

International World Recognition on Indonesia's Success in Creating Tolerance of Religion

Teuku Saiful Bahri Johan*
 Jakarta Islamic University
 mrhasan95@yahoo.com

Abstract. Indonesia, as a country that has a plural society, apparently in social life upholds togetherness (tolerance). It is reflected in the actualization by accommodating the differences and diversity in society, such as religion, ethnicity, race, and culture. Indonesian people who are predominantly Muslim have enough ability to mingle with members of other minority religious communities. In the social life of religion in Indonesia, people always put forward the tolerance of each other and always well integrated. As a result, the international community has given appreciation and exemplified Indonesia in building a multi-religious, ethnical, racial, and cultural society. This study aims to get an overall picture and understand the symptoms studied, in the form of facts and information about tolerant life. The research method is a case study using a qualitative approach, with the determination of the purposive sampling informant technique. The subjects or informants in this study are the figures involved directly and observers of tolerance and human rights with non-participant conservation data collection techniques. In modern society, ideal religious tolerance must be built through the active participation of all members of diverse societies to achieve the same goals based on togetherness, inclusive attitudes, respect, and mutual understanding regarding the implementation of religious rituals and certain doctrines of the professed religion.

Keywords: *tolerance, religion, democracy, civil society*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world consisting of 17,508 islands and 1,128 ethnic groups, with a very diverse religion and culture, but in their lives remain harmonious by upholding tolerance [1]. Various ethnic religions, cultures, races, and social behaviour behave in socializing colours of tolerant life in Indonesia. Even starting in the era of the struggle for independence of the Indonesian

nation from colonialism in achieving its independence, with the tolerant spirit, freedom fighters abandoned the diverse ethnicity, race, and religion. It raised the spirit of unity and unity of all Indonesian people to expel the invaders from the motherland. The spirit of tolerance wrapped in nationalism and a sense of love for the homeland is still upheld in filling Indonesia's independence.

Specifically related to religion, tolerance includes beliefs in human beings associated with the creed or with the deity that they believe. Komarudin Hidayat said there were five typologies of religious attitudes, namely exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism, eclecticism, and universalism. Each of these typologies does not mean separated and interrupted with each other and not permanent, but rather is said to be a prominent tendency, given that every religion and religious attitude always has the potential to give birth to the five attitudes [2]. Therefore, religious norms remain a concern in every Indonesian legal product, but provisions based on religious values do not make Indonesia a religious state [3].

Etymologically the term "tolerantia" is also very well known in Europe, especially in the French Revolution. It is related to the slogan of freedom, equality, and brotherhood, which became the core of the French Revolution. For Indonesia, tolerance is related to circumstance, in the sense of liking for anyone, letting people have opinions or other opinions, not wanting to disturb others' freedom of thought and belief. Tolerance must be able to shape the possibility of attitudes, such as attitudes to accept differences, change uniformity into diversity, recognize the rights of others, respect the existence of others, and enthusiastically support cultural differences and the diversity of God's creation which is then popular with the term multiculturalism. Then, tolerance or tolerant attitude is interpreted by Djohan Efendi as an attitude of respect for pluralism [4]. In other words, this attitude is not only to recognize others' existence and rights, even more than that, involved in the effort to know and understand the existence of diversity.

Thus, tolerance is an attitude of mutual respect between groups or between individuals in society or

other spheres. Tolerance prevents discrimination, even if there are many different groups or groups in a community group. Examples of general tolerance include: respecting the opinions and/or thoughts of others who are different from us and helping one another for humanity regardless of ethnicity, race, religion, and beliefs. Religious tolerance practised in Indonesia is an attitude of mutual respect for adherents of other religions, including not forcing others to adhere to a particular religion, not denouncing/insulting other religions for any reason; and does not prohibit or interfere with other religious communities to worship according to their religion/belief. Indonesia is one of the countries in the world that has a diversity of religions and cultures. Around 260 million Indonesians live side by side with 6 (six) religions and 1,340 different tribes [1].

RESULT & DISCUSSION

The International Community's View of Indonesia's Tolerance Practices.

Indonesia is one of the largest democracies in the world and has the most or the majority of Muslims. It turns out that the role of Muslims in advancing democracy in Indonesia is very large. Unlike the practices in other countries, Indonesian Muslim communities do not prioritize the basis of the Islamic religion as the identity of political parties. They play a lot of roles in nationalist-based political parties. It is proven by a number of General Elections held by Indonesia, both for members of parliament, Regional Heads, and the President. The biggest winning parties are national-based parties. In these parties, the Indonesian Muslim community has great influence but still prioritizes the Principle of Pancasila, which accommodates the aspirations of the whole nation, including from non-Muslim groups.

Many countries in the world respect and recognize Indonesia as a country that upholds the values of tolerance, and among them, Indonesia was once the host of the *United Nations Alliance of Civilizations* (UNAOC) held in Nusa Dua Bali in August 2014. The election of Indonesia as the host can be interpreted as a form of international appreciation that Indonesia can be a role *model* of a harmonious country between ethnic, religious, racial, and cultural diversity. Then, several world leaders, including famous *Islamic figures* from India, Dr. Zakir Naik gave the recognition. He admires the Indonesian people who are very tolerant of other religions. According to him, Indonesia is a country with the largest Muslim population in the world. However, the Muslim population does not make Indonesia an Islamic State. It is a privilege of Indonesia as a multicultural country, applying every

religion equally before the State and religion cannot be allowed to be a source of discrimination. Besides, *Advisor to the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, Ayatollah Mohsen Araki, considered Indonesia a country full of peace and tolerance so that it could become an example for other Islamic countries. According to him, Indonesia is one of the countries that become an example of coexistence and a life of peace and brotherhood. Indonesia has always been a good example and symbol for Islamic countries in the world. As for the various demonstrations with religious sentiments, showing the existence of freedom of expression in Indonesia, through predetermined channels and increasingly showing the sense of brotherhood and friendship of various groups in Indonesia. Then the former *Imam of the Islamic Center in New York*, United States of America, Muhammad Shamsi Ali also gave a view on a tolerance between religious communities in Indonesia. Shamsi said that the tolerance life in Indonesia had been built quite well and was very encouraging. This condition is created because religious life is part of the history of Indonesian society. Shamsi did not dismiss the cases of discrimination between majority and minority groups based on religious sentiments. But according to him, it is normal as a democratic state, although it needs to be anticipated so as not to cause disunity. According to Graham C. Kinloch, socially religious people cannot deny that they must associate not only with their own groups but also with groups of different religions [5].

The things stated above show that Indonesia's ability to implement the values of tolerance as well as democratic values is increasingly recognized by the world. Indonesia has played a key role in spreading tolerance to reduce extremism and terrorism increasingly strong in the world. Indonesia has played an active role in sharing its experiences in developing values of tolerance in a democratic country, especially with the role of religion in public life. Religion in Indonesia plays an essential role in people's lives. It is stated in the ideology of the Indonesian nation, Pancasila: "The Almighty God." A number of religions in Indonesia influence collectively on politics, economics and culture. In the 1945 Constitution, it is stated that "each citizen is given the freedom to choose and practice his beliefs" and "guarantee all of them the freedom to worship, according to their religion or beliefs". With tolerance, everyone can respect and respect the activities carried out by the surrounding community, especially life between religious communities, by tightening the relationship between fellow religious communities and those of different religions. By living up to the meaning of tolerance, social life within ethnic,

religious, and racial differences can be achieved as well as possible. Even tolerance has been able to provide broad impact and benefits for religious and community members in Indonesia and has maintained unity and diversity within the dual-colour frame of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). The existence of the Republic of Indonesia based on the 1945 State Constitution is multicultural, including the plurality of legal systems in force in its society [6].

The Indonesian government officially recognizes six religions, namely Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. But when talking about religious tolerance is related to the existence of human belief in God Almighty. In social science, religious differences can place understanding in religion into two groups: religious groups of the host; and various group migrants. The religious community of the host usually has the majority quantity of publicity, whereas the various community groups of the migrants with the minority position [7].

According to religious teachings, especially Islam, tolerance is not only towards fellow human beings, but also the universe, animals, and the environment. With this broad meaning of tolerance, tolerance among religious believers in Islam receives important and serious attention. Mutual respect in faith and belief is a very comprehensive Islamic concept. The consequence of this principle is the birth of the *spirit of piety* in religion. Hence, piety to Allah gives birth to a sense of universal brotherhood among humanity. However, religious tolerance, according to Islam, is not to merge in faith. Nor is it to exchange beliefs between different religious groups. Tolerance here is in the sense of *mu'amalah* (social interaction). So, there are shared boundaries that can and cannot be broken. It is the essence of tolerance, where each party controls and provides space to respect each other's uniqueness without feeling threatened by their beliefs and rights.

However, the recognition of Indonesia's ability to carry out the values of tolerance as well as democratic values in the eyes of the world is sole because Indonesia has always maintained unity and diversity based on the concept of civil society, by guarding democracy and upholding the rule of law. Democracy without law enforcement will be wild. Conversely, if the law is not made democratically, it will be elitist and one-sided. Madani Society in Indonesia is a civilized society. According to Gus Dur,

"It doesn't matter what your religion or tribe is. If you can do something good for everyone, people never ask what your religion is".

Therefore, every Indonesian citizen is demanded to continue upholding mutual tolerance both among religious communities, ethnic groups, races, and groups and respect each other between the rights and obligations that exist between communities for the integrity of the State and the peace of life in society.

Indonesia Becomes an Inspiration for Tolerance in the World Community

As has been said, that religious tolerance in pluralism in a very complex society in Indonesia has gained recognition from countries in the world. The concept of progressive Islam and the middle Islamic path adopted by the majority of Indonesian society is judged to have an important role in reviving tolerance. At least, it appeared at the "Tolerance of Islam in Pluricultural Societies" seminar, which took place at Villa Borsig, Berlin, Germany, on May 29, 2019.



Figure 1. The seminar, which was initiated by The Ambassador of Indonesia for Germany

The seminar, which was initiated by The Ambassador of Indonesia for Germany (Arif Havas Oegroseno) was held in collaboration between the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI) Berlin, and the Azerbaijan Embassy in Berlin. A number of crossroads and religious figures were present at the seminar, including members of the German Parliament, organizations of various religions (Islam, Christianity, and Judaism), Humbolt University professors, media circles, non-governmental organizations / NGOs, and a number of German government officials. The seminar mentioned that Germany inspired the concept of Islam that developed in Indonesia. Head of the Department of Religious Affairs, German Foreign Ministry, Volker Berresheimsaat Opening the Seminar aid that Germany inspired the concept of Islam that developed in Indonesia. According to him,

"The concept of Indonesian Islam can be an alternative to offset the concept of Islamic

concepts from certain ethnicities currently being developed in Germany. We need to introduce other German-colored Republics of Islam. Islam is not identical with certain researchers. Islam practised by Indonesian people is an example of how Islam can provide tolerance in very different ethnicities. Imagine, 260 million people are scattered in thousands of islands in Indonesia, with hundreds of cultures and languages, as well as diverse religions and beliefs, able to live happily. Moreover, around 87% of Indonesia's population is Muslim" [8].

Prof. Dr. Azyumardi Azra, CBE delivered another case as the main speaker at the seminar from Indonesia stated that:

"Indonesian Islam was inspired by four national pillars, namely Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, the Republic of Indonesia Unity State and Unity in Diversity. Pancasila is a platform and integrating force of diversity that Indonesia has. "Indonesian Islam is recognized as the smiling and colourful Islam, a colourful and peaceful Islam. Indonesian Islam is not very thick with Arabic but does not mean any more Islam than Arab countries. A number of researchers revealed that the Indonesian Muslim community is more obedient in carrying out the Islamic Shari'a, such as fasting, Friday prayers, and pilgrimage than some countries in the Middle East " [9].

Through the seminar, the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs obtained from the seminar participants, especially Indonesian and Azerbaijani sources, about the concrete steps needed. The stigma that Islam is threatening society's stability, especially when it has to migrate from Middle Eastern countries to Germany, is a growing fact in Germany. Pastor Dr. Nikodemus Schnabel from the German Foreign Affairs Minister said:

"We who are present here have added that the stigma is not right and needs to be straightened out. However, we need to formulate what needs to be done to refute and improve interpersonal misunderstanding, a dialogue of religious leaders with the government" [10].

Some recommendations are offered by participants, such as strengthening the values of multiculturalism in the community, strengthening interfaith and interreligious dialogue, doing dialogue with religious leaders, and identifying the importance of formal education and schooling. And in the direction of radicalism in the name of certain

religions. In this connection, the German Foreign Ministry has formed a special "Religion for Peace" Summit in Germany.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian Ambassador (Oegroseno), through the Indonesian Embassy in Berlin has already carried out a number of such recommendations. One of them in August 2020 will carry out the Interfaith Scholarship program by inviting leaders from Germany, to see the practice of Islam and pluralism in Indonesia. Indonesia has some tolerance or peace (Wahid Foundation and the initiators) that have strengthened the grassroots community's capacity to build peace and tolerance. In the design, the commitment to realize and strengthen peace, education, gender equality, values of brotherhood and tolerance in the lives of citizens, and having strengthened the values and norms of local wisdom and the deterrence of the prevention of tolerance.



Figure 2. Muslims perform Eid prayer in the courtyard of Hati Kudus Jesus Church in Malang, East Java.

One example of a tolerance/peace village in Java is Nglinggi Village in Klaten District, Central Java, which is headed by Sugeng Mulyadi. He is the head of the village of the majority group that can develop religious harmony in his village. In fact, there were rumours of being a Christian (a minority in the village) that it was impossible to be elected, but some people wanted to be accepted as a religionist. So we hope if the people chosen to guard the programs are full, and even if they make mistakes, please warn them [11].

Empirically, the High Country has around 2,400 residents with various beliefs, but the majority are Muslim. When nominating themselves into villages in 2013, there were only 20 Christians. During the campaign, I never mentioned religious matters. The main thing discussed was only the program.

He was dreamed of being the village of the new economy that is tolerant and peaceful. During the election day, Sugeng gained 52 % of the votes, winning over his opponents. Non-Muslims lead

Nglinggi Village as the majority of Muslims. He has never faced any other religious group because he formed a religious community association group, where religious leaders often meet and chat. Every time there are warnings of religious days, all of them are always helping and visiting. He was present at the Koran study or the recital (the event in Islam), active on Islamic Muslim fraternity. It has become one of several villages or villages in the villages that are in three provinces in Central Java, West Java, and East Java.

CONCLUSION

From the description above, it can be concluded that there are conditions for maintaining tolerance, namely:

1. An ideology that unites all religions and ethnicities, in Indonesia united by Pancasila;
2. The presence of interdependence or economic dependence, for example, in Madura, predominantly Muslim, as a tobacco supplier, then a Chinese cinema broker. Secondly, there is never a question of difference, because of economic interdependence;
3. The existence of cross-affiliation, meaning that people are not in groups and have the same identity. For example, in art or sports, that art and sports are seen as abilities, not religion or ethnicity.

Every tribe and religion in Indonesia has its uniqueness in creating tolerance, but if one of them is absent, the threat of tolerance will emerge.

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