

NAHDLATUL ULAMA'S CONCEPT OF PROMOTING GLOBAL HARMONY THROUGH RELIGION TWENTY

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Article received Month March 18th, 2024; Article revised April 14th, 2024; Article approved May 1st, 2024

Abstract

This article explores Nahdatul Ulama's concept of promoting global harmony through the R20 activities. The research employs a qualitative method with data sourced from library research. The article concludes that R20 has taken concrete steps, facilitated by Nahdatul Ulama, to foster global harmony. These efforts culminated in a collective agreement termed the 'Communique' focusing on four key aspects elucidating religion as a conflict resolution: firstly, tolerance (Tasāmuḥ) emphasizes the development of tolerant attitudes among religious communities as an expression of the ability to bear the burden of differing perspectives in the dynamics of social diversity. Secondly, eco-theology, a theological concept exploring the interconnectedness of religion and nature, encourages integrating spiritual dimensions with environmental responsibilities. Thirdly, Interfaith Dialogue underscores the necessity for in-depth dialogues to achieve peace among nations and religions. With openness, communication, and compassion, conflicts are viewed as opportunities to enhance understanding, fostering harmonious relationships among religious practitioners. Lastly, the article highlights the active roles of government and religious leaders in addressing extremism and intolerance, contributing to the realization of harmony. The concept used by NU as a basis for compiling the 'Communique' is special because it specifies universal religious values and strengthens the national program, namely Religious Moderation. This is based on NU's commitment as a religious organization that maintains traditionalist theological values while also being a guardian of national policy.

Keywords: Conflict resolution, Nahdlatul Ulama, Religion, R20

INTRODUCTION

Research on religion and conflict resolution has received much attention from researchers globally. However, studies on

religious organizations and their role in global conflict resolution are still limited. Many global problems require solutions with unique contributions from religious organizations. The diversity or plurality that has become a reality in today's global society requires an

acceptable management model for all relevant parties. Weaknesses in managing the potential of this social diversity can lead to disharmony and even conflict. Religious conflicts, which can be triggered by strained relationships, fall into this category. Sociologically, religious conflict is a type of conflict that is complex, intricate, and difficult to resolve. It is not uncommon for such religious conflicts to linger and become almost impossible to resolve (Muhtadi, 2019).

Among its consequences is the threat of a deep crisis; prolonged conflicts like the Russia-Ukraine war, for example, can worsen the global economic situation and increase the potential for a larger recession (Saryono et al., 2022). This is not limited to Ukraine but is also evident in various countries like Israel-Palestine, Mali, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Three conflict situations demonstrating religious dimensions are analyzed as case studies: the conflicts in Israel-Palestine, Mali, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Identification is made regarding the concepts, actors, and arguments applicable in each case, as well as explaining to what extent and in what ways various religious aspects are involved in efforts to build peace amidst violence, or both. Findings indicate that religious factors and motivations vary in each case, reinforcing the argument that understanding the context is crucial for comprehending their roles in conflict situations (Silvestri & Fba, 2015).

Not only conflicts between countries worldwide, but also within Indonesia. Conflicts among religious communities and followers of religions in Indonesia seem to remain a persistent threat. It appears that achieving harmonious living or exchanging greetings as a way of life is still challenging to realize. Why is it that Indonesian citizens, who adhere to Pancasila, always strive for spiritual and physical development but remain vulnerable to harsh treatment, not only physically but also psychologically? Why is establishing courteous, tolerant, and egalitarian social relationships difficult? Is this due to an incorrect social foundation of the nation? Does the religious perspective also play a role in triggering these conflicts? Or perhaps, is it human nature to bring about conflict? (Aisyah, 2014).

According to Nurcholis Madjid, one of the causes of conflict is a mistaken worldview or life vision. However, this vision is crucial in

guiding life. Khalil Khavari, as expressed by Ary Ginanjar, sees that the occurrence of spiritual disturbances or spiritual illnesses in modern humans is more due to errors in orientation in living life. Therefore, continuous enlightenment is needed to design a quality life orientation, form a harmonious life, and nurture the spirit of diversity.

Holland Taylor, CEO of the Center for Shared Civilization Values, stated that Nahdlatul Ulama has long been very systematic and institutionalized in its efforts to create social integration. The efforts to maintain and strengthen social harmony sparked Nahdlatul Ulama's initiative to initiate a dialogue forum among world religious leaders, the Religion of Twenty (R20). According to Holland, Nahdlatul Ulama's collaboration with the Muslim World League (MWL) is very appropriate because MWL plays a strategic role as an internationally esteemed Islamic organization. With this in mind, this research aims to portray the concept of Nahdlatul Ulama in R20 and the values generated in R20 meetings as a tool to promote global harmonization and utilize religion as a means of conflict resolution.

The research objectives were achieved by addressing the following three formulated questions: 1) How was the 'Communique' prepared by NU and established as a joint agreement with global religious leaders? 2) What concept does NU utilize as a basis for preparing the Communique? 3) Why does NU employ this concept in preparing the Communique as a guide for conflict resolution and the preservation of global harmony?

Literature Review

Global conflict resolution involving religious organizations is a multifaceted issue that necessitates a deep understanding of the dynamics at play. Numerous studies underscore the importance of religious actors in conflict resolution efforts. When religious communities collectively strive for peace, they can significantly contribute to conflict resolution (Kloster, 2022). This is crucial as specific religious factors have been identified to exacerbate armed conflicts, such as the convergence of religious and other identities, grievances among religious groups, and calls for violence by religious leaders.

In recent years, there has been a shift towards acknowledging the role of religion in

peacebuilding. Organizations and governments are increasingly advocating for religion as a tool to foster global peace and security, recognizing its vital role in comprehensive peacebuilding approaches. This shift is noteworthy as it signifies a departure from viewing religion solely as a driver of conflict.

Studies also highlight the significance of interfaith dialogue and religious sensitivity in conflict resolution. Traditionally, conflict resolution did not adequately consider religious traditions as a source of conflict resolution. However, there is a growing acknowledgment of the value of inter-religious dialogue in resolving conflicts stemming from religion (Hadi Kusuma & Susilo, 2020). Faith-based organizations play a pivotal role in conflict management by offering peace sensitization, emotional and spiritual support, negotiation, and reconciliation in conflicted communities (Saleh, 2022).

Furthermore, local religious institutions play a crucial role in calming conflicts by enabling religious leaders to stay informed about grievances among their followers and coordinate conflict resolution efforts (De Juan, Pierskalla & Vüllers, 2015). Research has shown that religious leaders, including women in leadership roles within religious communities, are capable of handling conflicts in constructive ways (Obi et al., 2021). Additionally, studies emphasize the importance of involving religious leaders in conflict resolution efforts, as they can provide critical prevention and treatment-oriented programs that contribute significantly to the well-being of congregants (Umubyeyi, Mtapuri & Naidu, 2020).

The involvement of religious leaders in conflict resolution is essential for upholding religious moderation and preventing disputes in multicultural societies. Thus, achieving global conflict resolution involving religious organizations necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the role of religion in either exacerbating or mitigating conflicts. By recognizing the potential of religious actors, promoting interfaith dialogue, utilizing forgiveness models, and engaging religious leaders in conflict resolution efforts, substantial progress can be made toward attaining peace and stability in diverse societies.

Conceptual Framework

Religious Organization and Global Conflict Resolution

The intricate relationship between religious organizations and global conflict resolution is a deeply nuanced field that showcases the transformative power of faith-based initiatives in promoting global peace and stability. By exploring the diverse roles these entities play in conflict zones, we can uncover their significant impact on advancing peace processes and fostering stability. Religious actors, acknowledged for their dual capacity to incite conflict or drive peace, are central to understanding the complex dynamics at play in conflict resolution and humanitarian efforts (Haynes, 2019; Payne, 2020).

By positioning religious organizations as proactive mediators rather than passive observers, it becomes clear that these entities possess unique capabilities for fostering understanding, peace, and reconciliation. Leveraging the ethical, moral, and belief systems inherent to various faiths, these organizations mediate conflicts in ways that are sustainable, meaningful, and rooted in values of forgiveness, dialogue, and mutual understanding. This approach not only bridges opposing groups but also leverages the perceived neutrality of religious organizations to enhance their effectiveness as mediators, providing safe spaces for constructive negotiations (Neuberg et al., 2014).

Faith-based organizations extend their influence beyond mediation, playing a vital role in empowering local communities and addressing root causes of conflicts such as economic injustice, discrimination, and inequality. This multifaceted engagement not only aids in resolving conflicts but also in preventing them, thereby contributing to the formation of a more inclusive and just society. The advocacy efforts of these organizations are critical in raising awareness, supporting peace initiatives, and mobilizing public support through their extensive networks (McDonnell & Idler, 2020).

Interfaith dialogue, education focused on tolerance and diversity, and cooperation among different religious groups are cornerstone strategies for establishing global harmony. These mechanisms foster understanding, reduce prejudice, and demonstrate how solidarity can transcend

religious differences, showcasing the importance of religion's dual role in both exacerbating and mitigating conflicts (Sandal, 2019). The involvement of faith-based organizations in conflict prevention and peacebuilding is deemed essential, especially in regions besieged by violent conflicts. By promoting inclusive and peaceful identity changes, these organizations contribute significantly to the establishment of sustainable peace, underscoring their indispensable role in peacebuilding efforts (Ganiel, 2021; Osei-Kufour & Bukari, 2022).

The acknowledgment of the unique contributions of religious actors to peace processes highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that incorporates religious sensitivity and moderation. The concept of forgiveness therapy, alongside the active participation of religious leaders in promoting moderation and reconciliation, emphasizes the necessity of integrating religious perspectives into conflict-resolution strategies (Nazir-Ali, 2023). Understanding the nuances of religious conflicts through detailed datasets and engaging religious leaders in discussions about moderation and reconciliation are critical steps in managing conflicts effectively. These efforts underscore the importance of religious actors in peacebuilding endeavors and their distinctive contributions toward fostering understanding and reconciliation (C.C. Okereke, Okoroafor & Sunday Adiele, 2019).

The participation of religious organizations in global conflict resolution underscores the complexities involved in leveraging faith-based initiatives for peace and stability. Recognizing the varied roles these actors play in conflict resolution, humanitarian aid, and peacebuilding efforts allows for a deeper appreciation of their impact in driving positive change and advancing global peace initiatives (Mahfudin & Sundrijo, 2021; Simion, Koech & Ayanga, 2022).

The integration of religious organizations into global conflict resolution and peacebuilding strategies reflects a nuanced appreciation of the potential of faith-based initiatives. By acknowledging religion's significant role in mitigating or exacerbating conflicts and utilizing the unique resources, perspectives, and networks of religious organizations, substantial strides can be made toward achieving a more peaceful and

harmonious global society. Through concerted efforts in dialogue, education, and cooperation, the vision of a world where differences are bridged, and conflicts are resolved through the principles of peace and justice becomes increasingly attainable, supported by a wealth of research highlighting the importance of religious actors in these processes (Basedau, Pfeiffer & Vüllers, 2016; Firdous et al., 2023).

Concept of Promoting Global Harmony

Promoting global religious harmony is a multifaceted endeavor that has become increasingly important in today's interconnected and globalized world. The essence of promoting religious harmony lies in acknowledging the rich tapestry of religions that coexist across the globe and fostering an environment where differences are not just tolerated but also celebrated. In this pursuit, it is crucial to recognize the inherent diversity within and between religious traditions and to approach this diversity as a source of strength and enrichment rather than division. By doing so, communities can move beyond mere coexistence to a deeper mutual understanding and respect. There was the need to build and promote the concept of religious harmony to meet the challenges posed by religious diversity, advocating for the principle of "harmony without uniformity" (Zuo'an, 2013).

Dialogue plays a pivotal role in the promotion of global religious harmony. It involves open and respectful communication between individuals and groups of different religious backgrounds. Through dialogue, misconceptions and stereotypes can be dismantled, and common ground can be discovered. Dialogues can take various forms, from formal interfaith conferences to informal community gatherings, each serving as a platform for sharing experiences, beliefs, and values. This exchange fosters empathy and allows participants to see the world from multiple religious perspectives, thus building bridges of understanding that transcend religious divides. Jürgen Habermas (2006) highlights the renewed political importance of religious communities and the potential for dialogue in the public sphere to address the challenges of religious fundamentalism and secularism.

Another essential aspect of promoting religious harmony is cooperation towards

common goals. When religious communities unite to address global challenges such as poverty, climate change, and inequality, they demonstrate the profound positive impact that faith can have in the world. This cooperative action not only contributes to the betterment of society but also highlights the shared values across different religions, such as compassion, justice, and the pursuit of peace. Through collaborative efforts, religions can become a collective force for good, showcasing the potential of religious harmony to drive societal progress. Significant roles religious institutions play in educational systems and global agendas, underlining the importance of understanding religious differences for peaceful societies (Marshall, 2018).

Education and awareness are critical in cultivating an atmosphere of religious harmony. Educational programs that include comprehensive information about the world's religions can demystify religious practices and beliefs, reducing ignorance and fear. Schools, religious institutions, and community organizations can all play a role in this educational effort, providing platforms for learning and engagement. Moreover, initiatives focusing on 'religious literacy'—understanding the basic principles and practices of various religions—can empower individuals to appreciate religious diversity and reduce the likelihood of conflict. Hyun-Sook Kim (2015) advocates for a global religious education directed toward social justice, cultural unity in diversity, and global responsibility, which can adequately address the challenges of a global age.

Lastly, leadership and advocacy for religious harmony are vital at both the local and global levels. Leaders from various sectors, including religious leaders, politicians, and educators, must advocate for policies and practices that foster religious harmony. This includes protecting the rights of individuals to practice their religion freely and without fear of discrimination or violence. By setting an example of respect, tolerance, and collaboration, leaders can inspire their communities to embrace diversity and work towards a more harmonious world. Jaclyn L. Neo (2019) explores the dimensions of religious harmony as constitutional practice, arguing that religious harmony, as a legal and social norm, can extend beyond state control

and contribute to intergroup relations and demands on the state.

Promoting global religious harmony requires a concerted effort across dialogue, cooperation, education, and leadership. It is a journey that involves understanding and respecting the beliefs of others, finding common ground, and working together for the common good. While challenges exist, the pursuit of religious harmony is not only possible but imperative for peace and unity in our increasingly global society. Through sustained efforts and commitment to these principles, humanity can forge a future where religious diversity is seen as a bridge to understanding and cooperation rather than a barrier.

RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative research employs a literature study design focused on written data regarding the implementation of R20. The primary data source is a joint agreement (Communiqué) consisting of three main points, which are further divided into sub-points. This joint agreement originated from the R20 international activity held in Bali on 2-3 November 2022, gathering religious leaders from around the world. Data collection occurred through documentation after the activity. The author's involvement in these activities facilitated the acquisition of primary data referenced in the joint agreement. The secondary data sources include the official NU website (www.nu.or.id) and other literature containing information relevant to the research issues.

The data analysis involved applying the concept of the role of religious organizations in global conflict resolution and promoting global harmony. This process aimed to map the foundational thoughts, concepts, and roles developed by Nahdlatul Ulama in producing a joint agreement, which served as the basis for global conflict resolution.

DISCUSSION

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and R20 Forum

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was founded on January 31, 1926, coinciding with the 16th of Rajab, 1334 H, in Surabaya by K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari, alongside traditional religious scholars and entrepreneurs from East Java (Muzadi, 2009). The establishment of NU began with

the emergence of Nahdlatut-tajjar (1918), which arose as a rural economic movement institution, followed by Taswirul Afkar (1922) as an intellectual and cultural movement, and Nahdatul Watan (1924) as a political movement in the form of education. Consequently, NU stands on three crucial pillars: (1) People's Economic Insight, (2) Intellectual, Social, and Cultural Insight, and (3) National Insight (Muzadi, 2009).

In the global context, NU has basically demonstrated its role in safeguarding world peace. Since 1965, NU through KH Achmad Sjaichu has mobilized the Asian-African Islamic Conference and at the same time became Secretary General of the Asian-African Islamic Organization in the same year. In the following period of management, NU has been consistent in its efforts to be an important part of global peace. KH. Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) once served as president of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP). KH. Hasyim Muzadi once held an International Conference of Islamic Studies (ICIS) which presented moderate ulama from Sunni and Shia circles. During the leadership of KH Said Aqil Siroj a new forum was formed, namely the International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL). Until the leadership of KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf has done a lot of development (Arrahmah, 2022) and one of them is held of the Religion20 Forum (R20).

The G20 Summit held in Indonesia in 2022 was accompanied by the organization of the R20 Forum initiated by PBNU. This interfaith meeting aims to encourage religions to engage in peace and humanitarian initiatives. The Religion of Twenty (R20) International Religious Leaders Summit is a global meeting of religious leaders from various parts of the world, launched by PBNU in collaboration with the Muslim World League (MWL). This religious event took place on November 2-3, 2022, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Nusa Dua, Bali. The event was integrated as part of a series of Engagement Group activities organized by the G20 Presidency (Haryanto & El Syam, 2023).

The main theme of the R20 Forum was "Revealing and Nurturing Religion as a Source of Global Solutions: A Global Movement for Shared Moral and Spiritual Values". This theme reflects efforts to explore and develop the role of religion as a key contributor to

global problem-solving. By emphasizing "Source of Global Solutions", the theme highlights the perspective that religion can serve as a source of inspiration and guidance in addressing complex global challenges. The global movement emphasized in this theme demonstrates a determination to involve religious communities broadly in promoting shared moral and spiritual values, with the hope of embracing diversity and creating a common foundation to achieve global peace and problem-solving. By observing how religion operates and interacts with other aspects of human experience at the global, institutional, group, and individual levels, we can gain a more nuanced understanding of the role (or potential role) of religion in conflict and peacebuilding (Silvestri & Fba, 2015).

The topics discussed at the meeting were: 1) Historical pain, Truth-telling, Reconciliation and Forgiveness; 2) Identifying and embracing the noble values originating from the Great Religions and Civilizations of the World; 3) Recontextualization of outdated and problematic religious teachings; 4) Identifying the values needed to develop and ensure peaceful coexistence; and Spiritual Ecology.

Discussions by religious leaders on these topics are an effort to generate ideas and frameworks to promote mutual understanding, a culture of peace, and harmonious coexistence among diverse people in the world, religions, and nations. Based on these interests, a communiqué was prepared, summarizing the results of the discussion and became a joint commitment from the figures present.

Communique (Joint Agreement) R20

Through the Forum facilitated by NU, a joint agreement (Communiqué) was born, and here are some points from the agreement:

- a. We, religious leaders from the G20 and other countries around the world, acknowledge global challenges such as environmental degradation, natural and man-made disasters, poverty, unemployment, displacement, extremism, and terrorism. These challenges are compounded by competition among major powers and the fragmentation of identity-based conflicts worldwide, which undermine global and domestic peace and security, including commitments to the

- ethical and spiritual values of individuals and societies.
- b. In response to these challenges, we gathered in Bali, Indonesia, to attend the G20 Religious Forum on November 2-3, 2022, organized jointly by KH Yahya Cholil Staquf and Syekh Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa.
 - c. The G20 Religious Forum is determined to promote shared understanding, a culture of peace, and harmonious coexistence among the diversity of nations, religions, and global societies. To achieve this goal, the G20 Religious Forum mobilizes religious, social, economic, and political leaders worldwide, ensuring that religion is a source of solutions, not problems.
 - d. R20 welcomes and appreciates constructive efforts to achieve the above objectives, including but not limited to:
 - a) The establishment, in June 2021, of the "Center for Shared Civilizational Values" by Nahdlatul Ulama spiritual leaders, including the Founding Chair of R20 and General Chair of the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board, Kiai Haji Yahya Cholil Staquf; and
 - b) "Forum for Building Bridges Between East and West" and "Mecca Charter" 2019, initiatives founded by the Muslim World League under the leadership of H.E. Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, Secretary General of the Muslim World League, to promote mutual understanding, peaceful coexistence, and harmony among the world's diverse peoples, cultures, and nations.
 - e. Therefore, R20 calls on religious and political leaders as well as all people of goodwill from all religions and nations to join in building a global alliance based on shared civilizational values.
 - f. Through this global alliance, R20 aims to:
 - a) develop and implement concrete initiatives that will bridge nations and civilizations;
 - b) encourage realistic and honest dialogue within or between religious groups to ensure that religion acts as a source of solutions, not problems;
 - c) inject social, political, and economic power structures with moral and spiritual values;
 - d) prevent identity from being used as a political weapon;
 - e) prohibit the spread of communal hatred speech;
 - f) promote respect and solidarity among diverse nations and cultures worldwide;
 - g) protect communities from violence and suffer due to conflicts;
 - h) call on global citizens to actively assist those suffering from conflicts;
 - i) explore the spiritual ecological wisdom contained within world religious traditions to ensure the respect and preservation of the environment, including the earth, air, and water;
 - j) Uphold the emergence of a truly just and harmonious world order based on the respect for equal rights and dignity for every human being; and
 - k) Confirming R20 as an official part of the G20 (Ernada, Al-Makassary & Ubaedillah, 2023).
- Referring to several points above, it can be elaborated that the concepts constructed by NU and religious leaders for global harmony include: fostering tolerance among religious communities; developing Ecotheology awareness; prioritizing "Interfaith Dialogue"; and strengthening the role of religious and political leaders.

Fostering Tolerance among Religious Communities

In formulating the joint agreement, NU consistently adhered to universal religious principles. As an Islamic religious organization, NU refers to the guidance of the Qur'an. The Qur'an often portrays the diversity or plurality that occurs in the universe, such as the forms of creation, choices of beliefs, professions, cultures, languages, traditions, and so forth. This diversity is expressed, for example, through the terms *syu'ūb*, *qabā'il*, *qaum*, *ummah*, *mukhtalifan alwānuh*, *ikhtilāf alsinatikum wa alwānikum*," and others. According to the Quran, diversity is part of the signs of the greatness of Allah (QS Ar-Rūm [30]: 22) and something that He desires (QS Al-Mā'idah [5]: 48). In responding to these differences, the Quran guides the form of *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance).

From a stance of tolerance, gradual religious harmony can be achieved. However, harmony is not the ultimate value, but rather a means that must exist as a '*conditio sine qua non*' to achieve the further goal of a safe and peaceful situation. This situation is greatly needed by all parties in society to enable the creation of spiritual and material values that are equally necessary to achieve a higher level of living (Ghazali, 2016). The consciousness to

live in harmony and brotherhood among the followers of religions is the aspiration and fundamental teaching of each religion.

Religious communities or organizations support the realization of tolerance as an effective strategy because religious organizations can carry out tolerance education both in non-formal contexts and in carrying out religious activities (Ulil Absor et al., 2022). Strengthening religious communities can also be facilitated through unity in establishing and maintaining houses of worship which is one of the main religious symbols (Sabara & Aksa, 2022).

Olaf Schumann identifies five interrelated dimensions of religious tolerance in the social context (Mujib & Hamim, 2022). Firstly, the social-practical dimension emphasizes the sustainability of legalizing the existence and activities of other religious communities with empathy. Secondly, the religious ritual dimension refers to openness to empathetically accept symbolic ritual expressions of religious life from other religious communities. Thirdly, the doctrinal teaching dimension involves the readiness to interpret with empathy the claims and doctrinal statements believed by other religious communities. Fourthly, the pilgrimage dimension of religious life highlights openness to mutual recognition that each religious community is still on a journey of faith. Fifthly, the dimension of religiosity and spirituality encourages intimate encounters with the Spiritual Reality, which becomes the central motivation for living in virtue and love for fellow human beings, making religious tolerance a spiritual calling.

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of religiosity and spirituality encourages intimate encounters with Spiritual Reality, which becomes the central motivation for living in virtue and love for fellow human beings, making religious tolerance a spiritual calling.

Developing Ecotheology Awareness

Ecotheology, also known as ecology based on theology, is termed Spiritual Ecology or *Ekologi Spiritual* by Arthur Green (Green, 2023). NU considers Ecotheology to be a theological concept that explores the relationship between religion and nature, or between religion and the environment. In a general context, ecotheology begins with assumptions about the interconnectedness between human religious or spiritual paradigms and environmental degradation issues.

In Islamic teachings, ecotheology is defined as a religious belief concept related to environmental issues based on Islamic teachings. This theological formulation can be used as a theological guide with environmental insights in managing natural resources and the environment. Through ecotheology, the harmonious relationship between God, nature, and humanity can be understood. Furthermore, it can be explained that the relationship between God, nature, and humanity refers to a systemic relationship, where God is the creator of humans and the universe, God is the owner of humans and the universe, and functionally, God is the sustainer of humans and the universe (Ridwanuddin, 2017).

Ecotheology can also be emphasized with a local wisdom approach because basically every religious community, especially in Indonesia, has a strong culture. For example, the Papuan people are aware of the representation of God's love through the preservation of Noken, which is one part of protecting nature itself (Pekei & Adrianus Sihombing, 2023).

In the context of global conflict, which often triggers war, it is one of the biggest threats to the safety of the living ecosystem which also threatens humanity. Thus, the concept of nature conservation with theological awareness conceptualized by Nahdlatul Ulama can prevent global conflict.

Prioritizing Interfaith Dialogue

Making dialogue between religious communities a priority scale has become the basic character of Nahdlatul Ulama in mainstreaming religious harmony. In its long journey, Nahdlatul Ulama is recorded in history as having succeeded in becoming a peace mediator in areas such as Southern Thailand and Afghanistan (Barton, 2023). NU's long experience in mediating global conflicts is based on basic principles regarding religion and state. This is in line with Küng's statement, "No peace among the nations without peace among the religions. No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions, No dialogue between the religions without investigation of the foundation of the religions" (Pauline C.H. Kollontai, Sue Yore & Sebastian Kim, 2018).

This points to the urgency of mutual understanding among each other, because to expand active participation in the public sphere, not only is religious education needed to address pluralism or even tolerance, but more importantly, openness, communication, and compassion among religious adherents are crucial. Indeed, conflict is a part of human life. As long as humans interact with each other, there will always be tension and conflict to some extent. A positive way to view conflict is to see it as an opportunity to communicate and create understanding with others, enabling coexistence while respecting differences (Suwarno, 2005). Agreements for mutual respect may not necessarily occur because of uniformity but may also occur in diversity. Success in making this happen depends on who is the facilitator (Pope & Paulus, 2023). This is what underlies the concept of Nahdlatul Ulama to become a peace mediator as outlined in the R20 communiqué.

The necessity of the role of religious and political leaders

As a religious organization with a strong national commitment, NU refers its concept to the thoughts of the Ministry of Religion, especially regarding Religious Moderation, one of which is to avoid strengthening political and religious leaders in carrying out their mission. The book 'Tafsir Tentang Moderasi Beragama', published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, explains that the state has a crucial role in strengthening religious moderation, including

creating peace in all layers of society. The state must be present and actively involved in efforts to prevent the emergence of seeds of extremism and intolerance in society. Seven important steps need to be taken (Hanafi et al., 2022): a) Creating a peaceful, harmonious, and cohesive societal atmosphere, both among individuals and between groups with their respective backgrounds, while maintaining warm relationships and mutual trust between citizens and the government; b) Striving for the welfare of all citizens so that they have resilience and resistance against extremist ideologies (poverty is identified as fertile ground for the growth of intolerant ideologies); c) Implementing preventive measures against the possibility of intolerance and violence in the name of religion through elegant and persuasive means; d) Promptly addressing instances of religious intolerance involving religious leaders at all levels to structurally engage in resolving issues wisely; e) Providing full support to religious institutions to conduct structured and continuous religious moderation development; f) Facilitating dialogues among diverse groups and creating joint activities to foster solidarity and active participation of all segments of society in nation-building; g) Ensuring effective and fair law enforcement at all levels without discrimination. Regarding the role of religious leaders themselves, several key actions can be undertaken by leaders of each religion as efforts for prevention and peacebuilding in post-conflict situations, including religious leaders should remain neutral, teach humanitarian values, promote mutual respect and compassion, maintain distance from politics that may pose dangers, be sensitive to issues affecting society, engage in learning about other religious beliefs to avoid miscommunication, position themselves as exemplary members of society and maintain the trust of the community, and encourage societal awareness towards peaceful coexistence.

Religious leaders must thoroughly understand and be able to differentiate, at the very least, between religion and politics (which are difficult to separate) and between religion and state (which must be distinguished and separated). Especially when religion is linked to the "public sphere", it may encounter challenges in upholding values in multicultural societies. According to Parekh, religion and

politics are intertwined (“it is OK” to find them inseparable), but religion and state must be distinguished or separated in the public domain. This is because religion in practice tends to be absolutist, self-righteous, arrogant, dogmatic, and intolerant of compromise (Parekh, 2001).

Meanwhile, according to Amin Abdullah, religion comprises voluntary elements (done willingly) and guidance, whereas states embody compulsory aspects and governance. Therefore, he argues that religion should be separated from the public sphere to minimize potential conflicts.

To achieve the above, concrete steps are needed that are interconnected with each other, including a) Education, here education is not only formal but also non-formal, playing a role in achieving peacebuilding; b) Mediators, also known as peacemakers, they manage conflict situations referred to as manifest conditions. According to Andrea Bartoli, a religious mediator can succeed if they: first, learn the culture and language of the local community; second, seek access to information, especially from the first parties to the conflict; third, are wary of political expertise; fourth, develop a long-term vision of peace for the community; c) Observers, anyone should be prepared to monitor what problems are occurring and at what level the conflict is occurring (origin, Tremendous Growth, Spread, Trigger); and d) Advocates, the role of advocates is also expected to seek solutions to resolve conflicts and produce long-term conflict resolutions.

The points analysis above shows that NU is very consistent in adhering to universal concepts for carrying out conflict resolution and maintaining global harmony. Strengthening the principle of humanitarian efforts put forward by Haynes (2019) and Payne (2020) is clearly stated in the concept of ecotheology awareness, which summarizes not only humanity but also nature.

The NU concept of Prioritizing dialogue follows the concept proposed by Neuberg et al. (2014). Values of forgiveness, dialogue, and mutual understanding which gave birth to the neutrality of religious organizations. This is also in line with Sandal’s concept which emphasizes interfaith dialogue through strengthening tolerance education for diversity. From this concept, the inevitability of the power of religious leaders is inevitable. What is special about the concept used by NU

is the use of universal values of religious teachings. This escapes the concept of experts regarding the role of religious organizations in conflict resolution and global harmony.

The NU concept of prioritizing dialogue follows the concept proposed by Neuberg et al. (2014), emphasizing values of forgiveness, dialogue, and mutual understanding that underpin the neutrality of religious organizations. This is also aligned with Sandal’s concept, which emphasizes interfaith dialogue through strengthening tolerance education for diversity. From this concept, the inevitability of the power of religious leaders is inevitable. What is unique about NU’s approach is its reliance on universal values from religious teachings. This escapes the concept of experts regarding the role of religious organizations in conflict resolution and global harmony.

The concrete steps to safeguard global harmony through strengthening education align with the proposal of Sook Kim (2015), who advocates for global religious education. As a result, the next practical step identified from the analysis of the joint agreement between NU and global leaders is the necessity for everyone to act as an observer, termed as an exploration of the dimensions of religious harmony in Neo’s concept (2019).

CLOSING

The ‘Communiqué’ is backgrounded by the robust history and foundational pillars of NU, incorporating insights from people’s economic, intellectual, social, cultural, and national perspectives. NU’s historical engagement in global peace initiatives and leadership in various international forums, such as the R20, provided a platform for engaging religious leaders worldwide. Through the R20 Forum, discussions on critical topics like reconciliation, ecotheology, interfaith dialogue, and the role of religious and political leaders were facilitated. This comprehensive engagement resulted in a Communiqué that encapsulates the collective commitment to addressing global challenges through shared moral and spiritual values.

NU utilized a concept deeply ingrained in its philosophical and operational foundations, focusing on fostering tolerance among religious communities, developing ecotheology awareness, prioritizing interfaith dialogue, and recognizing the significant role

of religious and political leaders. This multifaceted approach is grounded in universal religious principles, ecotheology, and the essentiality of dialogue and leadership in achieving peace and harmony. The choice of these concepts reflects NU's acknowledgment of the complex nature of global issues and the necessity of a holistic approach to address them.

NU's decision to use this concept in preparing the Communiqué as a guideline for conflict resolution and safeguarding global harmony is motivated by the pressing need to address the multifaceted challenges facing the world today. By fostering tolerance, NU acknowledges the diversity of human existence and the importance of embracing differences. The focus on ecotheology highlights the critical need for environmental stewardship as part of religious practice. Prioritizing interfaith dialogue underscores the belief that understanding and cooperation among different faiths are essential for global peace. Finally, emphasizing the role of leaders reflects the understanding that effective leadership is crucial in guiding societies toward peace and harmony. This comprehensive approach demonstrates NU's commitment to leveraging universal religious values and dialogues as tools for addressing contemporary global issues, aiming to cultivate a more peaceful, tolerant, and environmentally conscious world.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank all informants and other colleagues who helped with the research's completion. Thank you to the editors and reviewers who provided feedback and constructive criticism to help improve this article. Finally, we believe that this article can serve as an academic resource for emphasizing the role of leaders reflects the understanding that effective leadership is crucial in guiding societies toward peace and harmony.

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