

Moderate Islam in Indonesia Foreign Policy Towards Cases with Islamic Dimension in European Countries

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Introduction

Some problems are facing European countries like migration from middle east conflict countries. Another axample is terror attacks like what have happened in London and Paris assault, Charlie Hebdo office attack in 7th of January 2015 and also Stadium Stade de France Paris attack in 13rd November 2015 that killed 120 people and dozens injured. Even French President Hollande declared a state of national emergency. At the otherside, we can see islamophobia and misperception towards Islam also arise. Some cases of islamic blasphemy like publication of prophet cartoon in Danish magazine Jylland Posten, its duplication in many media, and film Fitna cretaed by Geert Wilder can be mentioned.

What can be seen/ learned from these cases? These cases are problems that potentially disturb harmony and peace not only domestically or regionally, but also internationally. Their religious/ identity dimension maked the cases not just European problem but world problem. Therefore, religious dimension can not ignored. The end of Cold War make many scholars to bring back religion into account in global politics (Mansbach and Raffery, 2012 or Tibbi, 2008 or Spillmann, Wenger and Hess, 2003). This approach is based on the argument that religion affects some political aspects of international relations in several ways. (Fox and Sandler, 2004)

Secondly, as world problem, they had big impact on people to people relations, (society to society) and also people to government relations and finally government to government relations. Last, they are non traditional security issues that need changing respond and also responsibility by state and non state actors.

What can Indonesia offer in reducing that problem, especially the terror attacks in one side and islamophobia at the other side ? As partner with its special identity as the biggest muslim populated country, Indonesia realize that it has responsibility to respond. Indonesia can use its experience in combatting terrorism and in building multicultural society to help. In this context, it is also good to see Islam role in its foreign policy.

Although in the struggle for independence period, Islam has served as positive element in diplomacy to secure recognition and international endorsement for new republic.(Hassan, 1980or Rahman, 2007), in the next period, the majority of researchers of Islam in Indonesia foreign policy concluded that Islam was absent and not become dominant factor in its foreign relations, (Leifer, 1983 Suryadinata 1987, Azra 2000, Sukma 2003, Perwita 2007, Wicaksana 2010, Anwar 2010). Since Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) administration, the change/ shift then occured when Islam articulated as new identity. In a meeting held by Indonesian Council on World Affairs (ICWA) on 19th of Mei 2005 in Jakarta, former President

of Republic of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), mentioned that Islamic identity become inherent projection of Indonesia reference. (Yudhoyono, 2005) This statement was important due to the fact that it was first speech about his foreign policy direction.

The same statement was spoken by former Minister of Foreign Affairs Marty Natalegawa in world economic forum Group of 20 (G20). He said that as the G-20 has confirmed itself for the status of the major forum on world economic issues, Indonesia was challenged to carve a niche within the group that is unique to itself as the world's third largest democracy, the country with the world's largest Muslim population, and a voice of moderation. (Anwar, 2011) .

Islam came in Indonesia peacefully, Islamic organizations also contributes to Indonesia *nation and state building*, and also their role in dynamics phase of Indonesia history, they all show peace character of Indonesia Islam. (Achmad, 2008) As conclusion, moderate Islam is the real Islam in Indonesia (Esposito and Voll, 2003 or Hatzopoulos and Petito, 2003 or Ramage, 1995 or Sahal and Aziz, 2015)

Some reasons can be presented in answering **why** must Indonesia participate in solving those European problems. The first is fact that there is a big hope especially from the European leaders that Indonesian Islam become an alternative Islam inspiring peace and democracy.

Islam in Indonesia is hoped to be alternative face of peace Islam. (Wirajuda, 2012) When attended Wilton Park Conference in England March 2010, Rizal Sukma said that international public hope that Indonesia could play its role as voice of Islamic world. (Sukma, 2010b) This expectation then arrive at advice that Indonesia could be mediator between West and Islam. Not just that reason, moderate Islam also hoped to be alternative model that can be implemented in other muslim society. Explicitely, USA President Barack Obama said that Indonesia like Chile and South Korea be model for democracy in Egypt. (Smith, 2009) Urgency in combating terrorism by developing moderate Islam network was seen by the West.

Secondly, those are also humanitarian problems and it is our common duty to respond. In Islamic concept, it is related to the concept of salam (peace), ishlah (conflict resolution) and ukhuwah basyariah (brotherhood of man) that are part of the essences of Islamic messages. We realize that there are many faces of Islam, (Ayob, 2000), but in this context, moderate Islam having special values like tasamuh (tolerance), tawasuth (moderation), tawazun (balance), and i'tidal (justice) can be offered in resolving these problems.

Giving his opening speech in 2006 when Nahdlatul Ulama held Suni- Syiah Conference for Iraq Reconciliation in Bogor, President Soesilo Bambang Yudhoyono said that it was Islamic and also constitutional duty to reconcile Sunni and Syiah in Irak (Shoelhi, 2009). This statement indicated that his Islamic worldview was one of his motivation. This also strictly showed that Islam is compatible Pancasila and constitution.

As respond to international issue discrediting Islam, foreign minister Hasan Wirayuda said that Indonesia as the biggest muslim country in the world has responsibility to project the real Islam- moderate Islam. (Wirajuda, 2004) This was based on facts that some muslim act as bad muslim that not reflect Islamic value. In other side, there was also false stereotype that give bad stigma to Islam. This statement also indicate his Islamic worldview that Islam must be projected in term *rahmatan lil alamin*.

Nahdlatul Ulama has the same view. For NU, that Islam must be projected in term *rahmatan lil alamin* (blessing for all). In Islam exist concept like religious brotherhood (ukhuwah islamiyah), nation solidarity (ukhuwah wathaniyah/ nasionalisme), and human solidarity (ukhuwah basyariyah) (LBM PBNU, 2004). In Islamic perspective, humanity is part of its doctrine. (Zemmali, 2012 and Mahmud, 2008 and Zayyid, 2008)

Therefore in relations between Islam and state, Islam and nationality is compatible and the dichotomy between them is dangerous one because both could go hand- in hand. According to *Kiai Ahmad Siddiq*, acceptance of Pancasila by NU was not political position but based on *syariah* or could be traced from Islamic teaching as prophet Muhammad *risalah*.(Muzadi, 2011). The same view also showed by Islamic scholars like Nurcholis Madjid who said that Pancasila is compatible with Islam and Islam has universality in its messages (Madjid, 2007).

Programs

How do we go ? In combating Islamic radicalism we must empower moderate muslim scholars. They can produce and publish counter discourse, counter ideology. It is a must to guarantee that there will be no false in understanding and practicing Islam. And Islam not to be hijacked for political reasons anymore. By what means ? Moderate Islam scholars become epistemic community that campaign, produce and teach the true face of Islam. Sociologically and politically, these moderate islam also should push their own government to participate comprehensively in solving the problems in conflicting states as one of the roots of radicalism and terrorism.

Many of Islamic leader from many organizations participate in Indonesia diplomacy as minister of foreign affairs statement that promotion of moderate Islam in foreign policy was done by empowering the moderates in first step.(Wirajuda, 2004) He also said that the success of combating terrorism depends on this effort in empowering moderates. (Wirajuda, 2005). This include people to people diplomatic activities done by Indonesian muslim living in European countries. Some of them join *pengurus cabang istimewa* (PCI- special branch board of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and actively deliver this second track diplomacy in promoting moderate Islam.

Promoting moderate Islam is also important in responding islamophobia. As a phenomena, islamophobia was an ancient one but got its rising momentum after 9/11 tragedy. Promotion of moderate Islam then held to get good image in the context of global war against terrorism (Nugroho, 2010). The fall of Soviet Union as common enemy made some expert in the West like Samuel Huntington, Elie Kedouri, dan Bernard Lewis to create new enemy. They then develop some argument to see Islam as victim. First, incompatibility of Islamic values with democracy. Second, muslim tend to unbelieve political institution of democracy. Third, Islamic values become source in authoritarian government in Middle East countries. Fourth, less commitment of Muslim to democracy.

This condition created Islamophobia in international area as we see in some cases like publication of prophet cartoon, film Fitna, innocence of muslim, and many. Some discrimination and violence to muslim occurred because of misinformation about Islam.(Gazali, 2012) This condition made muslim countries to respond. And Indonesia as biggest muslim country did too.

In reducing islamophobia, some diplomatic programs have been held that focused to take moderate Islam as *image* in global politics. (Sukma, 2012). They are *interfaith dialogues*, *inter-civilization dialogues*, hosting *the International Conference of Islamic Scholars*. This agendas were organized and supervised by directory of public diplomacy, ministry of foreign affairs. (Kemenlu RI, 2008) Even some scholars said that this moderate Islam program was started since first Bali Bombing in 2002 and became one of SBY foreign policy priority.(Weatherbee, 2013)

Interfaith dialogue programs were held in collaboration with many states like England and Canada. The same program also held in cooperation with USA (2010, 2012), Austria (2009, 2010), Belanda (2009), Bulgaria (2010), Ceko (2010), Ethiopia (2011), Hungaria (2010), Inggris (2008), Jerman (2010, 2011,2013), Kanada (2008), Lebanon (2008, 2011), Polandia (2011, 2013), Rusia (2009), Serbia (2011),

Spain (2010), Uni Eropa (2010), Vatikan (2008), Yunani (2011), Chile (2012), Argentina (2012), dan Pakistan.

In regional level, *Interfaith Dialog* was held like *Regional (Asia Pacific) Interfaith Dialogue* (di Yogyakarta, Cebu, Filipina, Waitangi, Selandia Baru, Phnom Penh, Perth, Semarang in 2012). *The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Interfaith Dialogue* also was held seven times (Bali, Larnaca-Cyprus, Nanjing, Belanda, Seoul, Toledo, dan Manila). *Asia Pacific Inter Faith Youth Camp (APIFYC)* was held in Surabaya in 2004, *APEC Intercultural and Faith Symposium* in Oktober 2006 in Yogyakarta; and *Asia Europe Youth Interfaith Dialogue* in Bandung in 2008. In multilateral level, it was held in two forum *The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation*, and second, *United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UN AOC)*. In 2014, became host of *'The 6th UN AOC Global Forum*.

To respond islamophobia in the cases of islamic blasphemy like publication of prophet cartoon in Danish magazine *Jylland Posten*, SBY launched **intermedia dialogue** in collaboration with Norwegia. His policy reduced misperception toward Islam in media and also gave more comprehensive understanding among international media in covering islamic issues (Djalal, 2008)

This kind of diplomacy to win the hearts and minds of foreign government and public in order to reduce misperception. (Wirajuda, 2006) Better understanding towards Islam among international media and nations was achieved. For Indonesia, appreciation from many foreign countries including non state actors in global politics arised. Therefore, the impact that hoped was good image of Indonesia. This good image in turn would promote cooperation and neglect conflict.

Challenges

Although efforts have been conducted but many cases still happens. Therefore we have to take care some challenges. **First**, in responding terrorism, we must be patient, "telaten", and together continue to carry on the programs. War against terror need long time because become moderate or radical, sometimes, it is hard to change. It is not easy because Islam is not monolit. But many facts that radicalist finally find the true way of peace and love religion.

Secondly, radicalism and terrorism also deal with ideological and sociological factors. Therefore, the roots of these must be handled. Ideological factor of radicalism must be tackled with counter discourse and teaching true message of Islam. An interesting view come from Indonesian Ambassador to Vatican Agus Sriyono that it is better to ask radical to join interfaith dialogues because most of the dialogues programs held just consisted of moderates. It is a hard path but must be tried.

The sociological and political factors must be tackled by cretaing more justice relations among all. Interreligion and interstate economy, social and political relations must be fixed. As example, Indonesian initiative in United Nations General Assembly 2012 to develop international convention banning religious blasphemy should be supported. If not, some will see in freedom of expression perspective and others in attack of religious belief.

Thridly, mapping the European muslim group is also needed to understand who are radical and moderate ones. After that, soft approach must be developed in empowerment the moderates. In this context, Indonesia can give its role by first and second track diplomacy.

Finally, European countries must support Indonesia to be peace, democratic, and wealthy. By this, Indonesia can be created as model, as best practice that islam-democracy-and modernity can go hand-in-hand.

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