



G20 Religion Forum and the Muslim World League

G20 Religion Forum (R20):

“Helping to ensure that religion functions as a genuine and dynamic source of solutions, rather than problems”

Nahdlatul Ulama invites Muslim World League Secretary General to co-chair R20 Summit

JAKARTA, Indonesia and RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — The official host of this year’s G20 Summit — the Republic of Indonesia, led by popular two-term President Joko Widodo — has decided to place religion and religious leaders near the center of geopolitical discourse for the first time in the history of the G20.

The world’s largest Muslim organization, Indonesia’s Nahdlatul Ulama, established the G20 Religion Forum (R20) in order to “help ensure that religion in the 21st century functions as a genuine and dynamic source of solutions, rather than problems.”

In order to fulfill this vision, the R20 will mobilize diverse religious, political and economic leaders from G20 Member States and elsewhere throughout the world “to prevent the weaponization of identity; curtail the spread of communal hatred; promote solidarity and respect among the diverse peoples, cultures and nations of the world; and foster the emergence of a truly just and harmonious world order, founded upon respect for the equal rights and dignity of every human being.”

Nahdlatul Ulama (est. 1926) has selected the Mecca-based Muslim World League (MWL) to jointly host the historic event. The NU decision comes in the wake of recent dramatic changes in policy by Saudi Arabia and the Muslim World League (est. 1962), which for decades propagated ultraconservative Islamic teachings worldwide, prior to the appointment of Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud as Saudi Crown Prince in 2017.

In the words of MWL Secretary General, Shaykh Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, the Muslim World League now seeks “to build bridges and facilitate inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue,” and to “promote the values of moderation to counter all forms of extremism.”

The founding Chairman of the G20 Religion Forum (R20) is KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf, General Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Central Board. Shaykh Mohammad Abdulkarim Al-Issa will co-chair the R20 Summit, which will be held in Bali, Indonesia on November 2 – 3, 2022.

Commenting on the significance of these developments, Dr. Al-Issa observed: “Working alongside Nahdlatul Ulama, which has approximately 120 million members and shares the ideals supported by the Muslim World League, will strengthen our mission. Our collaboration with Nahdlatul Ulama, which has significant influence, will enhance our tasks as well.” He added, “This partnership with Nahdlatul Ulama will serve as an excellent platform for dialogue that will amplify and extend the Muslim World League’s noble mission.”

Nahdlatul Ulama Chairman KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf said, “Through this cooperation with the Muslim World League, we hope to facilitate the emergence of a global movement. The G20 Religion Forum will invite people of good will of every faith and nation to help bring the world’s geopolitical and economic power structure into alignment with the highest moral and spiritual values, for the sake of all humanity.”

The partnership between the Muslim World League and Nahdlatul Ulama extends beyond the upcoming R20 Summit. The two organizations will work to define common values that may serve as a basis for harmonious coexistence between diverse communities. In addition, a senior representative of the Muslim World League will join the Board of Advisors of the [Center for Shared Civilizational Values](#), which was established by Nahdlatul Ulama leaders and serves as the [Permanent Secretariat](#) for the G20 Religion Forum.