahdlatul Ulama urges the Indonesian government to play an active and constructive role in seeking a resolution to the multi-faceted conflicts raging in the Middle East.

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.

Jakarta, 10 May 2016

NAHDLATUL ULAMA CENTRAL BOARD

[Signatures and seals of office holders]
Indonesian summit to promote 'renovated' Islam in challenge to global jihadis

May 8, 2016 - 10:46P

Jewel Topsfield

Indonesia Correspondent, Fairfax Media

Indonesian Muslims pray between tombstones at the shrine of Sunan Gunungjati in Cirebon, West Java. Photo: irwin Fedriansyah

- Muslim leaders including grand mufti of Australia back fatwa against Islamic State
- Lahore massacre's depravity is a political story, but it challenges Islam too

Cirebon: It's hard to know for certain what a Muslim saint who was born in 1448 might have looked like, but for a reasonable price you can wear his portrait on a T-shirt.

Kiosks outside the pilgrimage site devoted to Sunan Gunungjati in Cirebon, West Java, do a brisk trade selling tourist apparel along with flower petals, fragrant incense and canisters to scoop holy water.
Inside his mausoleum is a riot of sound and colour. There are gravestones spray-painted silver, a dusty chandelier, models of blue shrimps - Cirebon’s nickname is Prawn Town - and walls decorated with porcelain plates.

Pilgrims pray on raised platforms or animatedly chant *La ilaha ila Allah* (There is no god but Allah).

Sunan Gunungjati was one of the Wali Songo, or nine saints, credited with spreading Islam across Java in the 15th and 16th centuries. Pilgrims might visit his tomb to seek help finding a soulmate or with a financial problem, says Muhammad Jadul Maula, who runs an Islamic cultural school in Yogyakarta.

"They sometimes ask the Wali Songo to say a prayer to God about their problems. They believe Wali Songo are saints, close to God, and it is hoped their prayers will be answered," he says.
Sunan Gunungjati used wayang puppetry, a Hindu art form, to spread the word of Islam. This was typical of the Wali Songo, who embraced cultural practices from pre-existing faiths in their proselytising, including *kapitayan*, the ancient religion of Java.

This syncretism is part of what gives the Islam of Indonesia, known as Islam Nusantara, its unique flavour. It is also considered heresy by some Muslims, such as those who espouse the ultra-conservative brand of Sunni Islam known as Salafism or Wahhabism.

Wahhabists oppose the veneration of saints and pilgrimages to tombs, which they see as idolatry.

Saudi Arabia - where this puritanical brand of Islam originated and has official status - has even demolished the tombs of companions of the Prophet Muhammad in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

"Muslims are not allowed to idolise anyone," says Irfan Awwas, head of the executive board of the Wahhabi-inspired Indonesian Mujahideen Council. "(Pilgrims) pray to dead people. They idolise the Wali Songo."
The influence of Wahhabi teaching, funded by Saudi money, is spreading in Indonesia - six satellite TV stations promote its theology 24/7.

But if anything, pilgrimage to the Wali Songo shrines is more popular than ever, in part due to government promotion of the sites as tourist destinations.

"Visiting tombs is an old tradition in Indonesia, so it is difficult to attack this tradition," Jadul Maula says.

A couple of years ago a tomb was bombed in Yogyakarta, with the word *kafir* (infidel) scrawled across the tombstone.

"What is interesting is that people immediately realised it was a provocation," Jadul Maula says. "Now more people go to the tomb."
Many Indonesians believe the legacy of the Wali Songo is Islam Nusantara, a pluralistic, tolerant form of Islam that inspired the nation's founders to establish a multi-religious state in 1945.

This week the largest Islamic civil group in the world - Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) - will host a two-day international summit of Muslim leaders in Jakarta.

The summit, attended by 300 Muslim leaders from more than 30 countries, is part of NU's global campaign to promote Islam Nusantara as an antidote to extremist ideology and jihadism.

NU's Supreme Council general secretary, Yahya Cholil Staquf, believes the event will be historic because it will discuss frankly the links between terrorism and Islam.
Yahya, whose family has produced kiai (Islamic scholars) for generations, is shocked by the argument often presented in the West that Islam has nothing to do with extremism and terrorism.

He says provisions within fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) allow for slavery and executions. It is from these medieval interpretations of Islam that the so-called Islamic State and al-Qaeda draw justification for their actions.

"If we may implement without questioning any provision of fiqh ... then we may ... butcher people according to the rules of fiqh that still exist today," Yahya says. "This is a problem."

NU is pushing for a debate about how literal interpretations of Islamic law - relevant at the time of the Prophet Muhammad - can be revised to reflect contemporary society.

There is a heightened urgency to this battle of ideas given that IS claimed responsibility for a terror attack in Central Jakarta in January which killed eight people. "We want to encourage people to acknowledge the problem honestly and stop denying it," Yahya says.

Hajriyanto Thohari, an executive board member of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia's second-largest Islamic civil organisation, believes this linkage of Islam and terrorism is simplistic.

Muhammadiyah promotes a "modernist" view of Islam, rejecting customary Indonesian rituals such as tahlilan, the prayers for the dead recited at deceased people's homes.

"The root of terrorism is injustice in politics and the economy," Hajriyanto says.

He argues that Malaysia is a state based on Islam, where the Koran is interpreted literally.
"Why is there no terrorism in Malaysia? Because the Malaysian government is successful in providing economic justice, it has a good political system where Islam is the official religion but non-Muslims can be in the government, the military etc."

Hajriyanto says Indonesia's founding fathers failed to offer a clear explanation to the country's Muslim community of their decision to adopt Pancasila, a state ideology of five founding principles. The first of these principles was monotheism, and Pancasila recognised six official religions - including Islam - in a secular democratic state.

"The majority of Indonesians see that it shows the great heart of Indonesian Muslims, it shows Indonesian Muslims' tolerance, but some small groups see it as the defeat of Islam," Hajriyanto says. "And these small groups are very noisy. They are the ones who are today voicing the need for a caliphate."

The idea of Islam possessing a distinct Indonesian identity provokes fierce debate. During celebrations to mark Isra and Miraj (the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey to Jerusalem and then heaven) at the presidential palace last year, a university professor sparked controversy when he recited 15 verses of the Koran to a Javanese melody.

The Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI), Indonesia's peak body of Islamic scholarship, denounced the recitation as "an embarrassment for Indonesia", saying the Koran was revealed in Arabic and had to be read according to that language's tradition.

But the recitation was defended by Religious Affairs Minister Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, who said it preserved Indonesia's traditions and spread the teaching of Islam through the country.

A month later the Islam Nusantara campaign received an enormous boost when President Joko Widodo, known as Jokowi, described it as a force to counter extremism.

Jokowi said leaders of other countries often expressed surprise that people in Indonesia - an overwhelmingly Muslim country with a population of 250 million - lived safely with mutual tolerance.

"Thanks be to God, our Islam is Islam Nusantara, which is full of respect, courtesy and tolerance," he added.

But conservative Islamic groups see Islam Nusantara as deviant and an attempt to localise Islam, which they argue is a universal faith with one God, one Koran and one messenger.

"Islam Nusantara is not Islam because [it] believes that it is different to Islam in [the] Arab [world]," says Awwas. "[Islamic State] are angry at the liberals such as Islam Nusantara for ignoring Islamic teachings. But the way they react is wrong because it shows their misunderstanding of Islamic teachings.

"Meanwhile Islam Nusantara is just the same, because they see other Muslims as terrorists. My conclusion is that both IS and Islam Nusantara are equally evil, because both of them are damaging the image of Islam."

Every Christmas, Ansor - the youth wing of NU - deploys its paramilitary unit to provide security outside churches. Its general chairman, Yaqut Cholil Qoumas, hopes it can inspire similar acts of interfaith co-operation on a global level.

"We are facing a situation in the world where it is becoming normal to regard people from other faiths as infidels," Yaqut says. "Witnessing this development, Ansor is extremely concerned."

The Sydney Morning Herald
At an event parallel to this week’s NU summit, Ansor will issue a declaration calling for the "renovation" of Islamic jurisprudence that discriminates against non-Muslims.

"Ansor's global unity forum will highlight the fact that elements within classical Islamic law explicitly enjoin discrimination against certain classes of human beings on the basis of religion," says C. Holland Taylor from the LibForAll Foundation, a non-profit organisation fighting for tolerant Islam which he co-founded with former Indonesian president and NU leader Abdurrahman Wahid in 2003.

"Ansor will issue a call to ulama (Islamic scholars) to examine the problems humanity is facing and see how they are connected to Islamic law and teachings and how these might be reconceptualised."

The world’s largest Muslim organization to combat Islamic State

Swedish terrorism researcher Magnus Ranstorp photographed in Oslo, where he attended a meeting on the prevention of violent extremism.

Thomas Paust  |  April 5, 2016

- “They are not afraid to take up the fight against IS. It is important to support that kind of initiative,” says Swedish terrorism researcher.

The renowned terrorism expert, Magnus Ranstorp, will cooperate with the world’s largest Muslim organization in the global ideological struggle against the Islamic State (IS). Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is an Indonesian organization with 50 million members.

- “They’re going to create a platform against IS, and I’m going to be involved in it. My role will be clarified in a few weeks,” says Ranstorp, who is a terrorism researcher at the Swedish National Defense Academy.

- “I’ve had a relationship with prominent NU figures for many years. A project for the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) first brought me in contact with the organization’s top leadership,” says Ranstorp.
During the fall of 2010, the NU’s preeminent spiritual leader, Kyai Haji Mustofa Bisri, visited Sweden to attend a seminar on Islam and terrorism held at the Swedish Defense Academy.

- “He came to Europe because he was concerned about the rapid spread of extremism, and he promised to not only help limit [ethnic and religious] polarization, but also to demonstrate that Islam [as understood and practiced by the world’s largest Muslim group] opposes religious extremism.

- “Since 2010, they have continued the fight against extremism,” says Ranstorp.

**- Uniting Islam and democracy**

In recent years, polarization in Europe has been highly visible, and characterized by the emergence of anti-Muslim extremist movements. This coincides with the proliferation of extreme right-wing political parties in Europe, which are quickly gaining support among the general population. Simultaneously, there has been a rapid growth of so-called “parallel [Muslim] societies” in certain Brussels neighborhoods, where several of the most severe terrorist attacks of recent years had their origin.

Against this backdrop [of increasing polarization and Islamist radicalization], Ranstorp believes that the Nahdlatul Ulama is an important player.

- “This is an organization that has demonstrated its ability to reconcile Islam and democracy, while serving as a tireless force against [Islamist] extremism,” he said.

- “They are not afraid to take up the fight against IS. It is important to support that kind of initiative,” stressed Ranstorp.

- **Displaying the “true face” of Islam**

The Nahdlatul Ulama is based in Indonesia, which has the world’s largest Muslim population, consisting of over 190 million Muslims. While IS has its base in the Middle East, the NU dominates the other side of the globe [i.e., the Malay archipelago]. In fact, the NU enjoys great influence, even beyond Indonesia’s borders, says Ranstorp.

- “This organization projects strategic influence far beyond Indonesia, by demonstrating resistance to the Islamic State as an ideology, and by visibly opposing extremist forces. They are highly resolute in their approach [to this global threat],” says Ranstorp.

- “They contribute positively, by displaying the true face of Islam as a humanistic religion with a humanist ideal,” he says.

The details of the platform the NU is building to oppose IS are not yet fully known [in Europe], but Ranstorp says everything will be ready in May. He says one of the key tasks the Nahdlatul Ulama has taken upon itself is to identify and unite likeminded forces, including imams, to engage in the ideological struggle against IS.
- Islamic State is committing “grievous error” [through its actions, and violent interpretation of Islam]
The Nahdlatul Ulama’s spiritual leader, Kyai Haji Mustofa Bisri, has publicly stated that IS’s shallow understanding of Islam is triggering a global crisis.

- “Extremist groups justify their harsh and often savage behavior by claiming to act in accord with God’s commands, although they are grievously mistaken,” the New York Times has quoted him as saying.

The Sunni movement Nahdlatul Ulama was established in 1926 in response to the Wahhabi/Saudi conquest of Mecca and Medina. The organization is also engaged in charity, mending tears within the fabric of Indonesian society by funding schools and hospitals and helping poor communities.

Skal bekjempe IS med verdens største muslimske organisasjon

Thomas Paust  I  April 5, 2016

- De er ikke redde for å ta opp kampen mot IS. Det er viktig å støtte et sånt initiativ, sier svensk terrorforsker.

Nordens fremste terrorekspert, Magnus Ranstorp, skal samarbeide med verdens største muslimske organisasjon i den globale, ideologiske kampen mot Den islamske stat (IS). Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) er en indonesisk organisasjon med 50 millioner medlemmer.

- De kommer til å skape en plattform mot IS, og jeg kommer til å være delaktig i den. Min rolle blir klargjort om noen uker, sier Ranstorp, som er terrorforsker ved Det svenske Forsvarsakademi, til Nettavisen.

- Jeg har hatt relasjoner til NU i lang tid. Det var et prosjekt for Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) hvor jeg kom i kontakt med den øverste ledelsen i organisasjonen, sier Ranstorp.
Han henviser til høsten 2010, da NUs øverste og åndelige leder, Kyai Haji Mustofa Bisri, besøkte Sverige for å delta på et seminar om islam og terrorisme ved Det svenske Forsvarsakademi.

- Han kom til Europa fordi han var bekymret for ekstremismen som utviklet seg, og han ville bistå Europa med å begrense polariseringen, men også vise at islam er mot ekstremisme.

- Siden 2010 har de fortsatt kampen mot ekstremisme, sier Ranstorp.

**Forene islam og demokrati**

De siste årene har polariseringen i Europa blitt tydeliggjort gjennom fremveksten av ekstremistiske bevegelser med antimuslimske holdninger. Det skyller også en høyreekstremistisk bølge over det politiske Europa, hvor stadig flere høyreekstreme politiske partier får stadig høyere oppslutning. Samtidig vokser det fram såkalte «parallelle samfunn» i Brussels bydeler, hvor flere av de siste årene terrorangrep har hatt sin rot.

Med dette bakteppet, mener Ranstorp at NU er en viktig aktør.

- Dette er en organisasjon som til dels har vært tydelig på å forene islam og demokrati, og dels vært en utrøttelig kraft mot ekstremisme, sier han.

- De er ikke redde for å ta opp kampen mot IS. Det er viktig å støtte et sånt initiativ, understreker Ranstorp.

**Viser islams sanne ansikt**

Organisasjonen har base i Indonesia, som har verdens største muslimske befolkning - over 190 millioner muslimer. Mens IS har sin base i Midtøsten, befinner organisasjonen seg på andre siden av jordkloen. Likevel nyter NU stor innflytelse, også utover Indonesias landegrenser, mener Ranstorp.

- Denne organisasjonen har også innflytelse utenfor Indonesia ved å vise motstand mot IS som ideologi, men også ved å stå opp mot disse ekstremistiske kreftene. Det gjor de på en veldig resolutt måte, sier Ranstorp.

- De bidrar positivt til å vise islams sanne ansikt, at det er en humanistisk religion med et humanistisk ideal, sier han.

Det er fortsatt uklart hva denne plattformen mot IS består av, men Ranstorp sier alt skal være klart i mai måned. Han sier én av oppgavene til NU blir å koble krefter sammen, deriblant imamer, i den ideologiske kampen mot IS.

**IS tar særdeles feil**

Den åndelige leden av NU, Kyai Haji Mustofa Bisri, har tidligere uttalt at IS’ grunne forståelse av islam har skapt en kritisk situasjon.

- Ekstremistiske grupper rettferdiggjør sin harde og ofte brutale atferd ved å hevde at de handler i samsvar med Guds vilje, selv om de tar særdeles feil, har han tidligere uttalt, ifølge The New York Times.
Den sunnimuslinske bevegelsen Nahdlatul Ulama ble etablert i 1926 som et motstykke til framveksten av wahabismen i Saudi-Arabia. Bevegelsen driver også med veldedighet hvor de tetter en rekke hull i samfunnssstrukturen i Indonesia ved å finansiere skoler og sykehus, samt hjelpe fattige lokalsamfunn.

A Story by the World’s Third Largest Newswire Service, *Agence France-Presse*, generated extensive global media coverage about the Nahdlatul Ulama, simultaneous with the opening of ISOMIL.
Indonésie: des cyberguerriers musulmans à l'offensive contre l'EI

Des centaines de cyberguerriers de la plus grande organisation musulmane d'Indonésie publient sur les réseaux sociaux d'innombrables messages faisant la promotion d'un islam modéré pour contrer la propagande de l'État islamique (EI) dans le pays musulman le plus peuplé au monde.
Munis de téléphones intelligents et d'ordinateurs portables, environ 500 membres de Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), la Renaissance des Oulémas, qui représente l'islam traditionnel indonésien, tentent ainsi de riposter à la stratégie en ligne de l'EI qui rallie à sa cause nombre de candidats au djihad à travers le monde.

«Nous ne laisserons jamais l'islam être pris en otage par des imbéciles qui ont la haine au coeur», a écrit dans un message sur Twitter Syafii Ali, un membre important de NU.

Un avis partagé par le chef de la section des jeunes de NU, Yakut Quomas: «Pour nous, l'islam signifie simplement apporter une contribution à la civilisation existante, et non pas la remplacer».

La propagande sur l'internet aurait joué un rôle majeur pour quelque 500 Indonésiens partis rejoindre l'EI au Proche-Orient, notamment ceux vivant dans des villes où l'accès au web est facile.


Outre l'envoi d'un nombre important de tweets, les membres de NU cherchent à occuper le cyberespace en créant des sites faisant la promotion des opinions modérées de l'organisation. Ils ont ainsi mis au point une application Android et des chaînes de télévision en ligne, qui diffusent notamment des sermons de prédicateurs modérés.

Une poignée de cyberguerriers sont basés dans un petit bureau à Jakarta, tandis que les autres se trouvent dans des lieux isolés, et tous communiquent entre eux par internet.

**Difficultés et manque de moyens**

L'organisation des oulémas, qui fait la promotion d'un islam modéré depuis des décennies, reconnaît avoir des difficultés à s'imposer face aux messages de haine de l'EI, organisation qui contrôle de vastes territoires en Syrie et en Irak, et dispose d'importants moyens financiers.

«NU a lutté pendant un moment contre cette propagande radicale. À chaque fois que nous leur infligions une défaite, ils ne mettaient pas longtemps à retrouver leur force», explique Yahya Cholil Staquf, secrétaire général de NU.

L'organisation va promouvoir un islam tolérant sur la scène internationale à l'occasion d'une réunion de responsables religieux du monde entier, qui s'est ouverte lundi à Jakarta et s'achèvera mardi.

NU va mettre en exergue la particularité de la foi musulmane de l'organisation, l'islam de l'archipel (Islam Nusantara), pour contrer l'interprétation radicale de l'islam par l'EI.

L'Indonésie, le plus grand archipel du monde avec 17 000 îles et îlots, compte environ 225 millions de musulmans sur une population de 255 millions d'habitants, pratiquant en grande majorité une forme d'islam modéré.

La philosophie de l'État indonésien se base sur le «Pancasila» (cinq principes) qui reconnaît notamment l'égalité entre les six religions reconnues par le pays. Ce n'est pas le cas dans d'autres pays musulmans guidés par la loi islamique, la charia. De plus, il n'y a aucune référence à l'islam dans la constitution indonésienne, contrairement à celle, par exemple, de la Malaisie, pays voisin.
Fondée en 1926, l'organisation des oulémas veut convaincre les musulmans à travers le monde de s'inspirer de l'Indonésie, où les minorités religieuses et une multitude de groupes ethniques coexistent pour l'essentiel pacifiquement, plutôt que des formes d'islam plus dur au Proche-Orient.

Mais les cyberguerriers de NU apparaissent comme des amateurs face à l'EI, qui utilise de manière sophistiquée les réseaux sociaux pour promouvoir son idéologie radicale.

Cependant, observe Robi Sugara, expert en terrorisme, l'approche de NU est intéressante: «C'est une bonne stratégie de remplir les pages de recherche Google avec du contenu sur l'islam modéré».

The Indonesian Muslim ‘cyberwarriors’ who are battling Islamic State online

PUBLISHED : Monday, 09 May, 2016, 2:00am

(Agence France-Presse) A group of Indonesian “cyberwarriors” sit glued to screens, as they send out messages promoting a moderate form of Islam in the world’s most populous Muslim-majority country.

Armed with laptops and smartphones, some 500 members of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) – one of the world’s biggest Muslim organisations – are seeking to counter the Islamic State group’s extremist messages.

“We’ll never let Islam be hijacked by fools who embrace hate in their heart,” tweeted Syafi’ Ali, a prominent member of the NU’s online army, a typical message to his tens of thousands of followers.

They are trying to hit back at IS’s sophisticated internet operations, which have been credited with attracting huge numbers from around the world to their cause.

Internet propaganda is believed to have played a key role in drawing some 500 Indonesians to the Middle East to join IS, particularly among those living in cities where it is easier to get online.

The dangers of the growing IS influence in Indonesia were starkly illustrated in January when militants linked to the jihadists launched a gun and suicide bombing attack in Jakarta, leaving four assailants and four civilians dead.
It was the first major attack in Indonesia for seven years, following a string of Islamic militant bombings in the early 2000s that killed hundreds.

As well as firing off tweets, the NU members have sought to dominate cyberspace by establishing websites promoting the group’s moderate views, an Android app and web-based TV channels, whose broadcasts include sermons by moderate preachers.

The initiative has been building momentum for a while but started to pick up pace a few months ago. A handful of cyber warriors operate from a small office in Jakarta, while the rest work remotely, and the group mostly communicate with one another over the web.

But it will be an uphill battle and the NU, which has been promoting moderate Islam for decades, conceded they have previously struggled to take on IS’s hate-filled messages.

“NU has for a while wrestled with this radical propaganda,” said Yahya Cholil Staquf, secretary general of the NU, which claims at least 40 million followers.

“Every time we defeated them, it didn’t take long for them to regain their strength.”
The online drive comes as the NU is set to take its campaign to promote their tolerant form of Islam onto the international stage this week, with a two-day meeting from Monday of moderate religious leaders from around the world.

They aim to showcase their particular brand of the Muslim faith, known as “Islam Nusantara”, to counter the IS jihadists’ radical interpretation of Islam.

Meaning “Islam of the Archipelago” – Indonesia is the world’s biggest archipelago, comprising over 17,000 islands – it is accepting of diversity and stresses non-violence.

It grew up organically in Indonesia, as the religion entered the country gradually and had to mix with existing traditional beliefs such as praying at tombs, making it a naturally tolerant form of Islam.

Nowadays, most of the approximately 225 million Muslims in Indonesia practise a moderate form of Islam.

The NU wants to persuade Muslims from around the world to look for inspiration to Indonesia, where religious minorities and a multitude of ethnic groups mostly coexist harmoniously, rather than to harsher forms of Islam from the Middle East.

The group nevertheless has a long way to go to fight the rising tide of IS propaganda.

Despite their good intentions, the NU cyber warriors appear amateur next to IS’s well-funded set-up.

The jihadists, who control huge swathes of territory in Iraq and Syria, have a sophisticated online operation, using social media, apps and slickly produced videos.
They send about 200,000 tweets a day into the United States alone, according to US officials. It even has its own news agency, Amaq, which is often the first to report that IS is claiming responsibility for attacks.

In Indonesia, there are two main ways that IS propaganda spreads – by supporters posting on websites and apps such as Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter and Line, and through returnees from the Middle East preaching the group’s radical ideology.

Most of the NU’s online army are volunteers, often reaching into their own pockets to cover costs.

“ISIS has oil, while the only oil we have is for hair,” Ali said, explaining the project’s start was delayed for more than a year due to funding problems. Oil smuggling has been a key revenue source for IS.

Robi Sugara, a terrorism expert from NGO the Indonesian Muslim Crisis Centre, welcomed the NU’s online approach.

“It’s a good strategy to make Google searches fill up with moderate Islamic content,” he told AFP.

“The battleground for Islamic ideology has moved to the internet, and by producing as many moderate websites as they can, they can keep more minds healthy.”

Indonesia's Muslim cyber warriors take on IS

JAKARTA (AFP) - A group of Indonesian "cyber warriors" sit glued to screens, as they send out messages promoting a moderate form of Islam in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim-majority country.

Armed with laptops and smartphones, some 500 members of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) -- one of the world's biggest Muslim organisations -- are seeking to counter the Islamic State group's extremist messages.
"We'll never let Islam be hijacked by fools who embrace hate in their heart," tweeted Syafi' Ali, a prominent member of the NU's online army, a typical message to his tens of thousands of followers.

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- 'Wrestling with propaganda' -

As well as firing off tweets, the NU members have sought to dominate cyberspace by establishing websites promoting the group's moderate views, an Android app and web-based TV channels, whose broadcasts include sermons by moderate preachers.

The initiative has been building momentum for a while but started to pick up pace a few months ago. A handful of cyber warriors operate from a small office in Jakarta, while the rest work remotely, and the group mostly communicate with one another over the web.

But it will be an uphill battle and the NU, which has been promoting moderate Islam for decades, conceded they have previously struggled to take on IS's hate-filled messages.

"NU has for a while wrestled with this radical propaganda," said Yahya Cholil Staquf, secretary general of the NU, which claims at least 40 million followers.

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by Olivia Rondonuwu

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Indonesia’s Muslim cyber warriors take on Daesh

May 10, 2016

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But it will be an uphill battle and the NU, which has been promoting moderate Islam for decades, conceded they have previously struggled to take on Daesh’s hate-filled messages.

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The World’s Largest Newswire Service, Associated Press, Designated ISOMIL as “The Big Story” of Monday, May 9, 2016. This Resulted in Coverage by Hundreds of Media Outlets Throughout the United States and Internationally.
Indonesia calls on Islamic leaders to promote tolerant Islam

May 9, 2016 9:29 AM EDT

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesia's vice president on Monday called on Islamic leaders to spread messages about a tolerant Islam to curb extremism that often springs from misinterpretation of Islamic teachings.

Speaking at the opening of the International Summit of the Moderate Islamic Leaders, Vice President Jusuf Kalla said he believes that youths who don't have deep faith are susceptible to be militants, not for wealth or political cause, but rather as a "shortcut" to heaven.

"That's why the role of Islamic clerics is needed to do more to correct the misinterpretation," Kalla said. "We gather here today for that purpose, to produce the solution to curb radicalism in the form of terrorism, wars and conflicts."

He added that the existence of 1.6 billion Muslims spread across 57 countries should become a force to promote the goodness of Islam.
The meeting organized by Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia’s largest Muslim organization, is expected to produce a message about the importance of promoting a peaceful Islam to combat radicalism worldwide.

More than 300 religious leaders from 33 countries, including clerics from Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Syria and Iran are attending the two-day meeting.

Kalla said that extremism in the Middle East and radical acts in other parts of the world are the results of wars at home against authoritarian governments in the name of democracy, which caused the future of their people to fall in the darkness.

Therefore, he said, overcoming radicalism and terrorism requires the unity and integrity of the whole nations.

Kalla noted the need of moderate Islamic states, which are able to provide grace, goodness, and unite to the whole community.

Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, has seen a spate of deadly attacks by Islamic militants including the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people, mostly foreign tourists. The smaller, less deadly strikes in recent years targeted government authorities, mainly police and anti-terrorism forces.

Eight people died in a Jan. 14 Jakarta attack including four militants, who claimed allegiance to the Islamic State group.

http://bigstory.ap.org/article/2c4f0b40577d4991baf0f8cb2c8f5357/indonesia-calls-islamic-leaders-promote-tolerant-islam
Indonesia Calls on Islamic Leaders to Promote Tolerant Islam

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS   |   MAY 9, 2016, 9:00 A.M. E.D.T.

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https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/indonesia-calls-on-islamic-leaders-to-promote-tolerant-islam/2016/05/09/e5d5661e-15db-11e6-971a-dadf9ab18869_story.html
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Posted: Monday, May 9, 2016 8:30 am | Updated: 9:15 am, Mon May 9, 2016.  | Associated Press

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"That's why the role of Islamic clerics is needed to do more to correct the misinterpretation," Kalla said. "We gather here today for that purpose, to produce the solution to curb radicalism in the form of terrorism, wars and conflicts."

He added that the existence of 1.6 billion Muslims spread across 57 countries should become a force to promote the goodness of Islam.

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Therefore, he said, overcoming radicalism and terrorism requires the unity and integrity of the whole nations.

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http://www.journalnow.com/news/nation_world_ap/indonesia-calls-on-islamic-leaders-to-promote-tolerant-islam/article_7778b2b5-57c5-5bc3-bc45-7a17f9f3f83f.html?mode=jqm
Indonesia Calls on Islamic Leaders to Promote Tolerant Islam

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS    |    JAKARTA, Indonesia —  May 9, 2016, 9:57 AM ET

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http://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/indonesia-calls-islamic-leaders-promote-tolerant-islam-38978477
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Published May 09, 2016 | Associated Press

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Indonesia is the world’s most populous Muslim nation. Militants have carried out a spate of attacks including the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people, mostly foreign tourists.

http://www.foxnews.com/world/2016/05/09/indonesia-calls-on-islamic-leaders-to-promote-tolerant-islam.html
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http://www.wbtv.com/story/31924713/indonesia-calls-on-islamic-leaders-to-promote-tolerant-islam
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http://www.wbal.com/article/162130?title=indonesia-calls-on-islamic-leaders-to-promote-tolerant-islam
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AP, Jakarta  |  Updated: May 09, 2016 21:46 IST

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http://www.hindustantimes.com/world/indonesia-calls-on-islamic-leaders-to-promote-tolerant-islam/story-AxVeEmDkgsSJnIhUknrioI.html
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By ASSOCIATED PRESS I PUBLISHED: 08:32 EST, 9 May 2016

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http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-3580911/Indonesia-calls-Islamic-leaders-promote-tolerant-Islam.html
OTHER SAMPLE MEDIA COVERAGE
World's largest Muslim group denounces Islamist extremism

Jakarta, Indonesia (CNN) An Indonesian religious group that claims to be the world's largest Muslim organization issued an unusual declaration on Tuesday, denouncing fellow believers for the rise of violent extremism across the world.

The Nahdlatul Ulama identified elements within the Islamic world as being "the most significant factor causing the spread of religious extremism among Muslims."
The group, which was founded in southeast Asia in 1926 and boasts tens of millions of followers, also accused un-named Middle Eastern governments of deliberately nurturing religious extremism by exploiting sectarian differences.

"By 'weaponizing' sectarian differences, these governments have sought to exercise both soft and hard power, and exported their conflict to the entire world," the group announced.

It was a thinly veiled denunciation of Saudi Arabia and Iran -- rival Sunni and Shia Muslim states -- and their support for groups battling each other in Syria and Yemen.

The Nahdlatul Ulama announcement came after the group hosted an international, two-day meeting of moderate Islamic leaders in the Indonesian capital.

**Challenging extremists**

Some counter-terrorism experts applauded Nahdlatul Ulama's denunciation of religious intolerance within the Islamic world.

"They're not afraid to connect Islam and terrorism," said Magnus Ranstorp, an analyst with the Swedish Defense University who attended the conference in Jakarta.

"I don't see any other Muslim leaders standing like a tower and saying we are prepared to take this on," he added.

Nahdlatul Ulama religious scholars say they are using Islamic law to challenge the arguments extremist groups such as ISIS and al Qaeda have used to legitimize their campaigns of violence.

The initiative appears to have the support of the Indonesian government.

Vice President Mohammed Jusuf Kalla spoke at the opening of the two-day conference, saying he hoped religious leaders could help "straighten" the extremist ideology that has taken root in some Muslim communities.

In their statement, Indonesian scholars also identified poverty and political injustice as contributing factors to religious terrorism, which they said in turn contributes to the rise of Islamophobia in Western societies.

*CNN's Kathy Quiano contributed to this report.*

http://edition.cnn.com/2016/05/10/asia/indonesia-extremism/
Muslim leaders from around the world met in Jakarta this week to address the religious aspects of extremism and terrorism. The International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders was hosted by Nahdlatul Ulama, an Indonesian Muslim organization that claims 50 million members worldwide.

More than 300 religious leaders from 33 countries attended the two-day summit, as well as President Joko Widodo and Vice President Jusuf Kalla of Indonesia. On Monday, Kalla denounced what he called radical youths’ misinterpretation of the idea of jihad (a word with a range of meanings), saying that such extremists mistakenly view violence and terrorism as a “shortcut” to heaven.
“That’s why the role of Islamic clerics is needed to do more to correct the misinterpretation,” Kalla said. “We gather here today for that purpose, to produce the solution to curb radicalism in the form of terrorism, wars and conflicts.”

NU is a hybrid Sunni religious body, political party and charity that launched its anti-extremism initiative in 2014, in response to the rise of the militant group that calls itself the Islamic State.

Indonesia is home to the largest Muslim population in the world — 190 million people — but since they have nearly always coexisted with Hindus, Buddhists and Christians, Indonesian society has evolved a liberal, pluralistic brand of Islam. NU leaders think this approach, known as Islam Nusantara, or “Islam of the Archipelago,” could be a powerful force against radicalization.

The source of turmoil in the Middle East is the absence of a “harmonious relationship” between nationalism and Islam, Said Aqil Siroj, NU’s general chairman, said at the summit.

While NU has been fighting extremism for two years, there was a particular sense of urgency to this week’s event. One reason might be the deadly attack in Jakarta on Jan. 14, in which eight people died, including four militants who claimed allegiance to the Islamic State. It was the first major terrorist attack in Indonesia in seven years.

One session of ISOMIL examined how efforts to eliminate radicalism could themselves constitute a form of jihad, or holy war, according to a conference agenda. Other topics on the slate included uniting the global community of Muslims against extremism and fighting Islamophobia.

Lately there have been some cracks in Indonesia’s liberal Islamic consensus. About 500 Indonesians have gone to fight for the Islamic State in Syria, according to the BBC. There is also growing support for some elements of Sharia law in the country, like bans on alcohol and gambling, the country’s minister of religious affairs told the BBC.

At the local level, NU has tried to spread its message by engaging young Indonesians as volunteer “cyber warriors” to counter radical content on social media. But at this week’s summit, NU Secretary-General Yahya Cholil Staquf admitted that these efforts were still “minuscule” when compared to the Islamic State’s “extraordinary” network.

On Tuesday, at the end of the summit, the attendees published a “Jakarta Declaration” calling for an international coalition of religious groups and governments to dismantle the religious backing of extremism and terrorism.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/nahdlatul-ulama-conference-2016_us_5730e3eee4b0bc9cb047a41a
(Vatican Radio) In a joint effort to promote understanding of Islamic teachings and the spread of moderate views, some 500 moderate Muslim leaders from 70 countries held a conference in Jakarta, sponsored by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Indonesia’s largest moderate Islamic organization.

The event followed the summit of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held in Istanbul a few weeks ago. According to the organisers, Indonesia – the world’s most populous Muslim-majority country – must take a leading role in solving conflicts caused by poor interpretations of the Qur’an, a fact that underlies violence in the Middle East, and attacks in Paris, Brussels, Ankara and Lahore.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo was supposed to open the summit, but Vice President Jusuf Kalla took his place. For the VP, all moderate Islamic nations must promote peace in Islamic societies, as well as respect for non-Muslim communities.

Noting Kalla’s concerns, NU President Kiai Hajj Said Agil Siroj said that Muslim leaders found themselves at odds with each other on a number of issues at the OIC summit. Nevertheless, the NU has been working for years to promote a moderate version of Islam at the national and international levels, especially in the educational and social fields, including health-care.
In 2001, it set up a similarly moderate organisation in Afghanistan, which now has branches in 22 provinces. “Moderate Afghan leaders are concerned about and reject religious radicalism,” said ISOMIL coordinator Juri Ardiantoro. On 17 January, 2016, the Sunni organisation held an interfaith rally with Catholic participation in the Indonesian capital to say no to extremism.

Almost four million students attend NU’s 23,000 boarding schools and educational centres. Its governing principle is that of Nusantara (referring to a group of islands, an archipelago) Islam, which signifies promoting an Islam of the Majority of Indonesians who hold moderate ideas of religious tolerance. At its 33rd congress last year, NU made this a priority.

In response to President Joko Widodo’s call on NU leaders to fight Islamist propaganda at home, NU leader Agil Siroj said that his organisation is doing this through a nationwide programme called ‘Nusantara Islam Expedition’ and a joint effort with the government’s anti-terrorism agency.

This entails plans to re-radicalise at least 700 Indonesian veterans from the Syrian civil war where they fought on the side of the Islamic State group.

(Source: AsiaNews)

http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/05/12/indonesia_islamic_moderates_hold_summit_for_peace_in_me/1229379
Indonesia demands the promotion of 'tolerant Islam'

Christian Deguit  |  11 May, 2016 1:14 PM

The Southeast Asian country of Indonesia has called on Islamic leaders during the International Summit of the Moderate Islamic Leaders to spread messages promoting a tolerant Islam with hopes of suppressing extremism. Islam teachings are often misinterpreted, which causes extremism.

"That's why the role of Islamic clerics is needed to do more to correct the misinterpretation ... We gather here today for that purpose, to produce the solution to curb radicalism in the form of terrorism, wars and conflicts," Muhammad Jusuf Kalla said at the summit, as quoted by the ABC news. Jusuf Kalla is the vice president of Indonesia.

Kalla says that the youth who are most likely to become militants are those who don't have deep faith. He points out that becoming a militant is not for wealth or political cause, but most militants believe it is a "shortcut" to heaven.
The International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders aims to share a message and give importance in advocating a peaceful Islam to fight radicalism, which is currently widespread.

The event was organized by Nahdlatul Ulama, a traditionalist Sunni Islam movement in Indonesia. More than 300 religious leaders from 33 countries, including clerics from Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Syria and Iran are present in the summit.

Indonesia is considered to be the world's most populous Muslim nation. Militants had carried out a series of attacks that killed and affected quite a large number of people. The existence of 1.6 billion Muslims all around the world, across 57 countries should be enough to become a force in promoting the goodness of Islam.

Wars for the sake of democracy against authoritarian governments can also lead to extremism and radical acts in different parts of the world.

There is a need for moderate Islamic states. Hopefully, this will provide grace, goodness and unity to the Islamic community. Kalla believes that in order to defeat radicalism and terrorism, there must be the presence of the unity and integrity of the whole nations.

Jusuf Kalla calls for moderate Islamic world

JAKARTA • Indonesian Vice-President Jusuf Kalla yesterday called for a "moderate" Islamic world and pressed for unity in the fight against radicalism.

"Surely, we all want an Islamic world that is moderate... Islam, as a religion that brings a blessing to all, brings good and unifies its people," he told delegates from more than 30 countries at the opening of the International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders in Jakarta.

The event was organised by Indonesia's largest Muslim organisation, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU).

Mr Kalla, in a speech, said radicalism often emerged in "failed" Muslim nations such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya, "which are authoritarian and where the actions of the leaders do not respect their people".

He added that Muslim-majority Indonesia implemented moderate teachings despite its diverse people, faiths, cultures and languages.

A top NU official yesterday spoke about efforts by the organisation, which has about 40 million members, to combat radicalism.
It plans to provide resources with the "correct interpretation of Islamic teachings" through social media and television, said NU organising committee head Imam Azis.

So far, it has launched a smartphone application called Nutizen, and plans to work with the Foreign Ministry to share ideas with foreign counterparts, he said.

NU secretary-general Yahya Cholli Staquf said the organisation's 500 volunteer cyber warriors were on social media to quash radical ideas and statements, but added that the efforts were "minuscule" against the "extraordinary" resources of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/kalla-calls-for-moderate-islamic-world
Indonesian VP calls for unity in overcoming differences within Islam

There must be mutual respect between leaders and their people in order to fight radicalism, says Mr Jusuf Kalla at a conference of Islamic leaders in Jakarta

By Chandni Vatvani I Posted 09 May 2016 21:23

JAKARTA: Indonesian Vice President Jusuf Kalla has called for unity in overcoming the differences within Islam in order to achieve a moderate Islamic world globally.

He was speaking on Monday (May 9) at a conference of Islamic leaders in Jakarta, which is being attended by participants from more than 30 countries.

Making a call for ways to promote moderate Islam, Mr Kalla emphasised the need to correct the misinterpretation of jihad or holy war, which he said many radical youths see as a "shortcut" to heaven.

Mr Kalla also said terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda and Islamic State were a result of failed states and he stressed that there must be mutual respect between leaders and their people to foster unity to fight radicalism.

The event is the third conference organised by Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's largest Muslim organisation.
It is part of a campaign the organisation began last year called "Islam Nusantara" or "Islam of the Archipelago", which aims to promote a tolerant Islam not only in Indonesia but in other countries as well.

Other than dialogue between Islamic scholars, Nahdlatul Ulama is also looking to work with the Indonesian Foreign Ministry to push for a programme on what it is calling "cultural diplomacy" to tackle the root causes of extremism.

"Radicalism and terrorism originate from a grassroots level through people who experience problems, whether in their faith or ... with welfare and equality," said Imam Aziz, head of the organising committee of the International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders, Nahdlatul Ulama. "The cultural diplomacy efforts actually will focus on how to strengthen the civil society."

Details of the programme will be discussed further after the conference. Nahdlatul Ulama is hoping to implement it in other countries through the Indonesian embassies around the world.

The event will wrap up on Tuesday, with summit participants expected to finalise a Jakarta Declaration. The declaration will call for an internal coalition to prevent conflict carried out in the name of religion. The Indonesian government will help initiate this effort.

The Frontier Post

Foreign Ministry, NU to open Islamic Center in Afghanistan

KABUL (The Jakarta Post): The Foreign Ministry in cooperation with Indonesia’s largest Islamic organization, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), will establish an Indonesian Islamic Center (IIC) in Kabul, Afghanistan, to strengthen religious cooperation with Afghan clerics.

Fazal Ghani Kakar, the founder of Afghanistan’s NU, an independent NU that closely cooperates with the Indonesian NU, said the IIC would be built on a 10,000 square meter plot of land in Kabul’s Ahmad Shah Baba Mina area donated by the Afghan government.

“With the ICC, we could further strengthen our ties [...] Afghanistan is now in dire need to learn [about moderate Islamic teachings] from Indonesia as well,” Kakar said.

The IIC would consist of four buildings, including a Grand Mosque, where the Afghan NU would deploy one of its clerics to disseminate Islamic teachings, and a library that would comprise books that could teach young Afghani not only about Islam, but also Indonesian culture, Kakar said.

The center would also have a social house to accommodate exchange visits between Indonesian and Afghan ulemas, where they would come together and learn from each other’s experiences, Kakar said.

In addition, Kakar said, a clinic would be built within the IIC for Afghan people, who were affected badly by the prolonged conflict and in need of treatment, since numerous healthcare facilities in the area had been damaged by the war.

The statement was made at the end of the two-day International Summit of the Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL ), organized by NU in Jakarta and joined by more than 300 participants including Muslim figures from 35 countries.

Earlier, Foreign Minister Retno LP Marsudi said the government had recently begun constructing the IIC in the Fatiha building, around 500 meters from a mosque in Ahmad Shah Baba Mina.

The IIC was hoped to encourage cooperation among Muslim academics and clerics from Indonesia and Afghanistan to promote moderate Islamic views, Retno said.

NU deputy chairman Maksum Machfoedz said his organization had mainly assisted the government in advocacy in order to push for the establishment of the IIC to facilitate religious cooperation with Afghanistan.

Besides, the NU also provided scholarships for Afghan students to study about Islam Nusantara, a tolerant form of Indonesian Islam that upheld values of peace, modesty, and cultural respect, at NU universities, Machfoedz said.
“The cooperation should be followed up by setting up another event like ISOMIL to pursue world peace,” Machfoedz said.

http://www.thefrontierpost.com/article/389217//
ISIS uses social media to disseminate its ideology: Observer

Selasa, 10 Mei 2016 19:23 WIB | 1.206 Views

Jakarta (ANTARA News) - The social media has been used widely by ISIS to spread its ideology and recruit new militants, an international observer stated.

"ISIS uses social media to recruit new militants and disseminate its propaganda," an ISIS observer from the University of Vienna Dr Nico Prucha stated at the International Summit of the Moderate Islamic Leaders here on Tuesday.

Therefore, ISIS ideology can be spread easily through the dissemination of its doctrine via social media.

"People in other countries view ISIS as a true form of Islam," Prucha pointed out.

Prucha said that ISIS uploaded two videos on a daily basis. They used Arabic as a medium of communication in their videos, and they were translated into other languages.
"As much as 95 percent (of the videos) are in Arabic, and five percent are in other languages, such as German, Dutch, and English," Prucha stated.

ISIS had sympathizers in various European countries who signed in as immigrants.

"As a result, European countries are denying entry to Muslim immigrants," Prucha noted.

ISIS has claimed it follows the true form of Islam that is in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah.

"ISIS also rejects Islam, which is different from their understanding," Prucha noted.

"ISIS rejects how Islam is practiced in Indonesia, and it assumes that Islam Nusantara is wrong as the ideology upholds tolerance towards people of other religions," Prucha affirmed.

In addition, ISIS also controls the land in Syria and Iraq.

"The ISIS movement is very dangerous as the group uses the approach of violence and war," he emphasized.

Vice President Jusuf Kalla stated that radical movements had earlier arisen from Islamic states, which had failed to develop, and their internal conflicts had spread to other countries.

"If we look back at history, radical movements had always arisen from failed Islamic countries. Al-Qaeda originated in Afghanistan, which failed to develop, and ISIS is from Iraq and Syria that we know have issues there," Kalla noted in a speech at the opening of the High-Level International Conference on Moderate Islam here on Monday.

The vice president explained that the failure of some Islamic countries had fueled the radical movement, which was caused by two main factors: the arbitrariness of the leaders and public ire towards the government.

"We know what happened in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Libya where the leaders did not respect (the aspirations of) their own people, and so, the large countries attacked them on grounds of establishing democracy," Kalla explained.

The devastation in the failed countries had triggered concern among the public regarding the future of their nation and initiated the emergence of radicalism, which later evolved into terrorism.

Hence, to overcome the problem of radicalism and terrorism, it was necessary to boost unity among Islamic countries, the vice president remarked.

The 1.6 billion Muslims living in 57 countries across the world should act as a driving force to spread the goodness of Islam.

Islamic countries should use their natural resources moderately, especially in the oil and gas sector. The vice president called for the efficient use of these resources, in a way that does not create divisions among Muslim nations.

"Of course, we all want a moderate Islamic state, which lends purpose to us all as Islam is a
religion that offers grace, promotes goodness, and unites the entire community. That is the purpose and ideals we all (follow)," he added.

The government has urged Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Indonesia’s largest Islamic organization, to play a role in disseminating peaceful Islamic teachings and acting as a peacemaker for conflicts in the Middle East.

Coordinating Political, Legal, and Security Affairs Minister Luhut Pandjaitan said conflict in the Middle East was due to an inability to reconcile nationalism and religious affiliation.

However, so far the only party acting as an arbitrator in conflicts, such as that between Israel and Palestine, was the US, Luhut said, while in fact, Indonesia could take a strategic role as a mediator in the international conflict.

"At this point in time, NU should become a mediator to find solutions for creating peace out of the conflict, especially those in the Middle East," Luhut said on Monday evening as quoted by Antara news agency in Jakarta.

The statement was delivered during the International Summit of the Islamic Moderate Leaders (ISOMIL) organized by NU, a three day meeting running from May 9 to 11. More than 300 religious leaders from 28 countries attended the summit.
leaders from 40 countries are gathered at the meeting to discuss a joint solution to conflicts that they consider to have emerged from the misinterpretation of Islamic teaching.

NU deputy chairman Maksum Mahfoedz, who is also serving as the summit's chairman, previously said the summit would produce an outcome in the form of a joint agreement called the Jakarta Declaration, which would also articulate the real interpretation of jihad in accordance with prevailing conditions in today's world.

The declaration reportedly aims to end the misinterpretation of jihad, which some parties still define as killing infidels, basing their argument on Prophet Muhammad's war. In fact, the interpretation could not be applied in this era given that today's social and political circumstances are so different to those in the past, Mahfoedz said.

Vice President Jusuf Kalla opened the summit on Monday, where he asserted the important role of Islamic clerics in disseminating peaceful Islam in order to curb radicalism that led to terrorism, war and conflict.

Meanwhile, NU central board chairman Said Aqil Siroj said the concepts of religion and nationalism should be upheld alongside each other and were inseparable as both were key factors to ensure and guard the unity of a country.

Indonesian clerics have succeeded in bridging the principles of religion and statehood into their teachings, while in the Middle East, the concepts of Islam and nationalism are yet to be unified, which has prolonged conflicts there, Siroj said.

According to Siroj, the government has asked moderate Islamic organizations to promote the concept of Islam Nusantara, a tolerant form of Islam with an Indonesian spirit that upheld peace, modesty, and respected culture.

NU first introduced the concept of Islam Nusantara in 2015 through a campaign in Jombang, Central Java, aimed at creating a unique and genuine identity for moderate Indonesian Muslims that was different from Muslim societies in the Middle East.

"This is the right time for us to promote the concept of Islam Nusantara at the international level," Siroj said.

NU, foreign ulemas endorse Jakarta Declaration

Indonesia’s largest Islamic organization, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and ulemas from 35 countries have endorsed the NU's Jakarta Declaration, asserting the importance of disseminating peaceful Islamic values internationally to end conflicts emerging from tensions between religion and state.

The NU promoted what it calls “Islam Nusantara” – a moderate form of Islam with a pro-Indonesian spirit to uphold values of peace, modesty and cultural respect – as a paradigm that could be adopted by the world, since it merged the concepts of Islam and nationalism as key factors to guard a country’s unity, NU central board chairman Said Aqil Siradj said.

"We don’t want to dictate to the world, but we want to inspire [other countries by showing that] our concept of Islam could maintain peace and harmony within the diversity of Indonesia," Siradj said on Tuesday.

The declaration was the outcome of the two-day International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL), organized by NU with the aim of presenting solutions to conflicts considered to have emerged from a misinterpretation of Islamic teachings.

According to the declaration, the misinterpretation itself is the cause of the prolonged conflict in the Middle East, where some governments use religious teachings as the base of their political legitimacy, which has given rise to religious extremism.
Besides, economic and political injustice that brought poverty to some Islamic countries had been used by extremist groups as one of their reasons for unleashing their terror, the declaration states, which then led to a wrong concept of jihad executed by these groups.

According to the Islam Nusantara perspective, Islamic teachings did not call for its believers to conquer the world, but instead for them to keep strengthening their faith to realize Islam as Rahmatan lil alamin (blessing for the universe), Siradj said.

"The conclusion of our two-day meeting is the core of jihad, namely to promote peace and do good deeds," Siradj said.

The declaration also urges the Indonesian government to play a constructive role as a mediator to find solutions for the multifaceted conflicts in the Middle East.

In addition, the NU would assist Middle Eastern countries in building mechanisms to connect the concepts of Islam and nationalism, if their governments were open and willing to build alternative bases for their political legitimacy.

NU secretary-general Helmi Faisal Zaini said the countries that took part in the summit were all surprised to learn that Islam in Indonesia could be highly tolerant of local culture, such as promoting Borobudur, the ancient Buddhist temple complex, as a historical site of Indonesia.

Meanwhile, Fazal Ghani Kakar, the founder of Afghanistan’s NU, said Islam Nusantara provided the best solution for conflicts not only in Afghanistan, but the entire Muslim world, since the paradigm was neither too liberal nor too extreme.

The paradigm could even be adopted in non-Muslim conflict areas, since Islam Nusantara promoted five general principles, namely moderation, tolerance, justice, balance and participation, that could bring people together and guard a country’s unity, Kakar said.

"It's the best solution to make everybody understand that moderation is the way for a better life and humanity in general," Kakar said.

The Jakarta Declaration is set to be submitted to the President, Vice President, the Coordinating Political, Legal, and Security Ministry as well as foreign embassies in Indonesia soon.

The next summit would be arranged by Indonesia’s NU but would probably be held in another country in line with the hopes of other ulemas that had joined the summit, even though the details were not yet settled, Siradj added.

Islam of the Archipelago leads way to moderation

Tama Salim  | Jakarta  | Posted: Wed, May 11 2016 | 10:04 am

The moderate view of Islam that promotes tolerance, peace and an appreciation for local cultures has gained wide acceptance in the world’s Muslim community, as Muslim leaders from 35 countries issued a joint statement on Tuesday on the global promotion of Islam Nusantara.

Islam Nusantara, or Islam of the Archipelago, a concept coined by Indonesia’s largest Muslim organization, Nahdlatul Ulama, is one that promotes moderate views and religious tolerance.

NU concluded its two-day International Summit of the Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL) by issuing the Jakarta Declaration, with the aim of disseminating Islam Nusantara’s tenets for a global audience.

The 16-point joint declaration states that Islam Nusantara is a natural progression for Islam that has flourished amid the diverse cultures of Indonesia, but does not contradict the basic teachings of Islam (sharia).

NU central board chairman Said Aqil Siroj said that the declaration was only a call for the world to appreciate the peaceful nature of the Islam that has thrived in Indonesia.

“NU does not mean to ‘export’ Islam Nusantara to the rest of the world. We only invite other Muslim communities to appreciate the beauty and dynamism resulting from the amalgamation of Islamic teachings with the realities of local cultures,” Aqil said on Tuesday, concluding the ISOMIL.

The declaration also called on Muslims to promote moderation, harmony, peace and justice, and stated that it was the dissemination of misinterpreted Islamic teachings that had contributed significantly to the rise of radicalism and violent extremism.

Throughout the two-day summit, Muslim leaders showed an interest in learning more about Islam Nusantara, NU secretary-general Helmy Faisal Zaini said.

Helmy said that a number of Muslim leaders expressed their interest in adopting the concept of Islam Nusantara and planned to set up grassroots organizations, much like the NU, to serve as platforms for Muslim leaders to promote moderate teachings of Islam.

Helmy said that Muslim figures from 10 countries, including Russia, Lithuania and Lebanon, were among those seeking to emulate what has been done in Indonesia.

Earlier, Coordinating Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister Luhut Pandjaitan suggested that, as the country’s largest Muslim organization, the NU could assume a key role in mediating conflict in the Middle East.
Luhut said that ongoing conflict in the region was a result of an inability to reconcile nationalism with religious affiliation, a point that was also made in ISOMIL’s Jakarta Declaration.

Lebanese cleric Amin Kurdi said he would personally endorse the establishment of an NU-like organization in his country, seeing as NU has experience in promoting a moderate and tolerant view of Islam.

Amin, who is also the grand imam of the Lebanese State Mosque, drew parallels between Indonesia’s diversity and the 18 different ethnic and religious groups in his country.

“We have something in common with what is promoted by Islam Nusantara — that we must care for other [groups],” Kurdi said.

Kurdi said that Islam Nusantara in Indonesia had been successful in protecting minority groups.

“This is an idea that originated in Indonesia, where the majority of Muslims in this world reside, so that’s why we are also interested in joining — with its 230 million-plus population, Indonesia has never marginalized its minorities,” he said.

NU first introduced the concept of Islam Nusantara in 2015 during its national assembly (muktamar) in Jombang, East Java. It aims to create a unique and genuine identity for moderate Indonesian Muslims that is different from Muslim societies in the Middle East.

A number of visiting foreign Muslim leaders have expressed their interest in the concept of Islam promoted by the Indonesian government, Islam Nusantara.

Introduced by Indonesia’s largest Islamic organization, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Islam Nusantara is a tolerant form of Islam that upholds values of peace, modesty and cultural respect.

NU secretary-general Helmy Faisal Zaini said some of the foreign leaders wanted to adopt Islam Nusantara, since the paradigm could be adapted to other countries’ local heritage.

Lebanese cleric Amin Kurdi, who is also a grand imam of the Lebanese State Mosque, said the attraction of Islam Nusantara were its teachings that told Muslims to be tolerant and spread love and peace.

"Personally, I'd like to push for the establishment of NU [in Lebanon], since the NU has experience in disseminating good, moderate and tolerant Islam," Kurdi said.
Beirut already has an NU special branch committee (PCI NU) to represent the Indonesian NU in Lebanon, as one of 40 countries around the world that have become special members of the NU’s central board.

Lebanon is among 10 countries, including Russia and Lithuania, that have announced plans for the establishment of independent NU organizations following the International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL), recently organized by NU’s central board in Jakarta.

More than 300 participants from 35 countries, including Muslim figures from Iran, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, attended the two-day meeting, where the clerics endorsed the NU’s Jakarta Declaration.

NU central board deputy chairman Maksum Machfoedz said there were currently five countries that had own independent NU organizations, namely Afghanistan, Turkey, Tunisia, Malaysia and Thailand.

The Afghan NU was established in response to an initiative by the Indonesian NU when the NU’s central board invited Afghan clerics to Jakarta in 2011 to assist in peace efforts in the war-torn country, Machfoedz said.

"We keep assisting them in the process [...] two years ago, we even have brought them to Gajah Mada University to learn about Pancasila (Indonesia’s state ideology)," Machfoedz told thejakartapost.com on Wednesday.

Fazal Ghani Kakar, the founder of the Afghan NU, said the Afghan government had supported the organization since its establishment in 2011.

According to Kakar, there are currently 6,000 local ulemas in 22 NU representative offices across 34 provinces of Afghanistan registered with the Afghan Justice Ministry.

"We are running independently, however, we get support from the Indonesian NU and Indonesian Embassy in Kabul from time to time," Kakar said.

In Afghanistan, especially, the five general principles promoted by NU, namely moderation, tolerance, justice, balance and participation, served as effective elements in creating a change of mentality among different groups in the country that kept clashing with each other, Kakar said.

Afghanistan, home to radical militant group Taliban, has suffered from war for more than four decades, with millions of lives lost.

The NU central board hoped that more independent NUs would be established soon in the countries currently hosting NU special branch committees, Machfoedz added.

JAKARTA, KOMPAS — Islam and nationalism are two sides of the same coin. Each is inseparable from the other. Both are key to the development of a nation and a solution to all conflicts currently occurring in many Islamic countries.

This kind of attitude, according to Nahdlatul Ulama chairman KH Said Aqil Siroj, is already understood by the clerics in Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. They have successfully established the connection between religious principles and the state. This is the difference between Islam in Indonesia and in Middle Eastern countries.

"The unity between Islam and nationalism does not exist in the Middle East countries, which are embroiled in continuous conflicts. Millions have died because of wars. For what? For whom?" Said Aqil said in his opening speech of the International Summit of the Moderate Islamic Leaders (Isomil) at the Jakarta Convention Center on Monday (9/5/2016).

The event, which was officially opened by Vice President Jusuf Kalla and will continue until today, was attended by 400 representatives of many countries of the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and Australia, as well as a number of Islamic boarding schools across Indonesia.

The opening of Isomil, which was held under the theme of "Islam Nusantara: Inspiration for World's Cultures", was also attended by former president Megawati Soekarnoputri and several ministers of
the Working Cabinet, including Religious Affairs Minister Lukman Hakim Saifuddin and Coordinating Human and Culture Development Minister Puan Maharani.

**Indonesia as an example**

In his opening speech, Kalla said that Indonesia should be thankful that it did not face the same problems as conflict-ridden Middle Eastern countries. He said that he hoped Indonesia could set an example for other countries by campaigning for tolerance and respect between religious adherents.

"We may not be able to unite every single thing. However, how we see our differences as a blessing for us all and complementing each of us in our lives, this is our collective hope," Kalla said.

Isomil organizing committee members Maksum Mahfudz and Imam Aziz explained that the event, which was held for the first time this year, aimed to refresh Islam's mission and encourage policymakers to take concrete steps to develop a peaceful and just civilization. The event also discussed a number of issues, especially tackling the alarming rise of religious terrorism and radicalism.

Jordanian cleric Hamdi M Murad said that he hoped the conference would produce a declaration that asked all Muslims everywhere to promote a peaceful face of Islam. "This is the true Islam. Islam that is peaceful and supports a progressive civilization," he said.

Nahdlatul Ulama senior cleric KH Yahya C Staquf said that the world's moderate Muslims should be more actively promoting moderate Islam. "This is what all Islamic leaders must continue to do: promoting a moderate form of Islam," he said.

A similar sentiment was voiced by C Holland Taylor, the director of Bayt Rahmah in California, the US. He said that he hoped moderate Muslims would continue promoting a friendly Islam such as that in Indonesia. He added that many Americans and Europeans who do not understand Islam well had their image of the religion shaped by terrorist events conducted by groups abusing the name of Islam.

"The violent groups even quote Quranic verses and hadith in improper ways. This is what people often see," Taylor said.

Nahdlatul Ulama rais aam (supreme leader) Ma'ruf Amin said in his opening speech, which he delivered in Arabic, that there were two types of extremism in the interpretation of Islamic teachings today. He reminded the audience that both types were equally dangerous and should never be followed.

First is the hardliners that interpret religious teachings in rigid ways. They are the ones who are extremely fixated on a single understanding in determining what is halal (allowed) or haram (forbidden). They read the laws textually without any comparison to other opinions or interpretations. They extend the scope of haram laws and ignore the original goal of why the law was established in the first place, or maqashid syariah.

"They only bring difficulty to the people and they make hard what Allah wants to make easy. They confine things that Islam wants to make broad and they do not understand simplicity. They think that the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims is by default antagonistic, a battle, instead of living side-by-side peacefully," he said.
The second group is the first's exact opposite. They oversimplify things too much. They think that there is no certainty in Islam as everything can always be reviewed and reassessed. "In their hands, religion becomes soft and weak and can be molded to their liking," he said.

http://print.kompas.com/baca/2016/05/10/Islam-and-Nationalism-Inseparable
NU Offers Archipelagic Islam to the World

May 11, 2016 08:10 GMT+7

JAKARTA, KOMPAS — Islam Nusantara or Archipelagic Islam, a manifestation of a peaceful and tolerant Islam that accommodates culture and local wisdom, is being offered as a new concept in the world of Islam. Archipelagic Islam can be the solution to conflict or a reference for the Islamic world to realize a world order that is peaceful and tolerant.

The point regarding Archipelagic Islam and Nahdlatul Ulama's determination to present a peaceful Islam to the world was made during the Nahdlatul Ulama Jakarta Declaration on Tuesday (10/5/2016) at the International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders. The declaration is also the result of a two-day conference that ended yesterday and saw the participation of 400 participants, including 25 country delegates.

Nahdlatul Ulama National Board (PBNU) chairman KH Said Aqil Siroj, who closed the conference, said he hoped that the event would be followed up by real action by NU and conference participants.

The PBNU formulated the Nahdlatul Ulama Jakarta Declaration, which is divided into two main ideas: on Archipelagic Islam and NU's stance on developments in the Islamic world.
The first main idea emphasizes that Archipelagic Islam is not a school of thought or new sect in Islam. Archipelagic Islam is Islam that has grown naturally in Indonesia by prioritizing harmony and peace, as well as accommodating local wisdom and culture.

The concept of Archipelagic Islam is not meant to dictate the understanding of Islam in other countries, but is more an offer of concept and experience from the Islamic world in Indonesia. Archipelagic Islam is proposed to be a paradigm that should be made an example of as it teaches tawassuth (a moderate way), tawaaazun (harmony), tasaamuh (gentleness), and I’tidaal (fairness). From a state point of view, Archipelagic Islam does not contradistinguish religion and nationalism, and does not encourage its followers to conquer the world, but instead materialize a religion that is a mercy to the universe.

**Stance**

The second main idea resulting from the conference concerns NU's position in relation to the Islamic world. NU shares its concerns with most of the people of the world because of the rampant religious extremism, terror and the wave of Islamophobia in the Western world. NU believes that certain ways of interpreting Islam have triggered the spread of extremism among Muslims, including the stance of the governments of Middle Eastern countries that exploit religious and sectarian differences and give rise to religious extremism and Islamophobia.

"Archipelagic Islam merges with culture and traditions in the archipelago, and synergize with nationalism. Archipelagic Islam has actually received a positive welcome from the participants of the conference, even though yesterday [in the opening speech] I strongly stated that the main problem in conflicting Middle Eastern countries was down to a lack of compromise between Islam and nationalism," said Said.

The positive response to the conference will, according to Said, be followed up by a meeting with delegates from other countries. A number of other countries have stated their readiness to establish an NU branch in their country, such as Afghanistan, Tunisia and Sudan. It is hoped that by having an NU branch in their countries, they will be able to spread a peaceful and tolerant understanding of Islam.

NU not only focuses on the harmony among followers of Islam, but also on reaching unity and harmony with other religions. The process of improvement among the followers of Islam continues to be carried out to further erase radical and terrorist ideologies.

"The first thing that must be done in order to overcome radicalism and terrorism is to be honest. There may be elements from Islam that are used as a basis or justification for hardline groups to carry out their actions," said Yahya Cholil Staquf of the PBNU.

PBNU general secretary Helmy Faishal Zaini said that the cases of intolerance that happen in Indonesia must be given strong sanctions by the government. "We stress one more time, if these anti-Pancasila groups are let off, they could one day be a big threat to the nation," Helmy said.

**The spread of radicalism**

From the last discussion in the conference it is revealed that the spread of radical ideologies is rife on social media, like Youtube. The acts of violence, torture and murder are displayed by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). All the videos include verses of the Koran as a justification for their actions, says Nico Prucha, a researcher in Islam from the University of Vienna, Austria.
Lauren Booth, an Islamic activist and a former journalist in England, said that the brutal incidents of late had reignited dark memories in the minds of the Western public. Muslims in Western countries often become the target of prejudice because of their religion, she said.

EDITORIAL: RI Sets Example of Peaceful Religious Life

May 12, 2016 07:36 GMT+7

Indonesia can serve as a prime example on religious tolerance and how to see differences as a blessing for global citizens.

In the International Summit of the Moderate Islamic Leaders, which was held by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Jakarta on Monday (9/5/2016) and Tuesday, the tolerance of Indonesian Muslims obtained widespread praise from representatives of various countries.

Nahdlatul Ulama, a 90-year-old civil society organization, has provided a good example for this tolerance. What is clearest is the accommodation of local wisdom and cultures that lends harmony amid the diverse faiths of the Indonesian people.

NU's determination to promote a tolerant and peaceful Islam must be placed in a global context. In a number of Middle Eastern countries, conflicts arise triggered by differences between religious adherents.

This difference, as mentioned by NU's rais aam syuriah (supreme leader) KH Ma'ruf Amin in his opening speech, was due to the religious adherents' extremist attitudes. On one end of the
spectrum, there are the rigid hardliners who bring nothing but hardship to people in their understanding of religion. On the other end, there are those who oversimplify matters and see that there is no certainty in religion as everything can be reassessed and reevaluated.

It is interesting that NU, as the biggest civil society organization in Indonesia, offered the Islam Nusantara movement at the international conference as a manifestation of a tolerant and peaceful Islam that can accommodate local cultures. This accommodative attitude also arises in the adoption of nationalistic views by the NU so that the concept of a unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia is not a problem. In practice, these accommodative approaches have been practiced and widely accepted ever since Islam first came to the archipelago.

Islam Nusantara (Archipelagic Islam) in this context is seen as a paradigm or worldview, instead of as a new school of thought (mazhab) in Islam. Moderate views, harmony, gentleness and justice are the emphasized foundations.

These attitudes are important amid globalization that weakens the state through the flow of capital and ideology that know no national borders. This has triggered negative prejudice against Islam in a number of Western countries.

Potential friction in society needs to be channeled peacefully and productively. We hope the attitude of Nahdlatul Ulama that emphasizes tolerance and harmony can maintain peace in Indonesia and be an example for other countries.

http://print.kompas.com/baca/2016/05/12/EDITORIAL-RI-Setsexample-of-Peaceful-Religious-Li