MUTUAL RESPECT AND DIALOGUE IS A CHALENCE FOR THE FUTURE OF DIVERSITY IN THE GLOBALIZATION

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ABSTRAK

Saat ini dunia dihadapkan dalam suatu era globalisasi dan modernisasi. Yang mengakibatkan terjadi perubahan-perubahan mendasar dalam kehidupan manusia. Globalisasi adalah satu kenyataan yang tidak terelakkan, dimana dunia semakin terbuka dan terkoneksi berkat perkembangan informasi dan teknologi, dan manusia semakin dekat dan mendalam mengenal satu sama lain, tetapi juga lebih mudah terbawa kepada penghadapan dan konfrontasi langsung satu sama lain. Di dalam setiap kasus, dimana keegoisan dan keserakahan manusia telah menyebabkan timbulnya berbagai persoalan dan konflik, terutama konflik yang berlangsung antara negara-negara Islam dan Kristen (Timur dan Barat). Oleh karena itu, sangat diperlukan sikap saling pengertian dan saling menghormati dengan mencari dan menemukan titik kesamaan satu sama lain, bukan titik perbedaan. Dialog dan saling pengertian di antara perbedaan agama dan budaya menjadi sangat penting untuk dilakukan karena prinsip dasar semua agama adalah perdamaian. Dialog bukan bermaksud untuk mempersatukan keimanan seseorang, tetapi untuk mendekatkan pandangan tentang kehidupan untuk saling menghargai dan menghormati antar tradisi untuk menciptakan perdamaian di muka bumi.

Keyword: Mutual Respect, Dialog, Globalization

Introduction

Southeast Asia is a geographically expansive and populous region characterized by fascinating social, cultural variation, and religious diversity. The majority of the countries in the region, particularly Indonesia and Malaysia are home to dozens of different ethnic groups, many with millions of adherents to Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. There are as many as hundreds of ethnicities and cultures. Indonesia and Malaysia has remained a bastion of pluralism both by law and in practice. We may thus say that, one of the most challenging aspects of what we say is "Malay culture" is its variety and complexity.

Today the world is directed towards globalization of the overall human life, which is enabled by the fast communication among people, and by the devices for that purpose However global integration is difficult to realize and establish because many obstacles still exist.. In any case, human egoism, greed, and unreasonable utilization of nature have posed problems, especially in the light of ongoing conflict between historically Christian and Muslim nations.

This article tries to analyze what should we expect in the century we are living. In view of the fact that also issues of the escalation of terrorism, liberalism and modernism have come to dominate popular discourse on Islam, the recognition of religious diversity and need for interfaith dialogue have become important topics today. The present world situation has led to a sharp rise in religious violence, it is therefore imperative that Indonesia and Malaysia as multi-religious and multi ethnic nations play a leading role in advancing the goal of modernity. Mutual Respect and Dialogue is a challenge in the globalization.

Globalization and new civilization

We live in a multicultural world full of potential dangers. As human beings, we need to learn to respect each other in our diversity. We are witnesses of a process, which is based on the technological-information revolution, and which creates better and more integrated global systems and institutions.

In such a world, through the process of global cross-dependence and sub-national fragmentation, it seems that all our images of the worlds are transformed. The emergence of a global culture, which does not over look the requirements and nature of local cultures, have to be considered. With the absence of dialogue among thinkers, scholars from various cultures and civilizations, the danger of cultural homelessness seemed imminent. Such homelessness would deprive people of solace both in their own culture and the vast horizon of global cultures.

Modern life intrudes upon the necessity to integrate the cultural varieties that exist in our societies. The complexity of this problem is even more emphasized because of globalization and the fact that the world is becoming mutually connected, and different societies, religions and cultures are mutually dependant. It is unavoidable the merging of these cultures and their mutual influence.

In conditions of modern political, religious, cultural beings, the post-global society, the identity crisis, civilization's fall, social alienation, post-modern relativity, ethnical rebirth, the religious fundamentalism and, unfortunately, the fall of common human values and denial of tolerance arephenomenons, which are more loudly heard.

At the same time, many societies are facing a deep crisis, which for a longer period is not only an institutional crisis, but is manifested as a crisis of ethics, measurements and orientations of mutual life.

The societies and the states have become more vulnerable because of the political, social and economic challenges of the globalization. Modernization and globalization increase the feelings of vulnerability among individuals. The driving force behind this new reality is economic competition without borders that has mainly become possible due to the end of East-and West conflict. The speed of globalization has been enormously increased by the rapid development and spread of communication technology, particularly through the internet. In the Resolution adopted on November 9 2001, the UN member states described the fact that the globalization brings "greater interrelatedness among people and increased interaction among cultures and civilizations,"[1] but The problem of the modern globalised society is that it tends to produce antagonisms. (Samuel P. Huntington, *Clash of Civilization*). In the age of media all differences and the antagonisms of the modern world are becoming increasingly obvious. In this way the tensions of this world become more and more public and this brings the risk of clashes between different groups, nations, religious and ideological communities.

We are facing the new millennium; the humanity faces new challenges of peace, solidarity, and love. We struggled for freedom and indeed are still struggling for freedom. Are we now ready to take the risk of the struggle for peace, solidarity, and love? The dominant insecurity of our interdependent world is a common anxiety of all humankind. Cultural, religious and political entities today are affected by the globalization and in danger of becoming mixed.

The Global world environment brings new challenges for people, communities and states. The mutual understanding, respect, and dialogue need of mobilization of political leaders, the spiritual leaders, the intellectuals and others involved, who must play a role in taking their mutual responsibilities.

Religion and Politics

Religion and politics have coexisted in the whole world since ancient times. Too often, religion is used in conjunction with politics or for political purpose. Religious traditions are the product of sacred texts and contexts, the word of God or scriptures interpreted and applied by human beings in specific historical and social contexts. Every act of people is connected with religion belief. Because of that the importance is very high, but also the responsibility of religion for the future of humanity and the world, particularly in today's turbulent world with insecure future, Religion play very important and responsible role.

There are three Abrahamic religions; Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and other religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism, and some other smaller religions. However, we cannot deny the fact that there are certain differences and tensions among different religions.

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[1] General Assembly, fifty sixth session, agenda item 25, A/RES/56/6, adopted at the 43rd plenary meeting, 9 November 21

Humanity has established several religious beliefs which give meaning to people's lives. It raises national spirituality and strengthens their culture.

Some scholars assume that religion is on the decline in Western societies, that the forces of modernization and particularly secularization are simply to strong and so the once dominance force of religion in public life has now been radically curtailed. On the contrary, it is very hard to understand the modern world without understanding the major religious traditions and influences that cut across global boundaries and feed into and shape global politics.[2]

Western perceptions of Islam identify it with threatening images of theocracy and terrorism. The Iranian revolution of 1979 and the rise of Islamic radicalism from West Africa to Southeast Asia contribute to the impression that a new Cold War is looming.[3] And post-9/11 by the threat of global terrorism and the association of Islam with global terrorism, defining a moderate Muslim become even more problematic. The Western media also has created simplistic image of Muslims as terrorists and oppressors through the word "Islamic Fundamentalism".

The Muslim world is experiencing a period of turmoil at the heart of this turmoil is the debate over the role of Islam in Muslim society, particularly in its political sphere. At one extreme there is secular despotism, which seeks to dominate Muslim societies, and at the other extreme is the specter of Islamic totalitarianism.

There is no compulsion in religion. The real message of Islam is peace. Islam promotes tolerance and diversity of believe system, Islam teaches that human diversity is a sign of God's mercy and portent for human knowledge; It is mentioned in the Qur'anic verse (30-32): "And of His (God's) signs are the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the different of your languages and colors". It is clear that Allah has not forced anyone to be a true believer. The Qur'an says: "Say: 'The truth is from your Lord': Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it)." (18:29) In another verse (11:118) it says: "If the Lord had willed, He would have made mankind into a single nation…."

The contribution of religions and cultures for peace, mutual respect and cooperation is interesting from many aspects. Religion and the profession of religion in Islam also have such a close connection to human values that the estimation of a man's religious profession is based on what he or she does and how it fulfills his or her responsibility.

Diversity and understanding

As Kofi Annan, the former General Secretary of the United Nation, said without dialogue, no peace could be lasting and no prosperity secure. Alongside

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[2] Nye, Malory, *Religion-the Basic* (London: Routledge, 2003), 177
[3] John L, Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*? (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992)

an infinite diversity of cultures, there did exist one humanity. Diversity had to be used as an asset. The use of polarization is a seed for war.

Why we think that dialogue among religions and civilizations can contribute for solving the conflicts founded in the political, social and economic differences, in the lack of development, in the violation of international laws and human rights, in the lack of pluralism, transparency, responsibility, and the rule of law, discrimination of women, minorities and everything else?

Dialogue among religions happens at a number of levels and it is not just about searching for our commonalities, crucial as that is. It is also about understanding and respecting our particularities and distinctive emphases. When we engage in socially active, ethical dialogue we will discover and ought to discover common, shared ethical perspectives, and we should also discover that we speak our ethical perspectives in distinctive accents.[4] Socially active, ethical dialogue is the response to the live issues of our time.

I believe that the different cultures, beliefs, and values belong to the common treasury of spiritual achievement of humanity. Only then, could we take the risk to struggle for peace, solidarity and love, since it is in human nature to answer together to such challenges.

Therefore, the issue about the importance of the contribution of mutual values of different cultures and religions in the future of mankind opens the highest challenge about the capacity of the contribution which we as modern people are ready or willing to give as our deposit for the future of our generations.

Education is also one of the most important instruments for eliminating the stereotypes and prejudices, and misperception of different cultures, religions and civilizations. Religious education has a great importance in deepening the concept of values in the person and rooting deeply the rights orientation which leads to a proper relation between people. The religious education will help the educational system to give children an answer about many spiritual needs, modern challenges and questions.

And also, the issue of dialogue among religions and cultures is of great importance, due to the fact that they refer to universal values of humanity, because the foundation of all religions and cultures are common human values. Dialogue does not intent to achieve unity in faith, but the closer the opinions for mutual life and understanding. The priorities, common topics which are in the focus of such dialogues are; peace, mutual life, rights for religion as part of the human rights and freedoms, social balance, etc. It is necessary to know people of certain religion, culture, nation, and through an open dialogue, to prepare ourselves without prejudis to respect their positive traditions.

In Southeast Asian countries, particularly Malaysia and Indonesia where the variety of the religions is their largest social asset, where religious variety is

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[4]See Knitter, Paul F, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* (New York: Orbis Books, 2002).

the main pillar of peace and wellbeing, religious beliefs and practices have a large impact on the personal lives and influence public life on a daily basis. It is time to start adopting attitude, which teaches us to love and teaches us to act the right way. The dialogue is privileged mean for achieving the civilization of peace and love. The battle for peace in the world, for human rights, establishing structures for social justice and common solidarity, development of sciences. Religion and faith are important elements in the construction of the new spiritual situation in our society.

Conclusion

We have thus to conclude that there is no culture, religion or civilization that can dictate to others certain values. Religion should not be allowed to be abused for political, economic or other power oriented purposes. The common ground between religions should be built upon for enhancing freedom, equality, human dignity, tolerance and peace.

Furthermore, it is necessary to know that civilizations do not contradict each other. Economic interests use religion and fanaticism as a cover up. The faith is always a positive force that is so important for the quality of life. However, it will become a negative force, and a powerful destructive one when it is led by the material interests.

The basic of all religion is peace; but there is always somebody who tries to use it to serve personal interests. It is a duty for committed people and people of good will to play their role seriously so that religion is not being used for self or group interests.

Moreover, renewing of mutual trust, going back to traditional values of loving God and respect to the neighbor, establishment of the inter-religious and inter-civilization dialogue, should help the world get rid of the prejudice, separations and delusions, and all of us to become dedicated to the creation of one better world.

I believe that God created man according to His own image and because of that, every human being has its own individual dignity, for we are all God's creation.

We cannot solve every problem in the world, but we can start with small steps on individual grounds, and mutual respect.

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