

## Contribution Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace in Realizing Peace Inter-Religious

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**ABSTRACT:** Various conflict occurred in Indonesia do not make Indonesians experts in managing them, even though they have long experience as a multicultural nation. This proves that the Indonesian should have capability to build peace. From this cause, ICRP rise as a driver for bringing peace in Indonesia. A number of interfaith youth projects have provided space for participants to understand the sources of conflict such as prejudice and stigma. In addition, the activities initiated by the ICRP also provide dialogue and discussion experiences about other people's religions in order to build harmonization between religions. The activities facilitated by the ICRP are considered effectively in bringing about peace at the grassroots level. Therefore, this research is interesting to study as new knowledge regarding methods for realizing peace.

**KEYWORDS**—ICRP, inter-religious, peacebuilding, Indonesia

### I. INTRODUCTION

The diversity of the Indonesian nation does not necessarily make it a skilled society to manage differences. Moreover, by utilizing this diversity as a synergistic and constructive strength. Several incidents like conflict and tension between groups based on differences in ethnicity, culture, and even religion still often appear in various regions of Indonesia. This case indicates that Indonesia has a high vulnerability to the gifts it has as a multicultural nation. (Pangabean, 2020)

Several conflicts that have occurred in Indonesia, such as ethnic conflicts in Kalimantan, inter-religious conflicts in Ambon, Aceh, and Sampang, and cases of separatist groups in Papua, are examples that are most often shown as lessons for the Indonesian that differences have the possibility to trigger conflict. Even today, differences as the trigger for tensions still dominate, which then breeds intolerance, discrimination, and intimidation towards some of the targeted communities.

Based on a report from the Setara Institute, in 2021 there have been 171 incidents and 318 intolerance actions and discrimination. Among them is the problem of houses of worship due to the issue of building permits (IMB) which is used as a justification by intolerant groups to disturb houses of worship or disrupt the course of worship. In terms of victims, Protestant Christians are the most victimized. Twenty of these cases involved disturbances in houses of worship, which included refusal to build houses of worship and disturbances during worship. In addition, the mosque occupies the second position as a house of worship that is experiencing disturbances. (Setara Institute, 2022)

The events presented in the equivalent report in 2021, have led us to think that being part of a multicultural society does not automatically make individuals skilled in managing diversity. Therefore, it is necessary to have activities that are used as methods to develop community skills for their differences (Korostelina, 2002). These activities at least contain efforts to prevent the emergence of conflict or the recurrence of conflict and build peace. Moreover, to build peace in the community directly.

Peace building from the grassroots level can be defined as efforts by non-state actors by utilizing various resources, to create harmonious relations between nations, ethnicities, races, religions, or other political

structures and to build social structures capable of promoting sustainable peace. The term "non-state actor" refers to institutions, organizations, or foundations established by the community at the grassroots level. (Oda, 2007)

Understanding that the diversity of the Indonesian people contains vulnerabilities, the ICRP is here to contribute to preventing conflict and building peace. Since 2000, he has made various efforts to realize a peaceful Indonesia. The number of programs that have been made by the ICRP requires the author to filter several programs related to youth to be presented in this article. The programs are Interfaith Youth Leadership School (SKPLA), Peace Train, Visit Tour, and Sharing Session.

## II. DISCUSSION

### 1.1 Who is ICRP

ICRP or *Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace* is an institution or legal entity in the form of a foundation that is non-sectarian, non-profit, non-governmental, and independent. The ICRP was born on 12 July 2000 to promote interreligious dialogue, democracy, and peace in Indonesia. The emergence of the ICRP was initiated by religious leaders from various religions and beliefs in Indonesia to encourage dialogue and build a democratic, humanist and pluralist religious life. The figures are Abdurrahman Wahid, Djohan Effendi, Budi Santoso Tanuwibowo, Chandra Setiawan, Gede Natih, Haris Chandra, JN Hariyanto SJ, Musda Mulia, Michael Utama Purnama, Muhammad Najib, Sudhamek AWS, Sylvana Maria Apituley. Together with institutions and individuals, the ICRP fights for pluralism and peace, which emphasizes efforts to uphold justice in various perspectives on gender, human rights, spirituality, economy, social and politics. In addition, the ICRP also actively takes part in developing studies on peace and conflict resolution and in fighting for human rights and freedom of religion and belief. (ICRP, 2022)

In its activities, ICRP has been driven by the vision to create a peaceful and prosperous society in the context of the plurality of religions and beliefs in Indonesia. Meanwhile, there are 4 missions initiated by the ICRP. The first is to grow and develop multiculturalism and pluralism in social life. The second is an effort to build awareness of a healthy culture of religiosity, mutual respect and free from mutual suspicion with all elements of the nation, especially communities and institutions of religion and belief. The third is to encourage efforts for dialogue, advocacy, assessment and problem solving both in socio-political and religious levels starting from the regional, national, regional and international scales. Fourth is to invite all parties, especially young people, to respect, appreciate, and be grateful for the diversity and richness of the traditions of the religious life of each party. Meanwhile, ICRP's strategic objectives are to increase understanding of pluralism, assist in handling various problems in inter-religious relations, and assist in the development of cooperation networks between institutions and individuals in the context of strengthening pluralism and peace. (ICRP, 2022)

### 1.2 What ICRP does

As conflicts become increasingly complex, the need to prevent, manage, and end violence as a result of conflict has changed the system or values for engaging youth in promoting peace (McEvoy-Levy, 2013). Now many grassroots communities have contributed to facilitating various youth projects in order to reduce violence in conflict and improve justice through cultural exchange programs, peace education in the form of training, or youth outreach to create a peaceful future. One of them is the ICRP which has contributed to providing a meeting room, especially among youths of interfaith.

The birth of the ICRP is part of an effort to foster a pluralistic attitude of diversity, respect differences, and celebrate freedom of religion and belief in Indonesia. Even now, the spirit of carrying out his vision, mission, and goals is still burning. Even in these years of crisis facing a pandemic like this, the ICRP is still steadfast in continuing to sow peace in Indonesia. Various activities have been summarized by researchers, while these activities include:

#### 1.2.1 Interfaith Youth Leadership School (SKPLA)

Until now, Indonesia is still the country with the highest diversity in the world, consisting of 1,340 ethnic groups and 718 regional languages spread over 17,504 islands from Sabang in Sumatra to Merauke in

Papua. With so much diversity, Indonesia inevitably has to experience various dynamics in its journey. Starting from conflicts between tribes, races, and or religions, to wars against armed civilian groups. In addition, there is a leadership crisis because there are rarely leaders who have high academic quality and prioritize the interests of the community above personal and group interests (Malik, 2018). Therefore, the Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace (ICRP) supported by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ford Foundation held a School of Interfaith Youth Leadership or in bahasa are called Sekolah Kepemimpinan Pemuda Lintas Agama (SKPLA). This activity is dedicated as a learning platform for those who want to appear as leaders for their respective communities, for the nation and the State in the future (Rahayu, 2021).

The program of SKPLA was attended by 30 participants from 43 people who registered. Of the 30 participants who successfully passed this selection were representatives from the areas of Jakarta, North Sumatra, Pontianak, Tasikmalaya, Bali, Malang, Bandung, Depok, Tegal, East Kalimantan, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Padang, Central Sulawesi, Madura and others. SKPLA participants also represent 10 religions in Indonesia, namely, Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Bahai, Sikh, Believers, and Judaism, with a gender composition of 17 women and 13 sons. The Interfaith Youth Leadership School learning activity is Batch 1 starting from November 2021 and ending in March 2022. In this pandemic era, the committee requires the committee to carry out this activity online. (Rahayu, 2021)

In SKPLA activity, participants will be provided with interesting materials related to ideal leadership for a pluralistic Indonesia. Participants are given the opportunity to learn in 10 meetings with various topics and resource persons who have expertise in their fields. The youth project has led participants to learn about the ideal leader in the midst of multicultural Indonesia. According to Junior Franata, a Catholic youth, SKPLA has facilitated youth to learn how to be a good leader for the people and for themselves. In addition, in the packaging material on leadership, participants are also given space to recognize the differences between the participants. According to Putu Eka, SKPLA always presents extraordinary speakers at every meeting, and the materials provided not only help to understand the differences between religions, but also provide an understanding to strengthen and unite each other in differences. (Kabardamai.id, 2022)

### **1.2.2 Peace Train Indonesia (PTI)**

One of the problems that currently continues to be a public concern is intolerance and religious radicalism in Indonesia. Religious intolerance and radicalism are manifested in various actions such as: banning religious worship activities, spreading hatred, religion-based violence or destroying places of worship. It is from this background that the *Peace Train* engages young people to actively become actors in fostering an attitude of tolerance, and jointly strive for the realization of peace in the country. At least through PTI young people get two important things. (Nurcholis, 2021)

First, as a bridge between young people from different religious backgrounds and from different cities to visit other cities where there are also youth communities of various religions. Uniquely, this bridge is used as a symbol and a way to knit peace. Of course this is related to the title of the program that is being carried, namely Kereta Api. Train is mass transportation. Inside it can be ascertained that it consists of passengers from various backgrounds, both ethnic, religious and different customs or cultures. From here, this program was created to invite PTI participants to take pictures of miniature Indonesia inhabited by various people as in the train. It is the portrait of diversity that they must understand and then report to their friends in the destination city as a material for reflection and learning.

*Second*, the experience is in the meeting room. Inside the carriage, even since they were still in the waiting room the encounter had already begun. They introduced themselves to each other among the participants and also to the committee team. This is where the encounter took place. From this meeting they know each other's religious background or belief, from what region and community and what their goals are in joining this program. Then the meeting room continues in the destination city to visit different places of worship such as: mosques, Christian and Catholic churches, monasteries, temples, pagodas. In these houses of worship, PTI participants were welcomed by the house of worship to learn more closely about the teachings, rituals or rites, the uniqueness or peculiarities of each and also how the relationship between the congregation in the house of worship and the different surrounding communities. (Nurcholis, 2021)

From the two objectives above, the essence of PTI's activities is that participants know and know directly from sources or adherents regarding various aspects of each religion. According to one Muslim participant, this activity has removed the stigma and prejudice that has existed in his thinking about Christians as worshipers of the cross during worship, in fact worshipping God is the same as Muslims. This experience not only surprised one or two people, but many participants from various religious backgrounds seemed as if the negative stigma disappeared when the space for meeting between differences was given the opportunity. Through this activity, it can be seen that the prejudices that often plague everyone can be eliminated. In short, visits to places of worship not only get a variety of information related to religions but also get a feel for how the relationship between religious communities is so close and intimate. (Nurcholis, 2021)

### **1.2.3 Visit Tour**

Facilitating a meeting room between youths who have different ethnicity, race, culture, and religion is an important instrument for sharing, having dialogue, in order to get to know each other. This effort is effective in eradicating prejudice, prejudice, and other negative attitudes related to disharmony between religious communities. ICRP presents a discussion space for youth of interfaith to spread tolerance and care for diversity through the "Anjangsana" activity by inviting youth of interfaith to visit the House of Worship.

Anjangsana activities have often been carried out by the ICRP. One of them is visiting the house of worship of the Ugamo Malim or Bale congregation. On this occasion, the visiting youths got firsthand knowledge about Parmalim. Upon arriving in front of Bale, the anjangsana participants are assisted to wear a sarong without exception, especially for the congregation and married male guests who are required to wear Ulos. Another attribute that must be worn is the ropes that are shaped like a white turban and are worn on the head as a symbol of purity. Not only that, while inside the Bale, the congregation and guests are not allowed to wear shoes or sandals. (Rahayu, 2022)

This activity is packaged in a structured manner so that it can give a good impression to the congregation or the participants of the anjangsana. After a leisurely conversation, at 11 o'clock in the afternoon, the Parmalim congregation performed a ritual of worship. Saturday is the time for Parmalim worship, it is not surprising that this activity is attended by many congregations who gather to worship. The ritual worship is carried out for approximately one hour with full reverence. While the participants only watched the worship until the end carefully. Then the worship service was closed by sprinkling holy water with leaves onto the skin of the congregation. After worship, the activity continued with lunch together. Of course, the meeting room with a lunch agenda added to the excitement of the dialogue between the congregation and the participants. After finishing lunch, the congregation and participants continued the dialogue that had been paused for worship. These activities bring the atmosphere of difference to be very beautiful like a rainbow. (Rahayu, 2022)

Anjangsana activities always bring pride to each party. Henri Simanjuntak, Ulu pungan (Branch Manager) Parmalim Bogor, expressed his pleasure at the arrival of interfaith youths to Parmalim. At first Henri did not expect that the young men who had come were. From this encounter, the congregation recounted the grief experienced by the Parmalim people. Even though the Parmalim people are proud of their beliefs, they still experience discrimination, especially the younger generation who cannot apply for jobs because of their religion. This fact made the participants realize that this kind of meeting room is really needed to hear and understand each other. (Rahayu, 2022)

### **1.2.4 Sharing Session (*Diskusi Beretika*)**

Sharing Session or they are called *Diskusi beretika* are a area for youth to meet and discuss various important issues related to current issues. This activity is held once a month with different topics. For example, on August 5, 2021, *Diskusi beretika* present the topic regarding "Talk to Differences: Turning on Relationships with Feelings of Wanting to Know". In this opportunity, the topic talks regarding Indonesia is a home for diversity of differences. In essence, this discussion resulted in the conclusion that all elements of the nation must have a shared commitment to maintain and manage Indonesia's diversity. (Rahayu, 2021)

Through this activity, one of the participants stated that differences between Indonesian people are not actually a problem, on the contrary, they are complementary spaces for each other. Furthermore, other

participants also agreed that the community needs to view differences as a resource that can be managed and utilized. However, since humans are born, identity has been attached to them which makes them different from others. Therefore, the difference is not something that needs to be debated. With this relaxed dialogue atmosphere, guided by discussion lighters, participants can freely discuss and learn from each other on the topic. (Rahayu, 2021)

### III. CONCLUSION

As a multicultural nation, It does not automatically make Indonesian has capability to manage it. Therefore, there is a contribution from the community for this unrest which is realized through methods that contain conflict prevention efforts. One of them is the contribution of the ICRP in realizing peace between religions and beliefs. From the writings described above, the ICRP's contribution in realizing peace is implemented through 1) education to participants on how to manage peace, 2) providing opportunities to clarify prejudices and prejudices regarding religion to its adherents directly, 3) fostering a sense of brotherhood and unity among people religious. These activities are packaged in the form of Interfaith Leadership School Activities (SPLA), Peace Trains, Visit Tours, and Sharing Session. Thus the ICRP has contributed to bringing about peace by involving youth.

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