



نهضة العلماء افغانستان

Nahdhatul Ulama Afghanistan

Report on WASATĪYYAT ISLAM FOR GLOBAL CIVILIZATION: CONCEPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

May 2018



Based on the Invitation from H.E President of the Republic of Indonesia, two NUA Members of the leadership committee Mr. Fazal Ghani Kakar founder and Mr. Sayed Salahuddin Hashemi elect chairman of NUA participated in this prestigious international 3 day forum in Bogor Indonesia to represent Afghanistan Nahdhatul Ulama. Ulama from more than 37 Muslim majority and countries of Muslim Minorities participated in the conference to emphasis the moderation of Islam under the theme of Wastiyyat Islam. Mr. Kakar founder NUA had active participation in the conference sessions and give constructive interventions during the sessions emphasizing on the characteristics of moderation in Islam, he mentioned the 4 prominent characteristics as below:

1. Ease and mitigating difficulty or hardship
2. Good Manners
3. Warning against any extremism and calling for moderation
4. Tolerance

During the visit NUA members also met Mr. Dr. Asad Said Ali form vice chairman NUI (Nahdhatul Ulama Indoneisa), Mr. Kakar give his excellency an overall information of NUA and talked about the efforts NUA has had for the peace talks and the recent peace initiative taken by the Republic of Indonesia to arrange a tripartite dialogue in Indonesia Ulam from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Indonesia to discuss peace and reconciliation from Islamic perspective.

The NUA had the opportunity to discuss the situation in Afghanistan with ulama from several other countries and ask for their support of the peace process in Afghansitan.



*Presiden Republik Indonesia
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mengharap Kehadiran Saudara/Saudari

pada

Peresmian Pembukaan

Konsultasi Tingkat Tinggi Tokoh Ulama dan
Cendekiawan Muslim Dunia mengenai Wasatiyyat Islam

hari Selasa, tanggal 1 Mei 2018, pukul 10.30 WIB
bertempat di Istana Kepresidenan Bogor

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I. INTRODUCTION

Wasatiyyat Islam (derived from an Arabic term, Wasatiyyatul Islam, in Indonesia it is known as Wasathiyah Islam), is a feature of Islamic understanding and praxis. It is also a method or approach to contextualize Islam in the midst of global civilizations. The presence of Wasatiyyat Islam is imperative and necessary both within the Islamic Umma itself and in the midst of the interaction between Islam with various religions and other world systems. In an effort to disseminate the understanding, conception and practice of Wasatiyyat Islam, the vernacularization, indigenization and contextualization of Islam have become strategic measures to develop and implement the practices of Wasatiyyat Islam. The understanding and praxis of Wasatiyyat Islam have become certainties in the midst of challenges posed by the eruption of crises in many parts of the Muslim World and global civilizations triggered by religious understanding and praxis that are not 'wasatiyyah' as well as by the unequitable world development in various aspects of life such as in politics, economics, socio-culture, science-technology, science, the environment and other aspects.

Wasatiyyat Islam also encourages the islah (reform) of civilization as embodied in its meaning. The agenda to build a world civilization that is more peaceful, just, and equitable has become the agenda of Wasatiyyat Islam both in the Muslim World and in the wider international environment. In the agenda of building this civilization, there exist pillars of civilization such as religion and spirituality, economics, politics, science, social institutions, and demographics that call for special attention.

These various pillars must be unified and synergized to rebuild a new civilization. In the absence of religions that embody spiritual and ethical values, a peaceful, just and equitable civilization would unlikely be realized. By virtue of science, an array of innovation and invention that are valuable and useful to the community can accelerate the rate of advancement of the civilization. Science contributes to political and economic development and transforms the way the people live. Social institutions are the subsequent prerequisites for the establishment and development of civilization. The next prerequisite is demography. A pluralistic population, made up of various age groups, helps determine and becomes a pillar of civilization.

The present consultation on Wasatiyyat Islam is not a new initiative because it is widely understood that previous initiatives have been undertaken, such as the following. First, al-Azhar asy-Syarif in Cairo, Egypt, as the centre of Islamic education and culture, has an influence on the diversity of the Islamic Umma in various countries. It is widely known that the colour (shibghah) of al-Azhar is characterized by the colour of Wasatiyyat Islam. This shibghah has influenced the spread of manhaj wasati as the mainstream of Islamic thought in the Islamic world. Second, Prince Ghazi ibn Talal of Jordan who initiated the adoption of the Amman Message (Risalah Amman), which resulted from the agreement reached by hundreds of world Muslim ulemas and scholars, also featured a wasati orientation. The initiative that prompted the birth of the same basis movement (kalimatun sawa) clearly has wasati colour because it invites people of different religions to emphasize similarities rather than differences. Third, King Abdullah ibn Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia further emphasized the

significance of Wasatiyyat Islam by establishing the King Abdullah International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) centered in the heart of Europe, Vienna, Austria. KAICIID is one of the inclusive and active dialogue movements that develops mutual understanding and mutual respect among adherents of different religions and cultures. Fourth, from Southeast Asia, the initiative of Prime Minister Tun Najib Razak of Malaysia ought to be commended, namely the creation of the Global Movement of Moderates. This movement relatively also highlights the image of Islam as a religion with the principle of wasatiyyah.

Fifth, it bears mentioning that in Indonesia, the Minister of Religious Affairs, Tarmizi Taher, in the 1990s revitalized the conception of Wasatiyyat Islam that had in fact historically and culturally become the basic colour of the diversity of the Islamic Umma in Indonesia. This conception is manifested in the existence of hundreds of mass organizations and Islamic institutions that are found all over Indonesia, which has at the same time also become a characteristic of Islam in the country. These Islamic organizations are concurrently mass organizations and cultural movements. They have become the backbones of the founding of the Republic of Indonesia, which design can, to some extent, be viewed as a manifestation of Wasatiyyat Islam.

This Bogor Consultation is intended as an effort to revitalize all these enlightening initiatives in the context of a global civilization that has experienced decadence and destruction so that Wasatiyyat Islam can be put forward as a solution.



II. WASATIYYAT ISLAM: A CONCEPTION

Wasatiyyat Islam is one of the central concepts in Islamic teachings to build the character and personality of Muslims, both individually and collectively. This concept is embedded in the concept of ummatan wasathan (middle people, by extension, middle path or justly-balanced umma). The concept of Wasatiyyat Islam is also related to the comprehensive teachings of Islam. Al-Quran and Hadith have repeatedly emphasized the importance of being wasatiyyah. The concept of wasatiyyah is inherent (unified and embedded with the trait and character that are inseparable) in Islamic teachings. Wasatiyyah derives from the Arabic word 'wasat', which means mediator, intermediary, being at the centre, core, heart, taking the middle path or the wise or primary way, beautiful and the best, having a balanced point of view, behaving justly. In academic Islamic studies, 'Wasatiyyat Islam' is often translated as 'justly-balanced Islam', 'the middle path Islam', 'the middle way Islam' or 'Islam as a mediating and balancing power'. These terms indicate the importance of justice and equilibrium, and the middle path in Islam to avoid from being caught in the extremes. The concept of Wasatiyyat Islam reflects

the principles of tawassut (in the middle), tasamuh (tolerance), tawazun (balanced), i'tidal (fair), iqtisad (simple). Thus, the term Ummatan Wasatan is often referred to as 'a just people' or 'a just community', namely a community or communities that implement the aforementioned criteria.

The character of Wasatiyyat Islam is understood as related to the position of Islam being in the middle between two previously revealed religions, namely Judaism which emphasizes justice (din al-'adalah) and Christianity which emphasizes compassion (din al-rahmah). Islam, as the middle religion, combines both justice and compassion (din al-'adalah wa al-rahmah). Thus, the Wasatiyyat Islam also affirms the middle path in the sense of not being caught between two extreme points (al-ghuluw wa al-taqsir). Wasatiyyat Islam is also understood as a middle ground between two religious orientations that is ascetic-spiritualistic or legalistic-formalistic. This explanation shows that Wasatiyyat is a basic Islamic character from its birth. Therefore, Wasatiyyat Islam is an attempt to combine the worldly life and the afterlife and to achieve happiness in this world and in the hereafter (sa'adat al-daraini).

In the aforementioned perspective, the concept ummatan wasatan signifies the 'best community' (khair umma), which in the Qur'an teaches goodness and prevents disobedience, and professes faith to God. Thus, the ummatan wasatan as khaira umma is a constantly quality- and achievement-oriented community, which could consequently lead the realization of a pre-eminent civilization.

Based on the aforementioned explanation and taking into account the opinions of world Muslim ulemas and scholars, Indonesian Muslim ulemas, at the 2015 National Conference of the Indonesian Ulema Council, concluded the Twelve Principles of Wasatiyyat Islam, namely:

1. Tawassut (taking the middle path), i.e. understanding and implementing religion that is not ifrat (exaggerating the teachings of religion) and not tafrit (reducing the teachings of religion).
2. Tawazun, (balanced), i.e. understanding and practicing religion in a balanced manner, covering all aspects of life in this world and in the hereafter, holding a firm stance on the principle that distinguishes between inhiraf (deviation) and ikhtilaf (difference).
- I'tidal (undeviating and firm), i.e. behaving proportionately, acting proportionately in exercising one's rights and meeting one's responsibilities, holding a firm stance on principles.
4. Tasamuh (tolerance), i.e. recognizing and respecting differences, both in religious aspect and other aspects of life. Thus, wasatiyyat requires fairness and stands above parties/groups.
5. Musawah (egalitarian), i.e. behaving indiscriminately to others not based on the differences of their beliefs, socio-economic status, traditions, places of origin, and/or gender.
6. Syura (deliberation), i.e. settling problems through deliberation to reach consensus by placing the interests of all before everything else.

7. Islah (reform), i.e. prioritizing reformative principles to achieve a better condition that accommodates changes and progress based on the common good (mashlahah 'ammah) by upholding the principle of al-muhafazah' ala al-qadimi al-salih wa al -akhdzu bi al-jadid al-aslah.
8. Aulawiyah (giving precedence to what is prioritized), i.e. the ability to identify matters of higher importance that must be prioritized and implemented over matters of lesser interest.
9. Tatawwur wa ibtikar (dynamic and innovative), i.e. being always open to make changes to keep pace in changing times and creating new things for the benefits and progress of humanity.
10. Tahadhdhur (civilized), i.e. upholding akhlakul karimah, the character, identity, and integrity as khair ummah in human livelihood and civilization.
11. Wathaniyah wa muwathanah, i.e. accepting the existence of the nation-state wherever one may be and giving priority to civic orientation.
12. Qudwatiyah i.e. undertaking pioneering initiatives for the common good and well-being and in consequence the Islamic umma that implement Wasatiyyat will provide testimony (syahadah).

The aforementioned principles should be crystallized in the paradigm and behaviour of Muslims, both individually and collectively, in various aspects of their lives. Wasatiyyat Islam is the actualization or manifestation of Islam Rahmatan lil'Alamin (Surah 21:107). Justice, for example, is reflected in the daily life of the Rasulullah Peace Be Upon Him and of Muslims' earliest generation. The Rasulullah set justice as an example when he reminded Muslims to enforce justice to all even when it concerned their own family members. Should justice be ignored when the perpetrators were found to be leading figures or government officials, then it would threaten the very existence of a society.

An example of implementing the wasatiyyat principle can be taken from the experience of solving issues through consultation and deliberation. The Rasulullah regularly consulted and deliberated with his companions to deal with various social, economic, and political issues. In making decisions, the Rasulullah sought the opinions of his companions, Abu Bakr and Umar. The opinions of Umar were often confirmed through the revelation of Quranic verses relevant to the issues being inquired. Ahl al-masyurah and ahl al-hall wal-aqd were socio-political institutions that provided advice to the supreme leader when issues arose and needed to be settled. The various forms of consultation and deliberation could take the shape of decisions, contracts, treaties, and agreements. The application of the middle path in Islamic history can be seen from certain documents, such as charter (mitsaq), ceasefire agreement (hudnah), peace agreement (mu'ahadah), alliance (hulf) of cooperation agreement (ittifaq ta'awun). The making of concessions (tanazul) and the offering of compensation (ta'wid) could also constitute as the application of the middle path, should they be just settlements under certain conditions.

The principle of tasamuh in having differences of opinion is exemplified by the Rasulullah in various aspects, such as by respecting the freedom of religion and not forcing the kabilah or making someone convert to another religion. The practice of tasamuh gains greater importance today as a wave of mutual mistrust towards other different groups sweeps across the world. The impression that Islam is intolerant and disrespectful is clearly unfounded. In fact, when Muslims become the majority in a particular region, non-Muslim minorities can freely practice their religion.

An example of how Islam teaches tolerance can be seen through a hadith narrated by al-Bukhari which states that the Rasulullah once stood up in respect of a passing procession of a deceased Jew. When someone later asked the Rasulullah why he had stood up, the Rasulullah replied by asking “Was not the Jew a human being too?” This hadith provides an understanding that the Rasulullah was tolerant of others by standing up in respect of a coffin, even though it was of a Jewish person.

Wasatiyyat Islam also encompasses an orientation towards a behaviour that appreciates the ethos of excellence. This ethos is based on the central position of knowledge in Islam. The Qur'an is replete with verses that contain words concerning the importance of the thinking process, including *ulul albab*, *afalaa yatadabbaruun*, and *afalaa ya'qiluun*. This reflects an important value that drives the sustained quest for knowledge, which ultimately results in excellence in various fields. The advance of Muslim scientists during the golden age of Islam was a manifestation of the thirst for knowledge that not only significantly contributed to the infrastructure development of Islamic civilization of that era but also became a catalyst for the development of the Western civilization in the subsequent period. Scientists, such as Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, and Ibn Haitam, have made many important discoveries for the development of modern science in medicine, mathematics, astronomy, architecture and in other fields.

Finally, one of the characters of Wasatiyyat Islam is *al-hanifiyyah al-samhah*, the spirit of seeking the truth imbued with an attitude that is open-minded, big-hearted, and tolerant. This concept holds two meanings. First, Islam forbids the imposition of religion (Surah 2: 256). In the history of the liberation of the city of Mecca at the time of Prophet Muhammad, as a case in point, the Quraysh people were not forced to convert to Islam. A similar policy was also to be found in the liberation of Palestine at the time of al-Khulafa al-Rashidun, during which the Christians and Jews were guaranteed the freedom to practice their religion. This type of attitude is based on the viewpoint that although every human being has the instinct to seek the truth, this truth-seeking process is richly varied. The process of finding truth would be easier for those who were born in Muslim families and raised in Islamic teaching. On the other hand, those who were born and raised in non-Muslim families may find that the truth-seeking process may not be easy and could take time. Therefore, Islam emphasizes the need to respect the process that truth-seekers must undergo by appreciating the diversity of faith that they profess. Second, Islam advocates seeking common ground out of differences (Surah 3:64). The diversity of religion embraced by society is a natural phenomenon that must be respected, since everyone always undergo a process in seeking the truth. The effort to find common ground can be found in the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina. He

united the pluralistic society of Medina under one interest, namely to protect the city from enemy attack and to build the Medina society based on their respective religions.



III. WASAṬIYYAT ISLAM IN THE COURSE OF ISLAMIC

CIVILIZATION HISTORY

The conception of Wasaṭiyyat Islam has been elaborated in numerous studies and references. Various opinions have been expounded on ummatan wasatan that were later associated with Wasaṭiyyat Islam, which can be signified as justly-balanced. This trait and character reflects an umma or a community that is just, advanced, and balanced. Throughout this chapter, various practices of Wasaṭiyyat Islam in the course of history, since the era of Ta'sis, Tathwir, and Tahdits, will be elaborated as part of an effort to demonstrate that Wasaṭiyyat Islam constitutes a historic heritage that merits and befits to be perpetuated and practiced by the Islamic umma of today.

1. The Formative Era (Ta'sis)

The dawn of Islam and the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him usher in blessings for the entire universe. The dawn of Islam and the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him do not only bring blessings for Muslims, but also for the entire mankind and the universe. Islam as a blessed religion has been proven to bring concrete improvements. Blessing, in this context, does not only signify compassion, but also civilizational improvement. During this formative era, the Rasulullah, through the practices of Wasaṭiyyat Islam spanning his 23-year prophethood, succeeded in developing cadres and communities on the basis of strong faith, and implemented a blueprint of civilization. As a figure who has succeeded in transforming the civilization of mankind, the Rasulullah was a role model who exemplified a wasat (justly-balanced) character. In concluding various agreements with the Quraysh people, the Rasulullah prioritized the values of peace and sought the middle path to find the common good. For instance, in the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, the Rasulullah displayed his great soul and patience. Furthermore, the Rasulullah also allowed the Christian community of Najran to perform prayers at the Nabawi Mosque.

Another example of the practice of Wasaṭiyyat Islam could be seen when the Rasulullah assumed the position of Head of the State of Medina, when he developed a community of believers who were bound by the Medina Charter (al-Mitsaq al Madinah). The basic principles concerning the development of a pluralistic society were guaranteed therein, such as the prohibition to commit murder, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, protection of possessions, cooperation in developing society, and mutual help at times of war. This was the first modern constitution that was far ahead of its time.

Additionally, the practice of Wasatiyyat Islam can be discerned in the Fathu Makkah (the Conquest of Mecca) event. Upon entering Mecca, the Rasulullah displayed chivalrous and praiseworthy demeanor by not acting egotistically as victors. As victors, the Rasulullah and his army had the fate and destiny of the inhabitants of Mecca under their mercy. Nevertheless, the Rasulullah acted compassionately and granted amnesty to the Quraysh people of Mecca, who had, in the past, intended to kill, banish, harm, and mistreat the close friends of the Rasulullah. Committing the act of forgiveness at times of victory is a remarkable proof of a great soul that is not tainted by revenge and hatred. The Rasulullah left a legacy of values to be emulated that consisted of virtue, humanity, faithful to one's promise, and acting in a fair manner.

In the era of the caliphates, the practices of Wasatiyyat Islam were exhibited in the period following the decease of the Rasulullah. In the era of Caliph Umar Ibn Khattab, after the victory in Jerusalem, he visited the third holiest city of Muslims to personally receive the surrender. As he arrived, the Christian inhabitants assumed that the Muslim Caliph intended to perform shalat in their holiest church to mark his victory, but Umar refused to do so. Instead, Umar conveyed to the Christian inhabitants that the Muslims would like to live together, perform their religious duties in accordance with their faith, and set better examples. In the event the Christians wished to join, they were welcome to do so. Otherwise, they were free to decide. Allah has pronounced, "There is no compulsion in religion".

2. The Development Era (Tathwir)

One of the important milestones for Wasatiyyat Islam in this era occurred during the period of Umar ibn Ábd Aziz (deceased in 101 Hegira/720 A.D.). He endeavoured to develop the inclusivism between Muslim communities, accomodated the Shiah community, and rehabilitated the name of Ali ibn Abi Thalib through what was commonly known as tarbi', which stated that the previous legitimate caliphs, known as Khulafa'al-Rasyidun, consisted of Abu Bakr, Umar, Utsman, and Ali. Previously, there were three versions of those who were named as Khulafa'al-Rasyidun. The Nawashib tribe of the Umawi clan believed that they included Abu Bakr, Umar, dan Utsman, but excluding Ali, and to some by including Muawiyah. To the Khawarij tribe, they only included Abu Bakr and Umar, whereas Utsman, Ali and Muawiyah were considered as kafirs. To the Syiah Rafidah tribe, Ali was the sole Khulafa'al-Rasyidun, whereas the others usurped the legitimate right of Ali who had been mandated by Rasulullah PBUH. Thus, tarbi' has become a form of Wasatiyyat Islam that later grew as a habit of the Ummah and one of the symbols that represented jama'ah and sunnah.

In the field of aqidah, al-Asy'ari played an important part by mediating in the differing schools of thought between Qadariyah and Jabariyah and introduced the complex tenet of kasb (acquisition). The kasb method was considered to be most balanced, and thus it flourished and became a Sunni tenet in the field of aqidah.

During the period of the Utsmani Dynasty, the practice of Wasatiyyat Islam materialized in the form of a social system that protected and guaranteed the freedom of religion and worship

that was known as Millet. Millet was a system that regulated the relations between different religious communities in the caliphate. This system was responsible for the religious rituals, education, justice, charity, and social services in each religious group. The outcome was the realization of the Jewish Millet, Armenian Millet, East Orthodox Community Millet under the reign of Utsmani – in addition to the Muslim community, naturally. Each millet performed internal coordinative functions within its community and reported to the Sultan whenever an issue or dispute arose and needed to be settled. The Sultan served as protector of all millet, and the Muslim community had their own supreme leader known as Shayk al-Islam. The Millet system was one of the manifestations of Wasatiyyat Islam in managing religious diversity and governance that spanned up to Eastern Europe. However, in parallel with the declining power of the Utsmani Empire in the 1700s-1800s, the millet system did not last until the end of the Utsmani Empire, and was replaced by a secular system.

3. The Modernization Era (Tahdits)

The expression of Wasatiyyat Islam in terms of modernization could be found from the last quarter of the 19th century. In this period, nearly the entire Islamic world – as Egypt, India, and Indonesia – were colonized by European countries. Although colonization led to the downfall of the political power of the Islamic Ummah, it also generated the awareness of the Islamic Ummah on the importance of developing tahdits in numerous sectors, namely military, government, social institutions, economy, culture and education. Instead of rejecting various aspects of the progress achieved by the European colonialists, the Islamic umma, on the contrary, drew lessons from it and developed it. This is due to a principle of Wasatiyyat Islam that asserts when progress originates from science then it belongs to Allah. Therefore, pursuing advancement by means of science—including science that develops in Europe—is not a hindrance to Muslims. It is on the basis of that viewpoint—to achieve progress—that the best students from the Islamic world were sent to European countries to study science.

During this period, the practice of wasatiyyat entered an era of revival ('asrun nahdah). Muslim intellectuals initiated modernization and attempted to catch up with the progress achieved by European nations. The practice of Wasatiyyat started to move forward to achieve progress by adopting and accommodating European civilization. Within this period, many scholars and activists of worldwide Islamic modernization moved forward, such as Muhammad Ali Pasha, Rifa'ah Rafi' Ath-Thahtawi, Nawawi Al-Bantani, Ahmad Khatib Al-Minangkabawi, Mahfudz Al-Termasi and many others.

In Turkey Utsmani, the expression of Wasatiyyat Islam in the modernization started to emerge since the era of Tanzimat. Tanzimat signifies to regulate, organize, and reform (islah). The modernization movement during this era started to develop since the mid-19th century. During this period, the practice of wasatiyyat was marked by the rise of a movement pioneered by a number of modernization figures of Turkey Utsmani, who learned from the West in the sectors of government, military, law, administration, education, finance, and trade. The era of revival had generated the rise of numerous modernization figures throughout the Islamic world. Therefore, this phase was designated as the era of modernization or reform (tajdid wa al-islah). This era had prompted the rise of modernization figures, such as

Jamaludin Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Rasyid Ridha, Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Iqbal, Ahmad Dahlan, Hasyim Asy'ari, Rahmah El-Yunusiyah, Soekarno, Mohammad Hatta, Muhammad Natsir and many others. The era of tajdid wa al-islah had provided a momentum for the practice of wasatiyyat that would continue into the era of mu'asharah. In this era, the following global figures played significant roles, namely, among others, Mahmud Syaltut, Wahbah Zuhaili, Fazlur Rahman, Mohammed Arkoun, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Mahmood Ayub, Harun Nasution, Nurcholish Majid, Abdurrahman Wahid, Aisyah Abdurrahman (bint Asy-Syati'), Seyyed Husein Nasr, Murtadha Muthahari, Abdullah Badawi, Mukti Ali and many others.



IV. WASATIYYAT ISLAM: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES AMID GLOBAL CIVILIZATION

The global civilization of today experiences uncertainties, chaos, and disorder. A number of experts has also observed the occurrence of a great shift and a big disruption. As a result, they have all inflicted an accumulative global damage. This kind of opinion reflects the trend towards a risk of resuming the Cold War with the rise of new political, military, and economic power blocs in the world. In addition, the world also face challenges with the emergence of the post-truth society phenomenon, which pose real challenges to religions.

Apart from it, the post Cold War situation and condition of many parts of the Islamic World is characterized by its being mired in proxy wars between global powers. Furthermore, the resulting issues from proxy wars are the persistent high index of underdevelopment in the Islamic Muslim World and the never-ending conflicts and wars stemming from the interests of the parties involved in the proxy wars.

This situation is inseparable from the global trends which lacks ethical and moral values, and common good due to antropocentric world perspective and abandonment of devoutness, ethics, and morals (theocentric). In the midst of this disadvantageous situation, the Muslim World - that is rich in natural resources, human resources, and historical resources as it has an outstanding civilization history in the past – possesses the potentials and opportunities to rise to contemporary challenges by building a world imbued with ethics and morals (spiritualized world) by adopting the Wasatiyyat Islam.

1. Challenges

The world has experienced evolution, progress, and acceleration in various fields owing to the development of science and technology. Human development has gradually transpired since the beginning of human civilization until the 1st, 2nd, 3rd industrial revolution, and now entering the 4th industrial revolution (4.0) — where cyber-physical systems will influence the materialization of the world that will collide with global values and ethics. At this stage, surrounded by the multi-faceted development and progress, the international community will remain haunted by issues facing humanity that emerge in all corners of the world.

The name but a few of those challenges:

a. Global Disorder and Loss of Public Civility/Common Good

The changes in the international system marked by multi-plurality and power competition have given rise to uncertainties. Following the world economic crises of 1997-1998 and 2008, the economic capacity of the Great Power countries has declined. However, this condition has not diminished the hegemony of those countries at the global stage. A new alliance replicating the Cold War blocs has regained a newly-found momentum in a global political dynamism in the Asia Pacific and Arab Spring. The economic pendulum that has started to swing towards the Asian region has caused the Great Powers, such as the United States, to get involved in tensions throughout the world. The economic growth of China has further escalated tensions in this region.

Meanwhile, the Arab Spring dynamics has reignited tensions in the US-NATO and Russia-China alliances in the Middle East. These alliances have also brought back countries in the region into more complicated centripetal conflicts. The Syrian conflict reflects these colliding interests.

The disorder in the international system is also related to international migration that, in turn, gives rise to mounting political and religious conservatism. The waves of international refugees to Europe and America have created a new episode of tension between the Islamic World and the West. Some researches have shown that the presence of Muslim refugees and persons in Europe and the United States has brought about economic and social issues, such as unemployment and criminality. The inability of Muslim migrants in Europe and America to integrate with the local culture has also contributed to frictions between native Europeans and Americans with Muslim migrants. Recently, home-grown terrorism in the form of bomb attacks in European cities, involving Muslim migrants has aggravated the insecurity situation and has worsened Islamo-phobia.

This condition has triggered a negative response from conservative groups in Europe and America who took advantage of this situation by advancing their populist political agenda that are anti-migrant and anti-Muslim. Political and religious populism were also behind the victory of Donald Trump in the US, Brexit in England, and the growing support for conservative parties in France, the Netherlands, and Germany.

The increasing populism and political and religious conservatism have caused the deterioration of public civility and common good in the behavior of many in the international community. It is clear that this trend impacts negatively on the efforts to realize world peace.

b. Global Gap

The domination and hegemony of global powers that control various domains of life – from the economy, politics, military, to socio-culture – have engendered intricate and complex problems. This situation has created a gap and an asymmetric global interaction. Furthermore, this situation has caused problems such as economic and financial crises, poverty, human trafficking, environmental crisis, illicit drug trafficking, and wars that have become globalized and worsened the lives of many communities in the world.

The injustice and gap at this stage could trigger the emergence of radical groups purporting to act in the name of religion, as well as of anti-globalization groups. Their violent actions and the response of security apparatus have created unbroken circles of revenge. The advances in technology have also impacted negatively with the ease spread of radical teachings through the Internet and social media. The success of ISIS in recruiting thousands of youths through social media merits our serious attention. At the same time, the phenomenal advancement in information technology is not coupled with the capacity of Muslim countries in mastering and developing science and technology infrastructures and supra-structures. In consequence, those countries merely become technology consumers.

As a result, the current world civilization undergoes what is called lack of morals, lack of well-being, and moral illiteracy. Many world communities experience disorientation in life, and this causes the efforts to build world peace more arduous.

c. A weak foundation of Wasāṭiyyat

This weakness stems from or is related to a strong prim-ordialism and a high sectarianism orientation in the social and political institutions of many parts of the Islamic world. Weak good governance has also resulted in widespread pernicious acts, such as corruption and intolerance. This has weakened the foundation of Wasāṭiyyat Islam. Eventually, this condition has given rise to authoritarian and corrupt leadership. Political prim-ordialism and sectarian orientation have caused divisions to become more acute in the Islamic world political entities.

d. Civil Society in the Muslim World

The existence and role of civil society in many parts of the Islamic world are also still very limited. Civil society is still considered as a product of the West which is inappropriate to Islamic values. In some cases, the presence of civil society is regarded as opposition that creates security instability and threatens leadership legitimacy. Even if civil society does exist, its role is only limited to philanthropic activities that have not produced empowerment effects nor strengthened elements of the society with civic culture and civility.

2. Opportunities

a. Umma solidarity and enhancement of global cooperation

The transformation of the modern international system since the beginning of the 20th century has created nation-states in the Islamic World with diverse governance systems. Nevertheless, it did not weaken the Umma solidarity among Muslim communities. Solidarity is a binding factor that shapes the transnational collective identity. Therefore, solidarity can be used as a foundation to bind Muslim countries and communities who live in different geographical locations. The Umma solidarity could be felt since the establishment of many nation-states in the Islamic World. Muslim countries mutually supported their struggle for independence and international recognition of sovereignty. Indonesia in 1945, for instance, was a country that received its first recognition for its independence from other Muslim countries in the Middle East.

The solidarity of the Umma establishes a global network among Muslim communities that can provide widespread benefits. Important events transpiring in a Muslim country can receive quick response from other Muslim communities living in different countries and continents. The humanitarian assistance initiatives and political support for the struggle of the Palestinian people or the Rohingya (Myanmar), for example, serve as very clear examples of the solidarity of the Umma. The Islamic World also continues to pay special attention to the humanitarian crises gripping Southern Thailand, as well as to the Kashmiri, Afghan and Syrian conflicts. The global Muslim community also pays attention to Islam phobia that gives rise to political and social issues in the Muslim community living in the West. The solidarity of the Umma may serve as a foundation for strengthening international cooperation among Muslim countries.

The advances of information technology also increasingly strengthen the Umma solidarity network. Technological developments have also spawned an inclusive digital Umma among the millennial Muslim generation. On the one hand, these developments further bind the identity of the Umma. On the other hand, this emerging Umma identity also breeds diversity and various lifestyle choices. Pharrell Williams, a pop star and film producer, released a song titled "Happy" that became viral. This song illustrates the expression of the diversity of Muslim lifestyle in the United Kingdom that is able to maintain diversity and live happily.

b. Growth of Muslim Middle Class

Along with the increasing rate of economic growth in Muslim countries, the Muslim middle class is also growing. This growth cannot be separated from the success of integrating economic improvement with Islamic values. This success is also linked to the rising levels of youth education and their interaction with modernism. Indonesia, Malaysia, India and some Muslim countries in the Middle East and Africa have significantly growing middle class. The middle class in the Muslim population is also on the rise in Europe and America.

The rise of the Muslim middle class is also accompanied by growing awareness of religious identity. Nowadays, it is easy to find Muslim figures among modern millennial generation, who are highly-educated, have jobs with good income, as well as being very assertive in expressing Islamic identity in attire, and are critical of addressing issues in the Islamic World.

Indonesia, in particular, has experienced relatively good economic growth in the last three or four decades. This development contributes to the growing number of middle class Muslims in Indonesia. The Muslim middle class of Indonesia also includes a progressive millennial generation. This generation adopts an open, tolerant and inclusive view of differences.

Various surveys on the rise of Muslim middle class show that they do not only bring positive developments to the economic growth of Muslim countries, but they also bring a positive effect to the global economy. The middle class encourages the growth of various middle and advanced industries coupled with the increasing purchasing power of the Muslim communities. The growth of the halal industry, Islamic banks, Muslim fashion and halal tourism are some of the important examples of the positive effects generated by the rise of the middle class in the Muslim World. The development of the Muslim middle class with such a lifestyle is not limited in growth within Muslim countries only, but it has also gained great attention in non-Muslim countries in Europe, North America, and Asia such as Thailand, Korea and Japan.

c. The Potential Power of Islamic World Leadership

The Islamic World is a global community with rich natural, human, and historical resources — because in the past it had a glorious history of civilization. This potential can serve as a capital for the Islamic world to emerge as a protecting power and offer solutions to various global issues. The ethical and moral wealth of Wasaṭiyyat Islam actually have a tremendous enabling power to contribute to the global civilization. This requires the Islamic World to have the capability to cope with various internal problems in order to be able to address global challenges.



IV. WASAṬIYYAT ISLAM: THE INDONESIAN EXPERIENCE

The concept of Wasaṭiyyat Islam has been widely studied and discussed by Islamic scholars, both classical and contemporary scholars. However, the added value that Indonesia has is how the implementation and actualization of the Wasaṭiyyat Islam has been implemented from a long time ago until now and in the future. Wasaṭiyyat Islam is the character and distinction of Islam in Indonesia and one of the legacies of Islam in Indonesia. The implementation of Wasaṭiyyat Islam in Indonesia can be observed from five characteristics or aspects. First, the understanding and practice of Islam; second, culture; third, civil society (both from sociological and historical perspective); fourth, education; and fifth, the state.

First, the understanding and praxis of Islam in Indonesia since the early period was wasaṭiyyah thanks to a peaceful and gradual spreading over several centuries. This cannot be

separated from the process of Islam entering Indonesia that respected local culture such as the method of da'wah (sermon) implemented by nomad Sufi teachers by adopting local cultural elements such as wayang (a story told through shadow puppets) and social institutions such as dayah, surau and pesantren (traditional forms of Muslim education). In terms of architecture, mosques built by the Wali Sanga (nine leading figures who spread Islam in Java) adopted typical local traditions and culture of the period, as found in the Grand Mosque of Demak and Sunan Kudus Mosque which are influenced by the pre-Islamic cultural tradition.

Furthermore, the practice of the Wasatiyyat Islam in Indonesia is adopted from pre-Islamic local traditions that have been Islamized for the purpose of da'wah. Sunan Kalijaga, one of the Wali Sanga who spread Islam in Java, used pre-Islamic traditions by synthesizing them with Islamic teachings, such as the play of wayang and the messages indicated in it to spread Islam.

There are so many other examples, but the most important point in this case is the willingness of those who conducted syi'ar of Islam and the ulemas to accommodate and adopt local traditions through certain Islamization process. That is why Islam in Indonesia is in harmony with local traditions. This is a form of reconciliation between religion and culture that works well in Indonesia. This is because in the process of acculturation of religion and culture, the ulemas do not frontally reject or throw it away; if there are things that still fit, it will be continued, if anything is less it will be modified according to the principle of the beneficial remains to be taken (*ma la yudraku kulluhu, la yutraku kulluhu*).

Such practice of Islam in Indonesia since the 17th century resulted in Islamic orthodoxy in Indonesia which consists of three aspects: First, Ash'ariyah which is the middle way between Khawarij and Mu'tazilah; second, the fiqh of the Shafi'i school which is the middle way between the Hanbali school which tends to be rigid and the more rational of the Hanafi school; third, the Ghazalian Sufism which is the middle path between the theoretical-speculative philosophical sufism and the excessive antinomian sufism.

The legacy of Islamic orthodoxy in Indonesia can be found in many local literatures using various local languages. Thus, the wealth of Islamic intellectual heritage in Indonesia is vernacularized — disclosure in local language — which then creates the process of indigenization and contextualization. These processes also play an instrumental role in the growth and strengthening of the Wasatiyyat Islam tradition in Indonesia.

The development and dynamics of religious life, education, social, culture and politics in the past four decades have strengthened the fluid Islamic tradition since the maritime age. The fluidity that makes sectarianism among schools and intra-Islamic sect has never been strong in Indonesia. In contemporary times, the fluidity also resulted in religious convergence among different Islamic traditions which had slightly differentiation in terms of furu'iyah. With the same religious convergence, Wasatiyyat Islam in Indonesia became more consolidated.

Islamic Orthodoxy in Indonesia as Wasatiyyat Islam—also known as Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah—which has become a paradigm *jumhur ulemas* of Indonesia continues to experience consolidation since the 17th century through the Dutch colonial period. The consolidation of Wasatiyyat Islam in Indonesia found its momentum since the early 20th century along with the rise of national movement towards Indonesian independence.

One by one, Islamic organizations that support and spread Wasatiyyat Islam emerged and have developed both at national and regional levels. They have become the mainstream of Islam in Indonesia. The list is not exhaustive, starting from Jamiat Khair (1905), Sarekat Dagang Al-Islam (SDI)/Sarekat Al-Islam (SI, 1905/1911), Persatuan Umat Al-Islam (PUI, 1911) Muhammadiyah (1912), al-Irsyad (1914), Mathlaul Anwar (1916), Thawalib Sumatera (1920), Persatuan Al-Islam (Persis 1923), Nahdlatul Ulama (NU, 1926), Jam'iyatul Washliyah (1930), Tarbiyah Al-Islamiyah (Perti 1930), al-Khairat (1930), Masyumi (1937), Darud Dakwah wal Irsyad (1937), Nahdlatul Wathan (NW 1953), Dewan Dakwah Al-Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII, 1967), and Dewan Masjid Indonesia (DMI 1972) and many other organizations at national levels until the number reaches more than 100.

These organizations are essentially mass organizations with millions of followers and are cultural movements actively participating in various fields, such as education, socio-cultural activities, and economy. These organizations are the pillars of Wasatiyyat Islam of Indonesia. Most of them were established before the independence of Indonesia on 17 August 1945 and these Islamic mass organizations were fully active and committed to the Unitary State of the

Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), Pancasila (the State Ideology), the 1945 Constitution and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (the State Motto: “Unity in Diversity”).

What is equally important is the fact that Islam in Indonesia provides high and wide-ranging positions for the actualization of the roles of women. This is significantly evidenced by the presence of queens (*sultanah*) in the Sultanate of Aceh in the 17th century, for instance. In the time of the Sultanate of Aceh, there were prominent figures such as Sulthanah Syafiatuddin Shah and Admiral Malahayati who led the fleet against European colonialism. Four Aceh's Sultanahs became the patron of the ulemas in the development of science. At the beginning of the modern era, the expression of Indonesian Muslim women was proved with the emergence of women's organizations. They conducted the first Indonesian Women's Congress in 1928. The Congress later became the milestone of the rise of the women's movement in Indonesia in the fight against colonialism and to achieve the independence of Indonesia, and it was then established as Mother's Day. The aforementioned Islamic organizations also have their own women's mass organizations.

Furthermore, these Islamic mass organizations are also active in mobilizing philanthropy and contributing to the increased awareness of Islamic philanthropy in Indonesia. Philanthropy, originally a charity and conducted sporadically by giving directly to the beneficiaries, has developed to be more productive and institutionalized in a modern and more organized way. The funds of zakat, infaq, shadaqah, and also waqf have been distributed maximally not only to *ashnaf* as regulated by the Qur'an, but also to other *ashnaf* based on the interpretation that

has been expanded and more contextual with the challenges of the times. The Islamic philanthropy movement in Indonesia now is not only focused on the handling of natural disasters and humanity both at home and abroad—such as building hospitals in Gaza, Palestine and in Rakhine, Myanmar—but also in developing 'Islamic philanthropy for social justice'. Therefore, Islamic philanthropy in Indonesia is now active in the effort of empowering micro and small economics, strengthening gender and human rights issues, peace camp and also in UN-initiated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) program.

Second, Indonesian Islam has a large room to accommodate local cultures. Indonesian Islam has also adopted many religious or social-religious traditions, such as celebrations and pilgrimage; which later also developed in various forms of walimah (celebrations). Some examples of walimah are: walimah al-'ursy (wedding reception); walimah al-khitan (circumcision); walimah al-safar (pilgrimage); walimah al-haj (pilgrimage to Mecca in specific dates); walimah al-'umrah (pilgrimage to Mecca any time of the year). All of these social-religious traditions play an important role in strengthening friendships and social relation, as well as sharing prayers, food and blessings.

Third, Islamic-based civil society. Indonesian Islamic-based civil society consists of the aforementioned Islamic organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Islamic-based civil society is independent, self-governing, self-financing and becomes mediator between the Government and grassroots community. Islamic-based civil society in Indonesia is very vibrant and dynamic in playing various roles in Indonesia, especially to strengthen Wasatiyyat Islam.

The existence of the civil society is what distinguishes Indonesia with other Muslim countries that do not have civil society basis before and after the Second World War, in particular. Consequently, there is no mediator that prevents conflicts between the Government and grassroots community. It is also one of the main causes why the transition from authoritarianism to democracy cannot take place smoothly in many Muslim-majority countries.

Besides Islamic mass organizations and NGOs, civil society is also driven by the alumni of the state and private universities. Those who have Islamic educational background or have a strong Islamic commitment have the

power to generate NGOs that carry and campaign the values of universal and cosmopolite Wasatiyyat Islam. They attempted to propose the wasatiyyah Indonesian Islam into contextualized ideas using new international norms. They translate humanity into the perspective of Wasatiyyat Islam as being open-minded, accepting human rights, accomodating the idea of Islam and democracy compatibility, promoting gender equality, citizenship, pluralism and tolerance.

The Indonesian Islamic education also contributes to the development of the character of Wasatiyyat Islam. The Islamic education taught at Islamic boarding schools, madrasah, and Islamic schools does serve as an excellent model of how Islamic education collaborates and adapts to local culture as well as to the dynamics of change. Among the sciences taught, the

traditional Islamic sciences with Wasatiyyat perspective and combined with modern sciences have become an integral part of these various Islamic educational institutions. These Islamic educational institutions are difficult to find in other countries. This specialized Indonesian education also contributed to Islamic education that teaches Wasatiyyat Islam.

From the perspective of the State, the country that was envisioned and aspired to by the founders of the nation is a country that is in line with the spirit of Islam as a blessing to the universe, which is derived into the constitution and state policies. The State also encourages the strengthening of Wasatiyyat Islam by accommodating the aspirations of Muslims through the adoption of the 'religiously friendly' Pancasila as foundation of the State. The State and Government have nearly always taken into consideration the aspirations of Muslims in various state policies.

The Pancasila state foundation is a logical result of Wasatiyyat attitude of Muslim ulemas and intellectuals who prioritized the common good together with the other components of the nation in the debates and deliberations on the Indonesian state foundation, which was expected to become independent after the end of the Second World War. The debates among founders of the nation in the early independence when determining the state foundation later became a decisive turning point in the history of the nation. From the 1920-1930s, the debates were characterized by two opposing parties –nationalism and Islam— with their two leading figures – Soekarno and Mohammad Natsir. The debates that began in the mass media in 1920-1930s continued into the PPKI and BPUPKI meetings in 1945 when discussing the principles of the state.

In the subsequent development, the leaders and figures of mass organizations expressed their full commitment to Pancasila and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). The Nahdlatul Ulama/NU officially accepted Pancasila through Khittah 1926 which was decided at the 1984 Congress in Situbondo. Similarly, Muhammadiyah accepted Pancasila through the concept of Darul 'Ahd wa al-Syahadah (Pancasila State as a place of agreement and witness). The official documents of these organizations show that the relations between religion and state in Indonesia are harmonious. Pancasila itself is a crystallization of Islamic values, starting from the aspects of divinity, humanity, unity, consensus, and social justice; all of which are the basic values of religious teachings.

Against the backdrop of the aforementioned factors, the Indonesian Wasatiyyat Islam does not only face challenges both from domestic and transnational politics; tensions, frictions, and contestation could occur in the intra-Islamic environment, interreligious and also with the Government. However, with the well-established Wasatiyyat Islam character in Indonesia, along with culture that has been embedded in Islam, we will always find new 'middle path' solutions to those challenges. With these assets, we can be optimistic that Wasatiyyat Islam will continue to develop and consolidate in Indonesia.

CLOSING

V. CLOSING

It is abundantly clear that Wasatiyyat Islam is a central Islamic teaching, yet in many aspects it is still potential in nature, it has not been realized in the lives of the Islamic umma, be it in the aspect of worships and social aspect, both at the local and national and global scale. Wasatiyyat Islam embodies the dimensions of immensity, nobility, and beauty. This teaching brings peace, order and harmony.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Islamic umma worldwide to put in practice the Twelve Principles of Wasatiyyat Islam in everyday life, especially to eliminate the deviant behaviours of a small number of Muslims who display violence, even in extreme forms such as murdering innocent people and committing other acts of destruction.

Furthermore, Wasatiyyat Islam can be proposed as a solution to human civilization that experiences various forms of crises (from food crisis, energy crisis, to environmental crisis). These crises clearly originate from a mistaken world system, which has an anthropocentric face and is far from spirituality, ethics, and morals. Therefore, it is high time for Muslims to rise and improve themselves, practice the true teachings of Islam so that Islam can be a problem-solver for civilization, not as part of the problem, much less the source of problems to the world civilization.

Bogor Message

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, Most Merciful,

We the Muslim Scholars of the world, convening at the high level consultation of world Muslim scholars on Wasatiyyat Islam, in Bogor, West Java, Indonesia, on May, 1-3, 2018;

Recognizing the reality of the modern civilization which demonstrate global disorder, uncertainty and accumulative global damages, compounded by poverty, illiteracy, injustice, discrimination, and many forms of violence, both at the national and at the national and global levels;

Believing in Islam as a religion of peace and mercy (din-salam wa al-rahmah), a religion of justice (din al-adalah), and a religion of civilization (din al-hadarah) whose basic tenets and principles teach love, mercy, harmony, unity, equality, peace and civility;

Acknowledging that the paradigm of Wasatiyyat Islam, as a central teaching of Islam, has been practiced in the course of history since the era of Prophet Muhammad PBUH, the rightly-guided caliphate (al-Khilafah al-Rashida), to modern and contemporary periods, in

various countries all over the world, as well as reaffirming the role and moral responsibility of Muslim scholars to ensure and nurture future generation to build a civilization of Ummatan Wasatan;

Hereby commit to:

1. Reinvigorating the paradigm of Wasatiyyat Islam as the central Islamic teaching encompassing 7 (seven) main values:

Tawassut, positioning in the middle and straight path;

ʾIṭidal, behaving proportionately and justly with responsibility;

Tasamuh, recognizing and respecting differences in all aspects of life;

Shura, leaning to consultation and settling problems through deliberation to reach consensus;

Islah, engaging in reformative and constructive deeds for the common good;

Qudwah, pioneering noble initiatives and taking lead for human well-being;

Muwatonah, recognizing nation state and respecting citizenship

2. Instilling values of the paradigm of Wasatiyyat Islam as a living culture individually and collectively, by epitomizing the spirit and exemplars from the history of Islamic civilization;
3. Strengthening determination to prove to the world, that Muslims are observing the paradigm of Wasatiyyat Islam in all aspects of life;
4. Encouraging Muslim countries and communities to take the initiative to promote the paradigm of Wasatiyyat Islam, through a World Fulcrum of Wasatiyyat Islam, in order to build the Ummatan Wasatan, a society that is just, prosperous, peaceful, inclusive, harmonious, based on the Islamic tenets and morality.

May Allah Swt Bless Us.

Bogor, 3 May 2018

17 Sha`ban 1439H