

Strengthening Indonesia-Africa Relations

The Role of Higher Education Institutions



EDITOR

Al Busyra Basnur

AUTHORS

Rosihon Anwar | Ahmad Ali Nurdin | Mardianto Hasudungan Marpaung
Dwi Maryani Rispatiningsih | Ester Karosekali | Felisitas Yuswanto
Abraham Woncheso Mishika | Gustaf Hariyanto | Nevy Rusmarina Dewi
Wolter Weol | Christar Arstilo Rumbay | Subandri Simbolon

STRENGTHENING INDONESIA-AFRICA RELATIONS

The Role of Higher Education Institutions

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Christian State Institute, Manado

Raden Wijaya State Buddhist College, Wonogiri

Catholic State Higher Education, Pontianak

Authors:

Rosihon Anwar, Ahmad Ali Nurdin, Mardianto Hasudungan Marpaung,

Dwi Maryani Rispatiningsih, Ester Karosekali, Felisitas Yuswanto,

Abraham Woncheso Mishika, Gustaf Hariyanto, Nevy Rusmarina Dewi, Wolter Weol, Christar Arstilo Rumbay, and Subandri Simbolon

Team Editors:

Oktavia Maludin, Paulina Gupta Wijaya,

Yusup Ramlan, Efendy Ponco Prasetyo, and Yusuf Mamid Amad

Assistant Team Editors:

Nico I P Nadeak, Cecep Junaria,

Mohamad Alvi Prasetya, Tomy Satria Wardhana, Adi Putra Candra,

Dean R Fuady, Lalu H Habibi, and Syarif Husain

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Welcome Remarks



Dr. (H.C.) Al Busyra Basnur, S.H., LL.M.

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Indonesia
To Ethiopia, Djibouti and African Union

The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Addis Ababa is pleased to introduce the book titled *Strengthening Indonesia-Africa Relations: The Role of Higher Education Institutions*, authored by distinguished academics from universities in Indonesia and Ethiopia.

This collaborative publication underscores the significance of relations between Indonesia and Africa, with a particular focus on higher education partnerships. Higher education institutions play a critical role in fostering economic, social, cultural, and political progress globally, and they hold unique potential for strengthening ties between Indonesia and African nations. It is essential for these institutions to work together to cultivate mutually advantageous relationships.

Since the Asia-Africa Conference in 1955, Indonesia has progressively deepened its engagement with African nations. This growing partnership is evident in several milestone events, including the inaugural Indonesia Africa Forum

(IAF) in 2018, the Indonesia Africa Infrastructure Dialogue (IAID) in 2019, and the second IAF in September 2024.

Indonesia and African countries share a profound understanding of education's transformative potential, having seen first-hand its positive impact on nations and societies.

This book is a valuable resource, presenting insights, perspectives, and strategies for enhancing the role of higher education institutions in advancing cooperation between Indonesia and African countries.

I extend my sincere appreciation to our partners, the higher education institutions, the Embassy's collaborators, and especially the authors whose contributions have enriched this publication. It is our hope that this book will reach not only Indonesian and African audiences but also readers around the world.

Happy reading,

Addis Ababa, March 2024



Chapter 1:

UIN Bandung Goes to Africa: Between Promotion of Religious Moderation and Internationalization



By Rosihon Anwar and Ahmad Ali Nurdin

Introduction

In early August 2024, I attended the Indonesia-Ethiopia Interfaith Dialogue in Hawassa, Ethiopia. This program was supported by the Indonesia-Ethiopia Friendship Club and aims to strengthen interfaith dialogue as part of global diplomacy for world peace.

My visit to Africa, particularly Ethiopia, was a significant opportunity for both myself and my university. This program aligns with my priority initiatives as the new Rector of the State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung (2023-2027). We have five priority programs: 1) Campus Internationalization; 2) Strengthening Religious Moderation and Gender Awareness; 3) Digital Transformation for Improved Services; 4) Enhancing Human Resources and Alumni; and 5) Good University Governance. This visit, therefore, could serve as a platform to

advance at least two of these priorities: campus internationalization and promoting religious moderation on a global scale.

This paper is divided into two parts. The first part examines what UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung has done to promote religious moderation, both internally for campus staff and students and externally to other campuses and global audiences, including in Ethiopia. The second part explores UIN Bandung's efforts toward campus internationalization.

The first section will detail how the university has contributed to advocating religious moderation within Indonesia. As we know, Islam in Indonesia encompasses various perspectives, ranging from radical to moderate to liberal. In the global effort to counter radicalism and terrorism, understanding the contributions of moderate Islamic groups



has become increasingly urgent. Unfortunately, these moderate groups have yet to receive the same focus in Western media as radical Islam. Nurdin (2005) observed that most scholarly research on contemporary Islam focuses on Islamic radicalism or fundamentalism.

Pribadi (2002) argues that moderate and tolerant Islam worldwide has been promoted and popularized by three main agents: Islamic intellectual networks, Islamic educational institutions, and Islamic publishers. UIN Bandung has been selected as a representative of Islamic educational institutions.

In Indonesia, educational institutions play a pioneering role in promoting a peaceful face of Islam. However, limited comprehensive research has examined UIN Bandung as an “agent of moderate Islam.” Therefore, this analysis is essential to identify the strategies, goals, target groups, and messages promoted by UIN Bandung. The key questions addressed are: What are its aims, strategies, objectives, and target groups? What channels and media does it use? How does this institution respond to issues of tolerance, multiculturalism, and pluralism as core democratic values, especially in the context of the rise of Islamic political groups (both moderate and radical) in Southeast Asia?

The second section of this paper explores how Indonesian universities, including UIN Bandung, have sought to emulate the National University of Singapore (NUS) in their efforts to achieve world-class university status. By examining Singapore’s experience, universities in Indonesia and Africa, such as UIN Bandung, can adopt and accelerate their internationalization programs.

UIN Bandung and its Campaign for Religious Moderation

This study examines the phenomenon of promoting moderate Islam in Indonesia, particularly through educational institutions such as UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung-Indonesia. It addresses how this institution engages in promoting moderate and peaceful Islam, tolerance, and the compatibility between Islam and multiculturalism.

In this study, we argue that UIN Bandung has significant potential to actively promote and popularize the principles of moderate, peaceful, and tolerant Islam. The study of UIN Bandung is worthwhile for several reasons: First, UIN Bandung has received limited scholarly attention. Scholars have given only minimal focus to UIN’s role in promoting peaceful Islam within Indonesian higher education.



The second reason is that UIN serves as a leading educational institution in the country, committed to promoting moderate and tolerant Islam. Its influence in encouraging young university students in Bandung to embrace moderate Islam can help reshape Islam's global image, which is often portrayed as radical or violent by Western media. Third, UIN has an extensive network across Indonesia, enabling it to disseminate its values through educational institutions nationwide.

To accurately and comprehensively assess UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung's role in promoting moderate Islam and advocating for tolerance and peace, this study adopts a case-study approach. We use ethnographic methods to explore the perspectives and responses of UIN Bandung members regarding moderate Islam, tolerance, and multiculturalism.

UIN Bandung could play a crucial role in promoting moderate or tolerant Islam in Bandung, West Java, where it is located. West Java, widely recognized within Indonesia, has a reputation as the most intolerant province. A survey by the Moderate Muslim Society (MMS) ranked West Java at the top in intolerance (TIM Penyusun MMS, 2010). Similarly, the Wahid Institute's 2011 findings on religious freedom violations highlighted West Java as the province with

the highest number of incidents, recording 49 cases (58%), followed by Banten (10%) and Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (5%) (TIM Penyusun Wahid Institut, 2010). Setara Institute also identified West Java as one of the five provinces with the highest intolerance rates in 2011, with 57 cases, followed by South Sulawesi (45), East Java (31), South Sumatera (24), and Banten (12) (Dwi, 2011).

For this reason, UIN Bandung has intensified its efforts to promote and advocate moderate and peaceful Islam in Bandung and West Java. The university's vision and mission reflect this commitment. Its vision is to become a leading, competitive, and innovative Islamic State University based on the concept of *Rahmatan Lil Ālamin* (blessing for all beings) in Southeast Asia by 2029.

The important concept of this vision is the concept of blessing for universe. It's of course an abstract concept. However, this concept tries to ameliorate relationship pattern of human being that is pluralistic, humanist, dialogical and tolerant. Apart from that, this concept develops the use and management of nature with compassion.

The implementation of Islam *Rahmatan Lil Ālamin* is Islam as a mercy for the entire universe. Islam *Rahmatan Lil Ālamin* is the concept that humans



have the highest position on this earth. Humans being then are called caliphs on this earth who have the task of guarding, protecting and preserving the universe without destroying it in order to obtain the benefit of life in this world and in the hereafter.

In short, as a Muslim who is *Rahmat Lil Alamin*, he emphasizes guidance to humans in everyday life according to their duties and areas of expertise for the good and blessing of society and the people around them, including the nation and state.

To implement its vision as campus that uphold blessing for all universe, above, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung has taken the most important step that is reevaluated and reformulated its curriculum. As an academic institution, UIN Bandung has formulated its curriculum to promote moderate and peaceful Islam through educational institutions. Anti Radicalism Curriculum or, more specifically the Curriculum of Moderate Religions, has been formulated. The formulation of the curriculum, of course, involved various parties and cooperated with the inter-agency. In this context, for example, UIN Bandung cooperated with Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Technology and Higher Education, and the Ministry of Défense to establish a cooperation in the de-radicalization

program at the Public Higher Education. Several important references have been considered in formulating a moderate Islamic curriculum. *First*, teaching materials should cover all dimensions of Islamic teachings. It should not only be limited to *aqidah/ideology-tauhidi* dimension, but also other subjects such as Sufism, *fiqih*, and even political teachings. *Ummatan washatiyah* (middle line) is the term taken by the Qur'an which gives a picture of moderation in all Islamic teachings. The preparation of this comprehensive material should be accompanied by appropriate learning strategies and should touch all levels of education, both in formal and informal institutions. These moderate and tolerant attitudes should be promoted to students since his/her early age. *Secondly*, it is necessary to be affirmed in the public spaces that moderate Islam provides a place for tolerance. It is important to note that the formulated curriculum does not produce graduates who are soft or helpless in dealing with various deviations. Islam not only teaches *ruhama* (tenderness, politeness, and tolerance), but also *asyidda'* (assertiveness of deviation). Moderate Islam actually does not deny the persistence in holding the principles taught by Islam itself.

In addition to reformulation of curriculum, UIN Bandung promoted religious moderation by actively became a



pioneer in campaigning religious moderation in the country. There are several reasons why Bandung UIN should become the pioneer of this campaign, as follows. First, UIN particularly Faculty of Theology (*Ushuluddin*) guides, teach and develop the basics of religion (*Ushuluddin*) of Islam in both text and context. That is why in the scientific paradigm, *Ushuluddin*, as a science, is a pure science. In addition, it became mother of Islamic science. That is why the role of this Faculty in framing the concept of moderate Islam is important. Second, in this university, we studied materials related to the body of Islam, such as Qur'anic, Hadith, Sufism and Aqidah/Theology studies. These are the materials that immediately formed the paradigm of the students' lives, or that shape the students' understanding of Islam. Framing and construction of moderate Islam begins with the studies above. In this Faculty (especially Ilmu al-Qur'an and Tafsir department), Al-Qur'an is studied not only limited to the understanding, but also studied the context of the struggle of thought *mufasir*, so that the wisdom of "wealthy treasures" in interpretation of the Qur'an can be found. Third, in this university, we have Religious Studies department. This department has the main purpose to introduce religious diversity in Indonesia. Therefore, students are expected to become a wise person in dealing with such diver-

sity. Furthermore, students can make the diversity as a binding for unity.

Another step taken by the UIN Bandung to promote religious moderation was cooperated with other Islamic Higher Education Institutions, declared statement to fight against radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia. First, the Declaration of Aceh on April 26, 2017 signed by 55 rectors or vice chancellors of the State Islamic Religious College (PTKIN) throughout Indonesia. The declaration contains the rejection of all forms of intolerance, radicalism, and terrorism that endanger Pancasila and the unity of NKRI. Second, Anti-Radicalism Declaration on July 6, 2017 in Surabaya signed by several universities' rectors. Third, the Declaration of Anti-Radicalism on July 14, 2017 in Bandung which was signed by 44 rectors of state and private universities in West Java. The contents are more or less the same, namely, preventing radical movement and thought in several campuses. Fourth, Moderate Islam Declaration of Bandung on August 6, 2017 which was signed by other Islamic universities around Indonesia. This declaration is more specifically committed to realizing moderate Islamic values in higher education.

The above actions highlight UIN Bandung's pioneering role in promoting religious moderation in Indonesia.



Following the discussion of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung's efforts to promote moderate Islam, the second part of this paper will examine how the Singaporean government has successfully elevated the National University of Singapore (NUS) to global recognition. From NUS's experience, the Indonesian and Ethiopian governments can gain insights on how to position their universities for international acclaim.

Internationalisation: Indonesian and Ethiopian Campuses Can Learn

In the higher education system, the world class university plays an important role in training the professionals, scientists, researchers needed to support the national innovation system. It is in this context that many countries and governments are emphasizing priorities to ensure that top universities in their countries can actually create scientific progress. Jamil Salmi (2009) refers to the characteristics of a world class university as a university that has a world-class research reputation and has primary responsibility in developing new science especially innovations in science and technology. Globally indeed, higher education has strategic value when it is associated with economic development and its contribution to the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of a nation.

In this decade, world class university terminology has become a phrase that attracts a lot of attention (Albath 2003; Li 2012; Simmons, 2003). This is because becoming a world-class university is not just about improving the quality of learning and research in universities but also more importantly is developing the capacity to compete in the global market of education. It's just that the paradox as mentioned by Altbach (2007) that everyone wants a world-class university, but no one knows what kind of creature it is and how to achieve it. To be a member of one of the world's exclusive university groups is not something that can be achieved simply by declaring yourself. However, the university status of the world is an elite status labelled by the international recognition out there.

At least some of the characteristics of a university are said to be world-class as qualified professors and professors, have distinctive features in research, guaranteed teaching quality, high government participation and non-governmental institutions as financial resources, have high-talented students including international students, have academic freedom, university structure with high autonomy, excellent facilities in terms of teaching, research, administration and student life facilities on campus (Niland, 2000, Salmi 2009).



In this second part of article, I will examine how Singapore government has built a globally competitive university, or 'world class university' by taking the case of 'education politics' policy applied at the National University of Singapore (NUS). By then, universities in developing countries such as UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung and Ethiopia Adventist College could take the same steps to make their campuses are internationally recognized.

Several strategies have been implemented by Singapore government and NUS to make their campus sat in the top rank campus in Asia and even in the world. NUS implemented an educational development policy based on a meritocracy system and prepared alumni who could develop Singapore's economic growth (Ramakrishna, 2012). As Singapore's economy continues to increase and change within a few years from manufacturing activity to science based economic activity, NUS's role has become more significant especially its focus on research since the late 1980s and the commercialization of technology since the 2000s. Furthermore, NUS's mission is also wider than just a local higher education that prepares the workers to become a global-oriented university, competes to become the best faculty and seeks talented students from different parts of the world, and strives

to become a beneficial university and have positive implications for the world through the development of science (Seah, 1983).

NUS is well known for its highly selective policies in accepting students both locally and internationally. Meritocracy system is really applied, not only in selecting prospective students but also prospective lecturers. The NUS tradition of accepting undergraduate students is those who have graduated from high school with a special exam (in Singapore known as A level examination result). Although the entry requirements of each department and faculty differ depending on the popularity of the majors, but certainly the trend of NUS entry competition continues to increase from year to year, especially in high-demand majors such as medicine, law and business.

Several innovation programs were also introduced by NUS to introduce students to the practical world of industry, involvement in international research and socialization. In 1999, the NUS curriculum adopted the Harvard University curriculum model.

In addition to government policies that make NUS a corporation, the Singapore government at the beginning of NUS, implemented a policy on language



use in educational institutions. In addition to maintaining local languages in schools in Singapore, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew in early independence paid special attention to English as a medium of instruction that could connect the people of Singapore consisting of various ethnic backgrounds with the world economy.

In addition to international cooperation programs, NUS issued a program to attract talented students from abroad to study at NUS. NUS provides a large scholarship for talented students from abroad. So is the talented lecturers from reputable universities abroad to teach permanent lecturers in Singapore with high salary offerings. With the goal of making NUS a world-class competitive university, NUS continues to develop the way of recruitment of qualified lecturers with very high salary compensation. Therefore, since the 1990s, NUS has issued a policy related to the strategy of attracting and maintaining the internationally acclaimed talented lecturers 'at home' teaching in NUS.

Of course, what is disclosed above is only part of the process and policies undertaken by NUS in achieving the achievement of a world-class university. There are still many other aspects that have not been presented and photographed in this short article about how

NUS can be perched in 12 worlds in 2015. It's just that there are some notes that can be learned and applied in Indonesia, especially in the campuses of Islamic Religious Higher Education (PTKI) in Africa, which led to world-class Islamic or Christian universities. The first lesson is to realize the world-class universities cannot be done by campus institutions themselves without the support of various parties, especially the government.

Singapore government policy that views Human Resources as the most important asset in nation's economic development needs to be replicated. Singapore government policy to make English as the language of instruction in teaching and learning in NUS as a step towards the university world needs to be imitated by Indonesia and may be Ethiopia do not have problem with this policy since English is their main language. If the Indonesian government has not issued the policy, the campus in each Islamic universities may be able to make the first step to make English or Arabic as the language of instruction by making a special class flagship with the introduction of both languages.

Second, just as the Singapore government encourages funding for campuses, the Indonesian and Ethiopian government have also been quite supportive in terms of funding with a twenty percent



education fund from the State Budget (APBN) in the case of Indonesia. If the funding given by the government is not maximized, it is the duty of the campus officials and other stakeholders to actively participate in obtaining funds outside government funds to support the campus activities.

Third, NUS experience shows that in terms of cooperation with the international campus, they have a mature plan and strategy. They chose cooperation with internationally reputable campuses such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the University of Pennsylvania, Stanford University, the Royal Institute of Technology Stockholm, the Fudan University of Shanghai and the Australian National University. Apparently, UIN Bandung and campuses in Africa need to follow the steps taken NUS in cooperation. In this case, Islamic campuses in Indonesia and other campuses in Africa are good enough in exploring cooperation with outside campuses. It's just how to improve the cooperation so that not only limited to Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on paper without follow-up to conduct activities both exchange students and lecturers. It is needed to start exploring the cooperation of exchange of faculty and students with universities of the world.

Fourth, among the criteria to become a world university recognized by the international community is the result of research conducted by the lecturers. In this case, Indonesian and African campuses through their research centre institutions need to review the research funding scheme for lecturers. It is important to consider that research funding is only assumed to be an annual 'share of livelihood' for lecturers so that it is considered less competitive. Research funding schemes with very small

Fifth, among the success of NUS to become a world-class university is due to the lecturers and students who are talented. It seems that this can be imitated by Indonesian and Ethiopian campuses mainly because enthusiasts join the campuses in Indonesia and Ethiopia continue to increase from year to year. A truly credible and accountable recruitment system for prospective students should be undertaken by universities. Of the many interests, it is possible for the campus to recruit prospective students. If NUS makes a Residential College System program, then in some campuses in Indonesia already has a forerunner to the program through Ma'had Al-Jamiah. The gifted students are prioritized to stay in the dorm or Ma'had so they can learn their foreign language skills. In addition to talented student



candidates, NUS also has internationally reputable lecturers. To improve the quality of existing lecturers, a well-designed strategic program is needed to improve the quality of lecturers. Assessment is required for the existing lecturers from the *Tridharma Perguruan Tinggi* side. If one aspect is lacking, then the campus should facilitate how the lecturers improve the aspect of the weakness. An institution at the university level is required to assess and develop the capacity of lecturers.

Conclusion

From the above discussions, it is clear that UIN Bandung plays a significant role in promoting moderate Islam in West Java specifically and in Indonesia and globally. This institution strives to emphasize educational institutions as an effective tool for advancing moderate Islam within Indonesia and beyond.

UIN believes that reforming and modifying the curriculum is essential to incorporate moderate values into teaching materials. However, due to Indonesia's complex social and political context and the diverse interpretations of Islam among Indonesian Muslims, the institution must adhere to government regulations. The varied interpretations of Islam in Indonesia present a considerable challenge for UIN to navigate.

Additionally, the persistent stereotype of Muslims as radical and intolerant remains one of the biggest challenges UIN faces.

Another conclusion from the second part of the article is that the NUS example illustrates how strategic thinking focused on national development and economic progress can drive academic growth, helping a university achieve world-class status. NUS's experience in progressive transformation has made it a model for a world-class university, worthy of emulation by countries in Southeast Asia and Africa, including Indonesia and Ethiopia. The aspiration to build a world-class, internationally recognized campus must be supported by all stakeholders. Similar to the NUS case in Singapore, both central and local governments, university leaders, lecturers, students, administrative staff, and the entire academic community in Indonesia and Ethiopia must work together to realize this vision. If policies, strategic plans, and practical programs for establishing a world-class university are initiated now, achieving this goal may become a reality in the near future.

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Chapter 2:



Strengthening Indonesia-Africa Relations: The Role of Higher Education Institutions



By Mardianto Hasudungan Marpaung

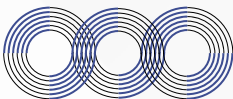
Abstract

Indonesia and Africa share a rich history of cooperation dating back to the Bandung Conference of 1955, which laid the foundation for solidarity among developing nations. In recent years, the relationship between Indonesia and Africa has expanded beyond political and economic cooperation to include higher education. This article explores the pivotal role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in strengthening Indonesia-Africa relations, highlighting the potential for academic collaboration, capacity building, and cultural exchange. The article argues that HEIs can serve as a bridge for fostering mutual understanding, addressing shared challenges, and contributing to sustainable development in both regions.

Introduction

Indonesia and Africa have a long-standing relationship rooted in a shared history of anti-colonial struggle and a commitment to South-South cooperation. The Bandung Conference of 1955, held in Indonesia, marked a significant milestone in the development of Indonesia-Africa relations. Over the years, this relationship has evolved, with both regions recognizing the importance of expanding cooperation in various fields, including education.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) play a crucial role in this evolving relationship, serving as catalysts for academic collaboration, knowledge exchange, and capacity building. This article examines the role of HEIs in strengthening Indonesia-Africa relations and explores the potential benefits of enhanced academic partnerships.



Historical Context of Indonesia-Africa Relations

The Bandung Conference, held in April 1955, was a landmark event that brought together leaders from 29 Asian and African countries. The conference aimed to promote Afro-Asian solidarity, foster economic and cultural cooperation, and support the decolonization efforts in both regions. Indonesia played a pivotal role in organizing the conference, and it marked the beginning of a new era in Indonesia-Africa relations.

In the decades that followed, Indonesia and Africa continued to strengthen their ties through bilateral and multi-lateral initiatives. These initiatives have included trade agreements, diplomatic exchanges, and cultural programs. However, the role of higher education in this relationship has only recently gained prominence. As both regions seek to address common challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and sustainable development, HEIs have emerged as key players in fostering collaboration and building the capacity needed to achieve these goals.

The Role of Higher Education Institutions in Strengthening Relations:

1. Academic Collaboration: One of the primary ways in which HEIs can

strengthen Indonesia-Africa relations is through academic collaboration. Collaborative research projects, joint degree programs, and faculty exchanges can facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise between Indonesian and African institutions. These partnerships can address issues of mutual concern, such as climate change, public health, and sustainable development.

For example, the University of Indonesia and Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia have collaborated on research projects related to tropical diseases and environmental conservation. Such collaborations not only advance scientific knowledge but also contribute to solving real-world problems that affect both regions.

2. Capacity Building: Capacity building is another critical area where HEIs can play a significant role in strengthening Indonesia-Africa relations. By providing opportunities for advanced education and training, Indonesian HEIs can help build the human capital needed to drive economic and social development in African countries. This can be achieved through scholarship programs, short-term training courses, and the establishment of centers of excellence.

Indonesia has already taken steps in this direction through initiatives such as the Indonesian Scholarship Program for Africa (ISPA). This program offers



scholarships to African students to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Indonesia. By investing in the education of African students, Indonesia is not only contributing to the development of skilled professionals but also fostering long-term relationships with African countries.

3. Cultural Exchange and Mutual Understanding: Higher education institutions also have a unique role in promoting cultural exchange and mutual understanding between Indonesia and Africa. By facilitating student and faculty exchanges, as well as hosting cultural events and conferences, HEIs can help break down stereotypes and build bridges between different cultures.

Cultural exchange programs, such as those organized by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, allow African students to experience Indonesian culture firsthand and vice versa. These exchanges foster greater appreciation for each other's traditions, values, and worldviews, contributing to stronger people-to-people ties.

4. Addressing Shared Challenges: Indonesia and Africa face a range of shared challenges, including poverty, unemployment, and environmental degradation. HEIs can play a vital role in addressing these challenges by con-

ducting research, developing innovative solutions, and training the next generation of leaders and professionals.

For instance, collaboration between Indonesian and African HEIs on agricultural research can help improve food security in both regions. By sharing knowledge and best practices in areas such as sustainable farming and agribusiness, these institutions can contribute to the development of resilient and productive agricultural sectors.

5. Promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Both Indonesia and African countries are committed to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. HEIs can contribute to this effort by aligning their research and educational programs with the SDGs. This includes promoting sustainable practices, conducting research on climate change mitigation, and developing programs that address social inequalities.

The Indonesian government, in collaboration with HEIs, has launched several initiatives aimed at promoting the SDGs in Africa. For example, the Indonesia-Africa Infrastructure Dialogue (IAID) has facilitated discussions on sustainable infrastructure development, with a focus on energy, transportation, and urban planning. By involving HEIs in



these initiatives, both regions can benefit from the expertise and innovation needed to achieve the SDGs.

Challenges and Opportunities

While there are numerous opportunities for HEIs to strengthen Indonesia-Africa relations, there are also several challenges that need to be addressed. These challenges include differences in educational systems, language barriers, and the lack of financial resources to support academic collaboration.

One of the main challenges is the disparity in educational systems between Indonesia and African countries. Differences in curriculum, accreditation standards, and language of instruction can hinder collaboration. To overcome these challenges, it is essential to develop mechanisms for mutual recognition of qualifications, harmonize curricula, and provide language training programs.

Another challenge is the limited financial resources available to support academic collaboration. While scholarship programs and joint research projects are valuable, they require significant funding. To address this issue, both regions need to explore alternative sources of funding, such as partnerships with international organizations, private sector involvement, and alumni contributions.

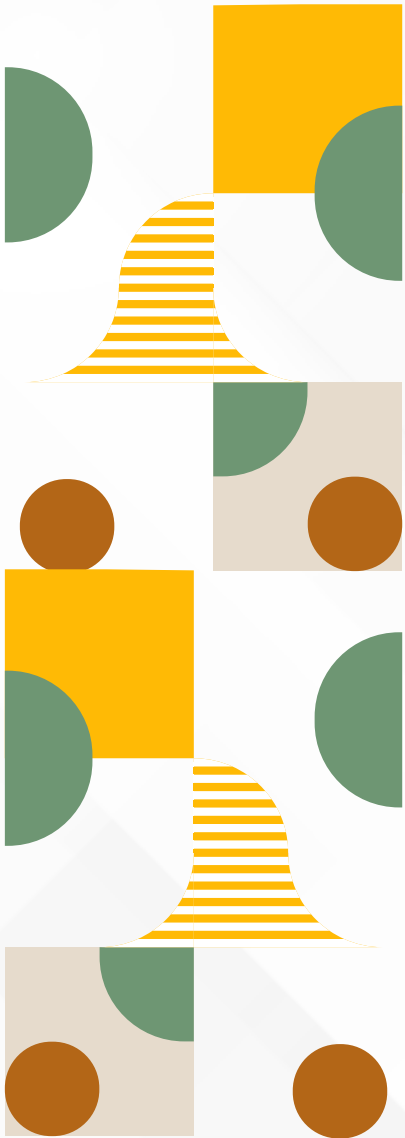
Despite these challenges, there are several opportunities for HEIs to strengthen Indonesia-Africa relations. The growing demand for higher education in Africa presents a unique opportunity for Indonesian institutions to expand their reach and attract African students. Additionally, the increasing emphasis on digital education and online learning provides a platform for HEIs to offer courses and programs to a broader audience.

Conclusion

The role of higher education institutions in strengthening Indonesia-Africa relations cannot be overstated. Through academic collaboration, capacity building, cultural exchange, and addressing shared challenges, HEIs can contribute to the development of a strong and mutually beneficial partnership between the two regions. As both Indonesia and Africa continue to navigate the complexities of the 21st century, the role of higher education in fostering collaboration and understanding will be crucial in achieving sustainable development and prosperity for all.



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- An abstract geometric design located on the right side of the page. It features a collection of overlapping shapes in yellow, green, and brown. The shapes include squares, circles, and semi-circles. Some of the yellow shapes have horizontal stripes. The design is layered, with some shapes appearing in front of others, creating a sense of depth. The overall composition is modern and minimalist.





Chapter 3:



Building Educational Bridges with Active Contributions Among Universities to Strengthen Indonesia-Africa Relationship

By Dwi Maryani Rispatiningsih



The relationship between Indonesia and Africa, two regions rich in history and culture, has long been established. Both have shared experiences of colonialism and a common spirit of independence. Indonesia's close ties with African countries have strengthened through the organization of the Asian-African Conference and Indonesia's significant role in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). In an increasingly interconnected global context, it is crucial for both parties to enhance cooperation, particularly in the education sector. Universities, as centers of scientific and cultural development, play a strategic role in facilitating this bilateral relationship. Through collaboration, universities are expected to improve educational quality, foster research and innovation, and contribute to community development. Therefore, support from various sectors, including

the government and society, is needed to strengthen international cooperation among universities in Indonesia. It is hoped that collaboration between Indonesia and Africa will support the success of the “Merdeka Belajar” (Freedom to Learn) program on independent campuses, which is currently being promoted in Indonesia.

“Merdeka Belajar” is a program designed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia. This program is a major initiative to reform the Indonesian education system, making it more relevant to contemporary needs and providing students with greater freedom to shape their educational paths. Cooperation between Indonesia and Africa can take various forms, including: (1) Exchange of academic staff, lecturers, and educational personnel; (2) Degree



and non-degree scholarships; (3) Training for educational personnel and lecturers; (4) Collaboration on scientific publications and research; and (5) Joint implementation of community service projects. The details of these cooperative activities are outlined below.

1. Lecturers and Academic Staff Exchange

Exchange between educational personnel means a program in which educational personnel, such as lecturers and academic staff from educational institutions collaborate with educational institutions in Africa for a certain period. This program aims to increase capacity, share knowledge, and strengthen international cooperation in the field of education. Lecturers can learn new and innovative methods of teaching, administration, and education management from institutions abroad. This program helps education personnel and lecturers to adapt to different cultures and education systems, enriching their experience in dealing with diversity. Educational personnel exchange programs between Indonesia and Africa provide valuable opportunities for professional development, broadening perspectives, and improving the quality of education at both institutions involved. By conducting this cooperation University from Africa and Indonesia would learn and

know the ultimate condition which can be adapted and certain university.

2. Degree and Non-Degree Scholarships

With the scholarship program, students from Africa can study in Indonesia, and vice versa. This scholarship program not only provides an opportunity for students to get a quality education, but also introduces them to Indonesia's culture, language, diversity and new perspectives that can enrich the student experience. It can also encourage the improvement of the quality of education in Indonesia, as well as provide opportunities for students to gain more complex and comprehensive learning experiences. Student exchange without degree, the system of this program is that students from different universities in Indonesia and Africa exchange places for a certain period of time without expecting an additional academic degree. The program focuses on the exchange of learning and cultural experiences, as well as skills development. With exchange students get the opportunity to experience the academic and cultural environment in another country, broaden their horizons, and understand different ways of learning. Student exchange programs often help students in the development of skills such as foreign languages, cultural adaptation, and interpersonal



skills that are useful in a globalized world. These programs provide valuable opportunities for personal and professional growth, while broadening students' academic and cultural horizons. Student exchanges are also expected to help in the development of quality human resources, which of course will be involved in national development.

3. Training for Academic Staff and Lecturers

Higher education institutions in Indonesia can also contribute to human resource development in Africa. Through training programs, short courses, and vocational education, campuses in Indonesia can help improve the skills and competencies of the workforce in Africa and vice versa. In the end, it is expected to strengthen the capacity of Indonesia and Africa in facing development challenges and increasing competitiveness in the global market.

4. Collaboration on Scientific Publications and Research

Collaboration in research is another important aspect that can strengthen Indonesia-Africa relations. Joint research conducted between lecturers also enables the exchange of knowledge and technology, which can provide long-term benefits for both parties. Joint

research can focus on regional to global issues. Higher education institutions can play an important role by creating platforms for collaboration and organizing international conferences or seminars that bring together researchers from both continents. International publication collaborations often result in publications that are recognized at the international level, for example, publications in reputable international journals such as Scopus. Publications in reputable international journals can improve the reputation of universities and academic lecturers. Through cooperation in the field of research collaboration and publications, both parties can exchange knowledge, technology, and innovations that are beneficial to the development of each country.

5. Implementation of Collaborative Community Service

One of the tri dharma of higher education is community service which aims to make a direct contribution to society, improve welfare and overcome various social problems. In the context of globalization, international collaboration has become one of the effective strategies to expand the reach and impact of community service carried out by lecturers. This collaboration not only enriches academic experience but also



strengthens relations between nations and increases the capacity of communities in various parts of the world. Community service collaboration between lecturers from two continents allows the merging of various perspectives and expertise, resulting in more innovative and effective solutions in addressing the problems faced by the community. Raden Wijaya State Buddhist College has a program called collaborative community service which is carried out with 6 difference institution either in central java or in east java.

Closing

Higher education institutions play a highly strategic role in strengthening Indonesia-Africa relations. This role should not be underestimated, as it includes the exchange of academic staff, lecturers, and educational personnel; offering degree and non-degree scholarships; supporting ongoing professional development; providing training for educational personnel and lecturers; engaging in collaborative scientific publications and research; and implementing community service projects together. Cooperation between Indonesia and Africa can serve as a bridge for closer, mutually beneficial collaboration. By effectively utilizing the role of universities, Indonesia and Africa can strengthen bilateral relations, build mutually advan-

tageous partnerships, and contribute to more inclusive and sustainable global development. Cross-continental collaboration is key to creating a better future and generating lasting benefits for all involved.





Chapter 4:

Strengthening Indonesia-Africa Relations: The Role of Higher Education Institutions



By Ester Karosekali

Introduction

In recent years, Indonesia and African countries have developed a growing partnership across several sectors. One of the most promising areas for cooperation is higher education, where universities and educational institutions can serve as bridges, fostering understanding, collaboration, and innovation between the two regions. Higher education institutions (HEIs) play a pivotal role in facilitating people-to-people diplomacy, advancing academic exchange, and enhancing mutual development. This article explores the potential of Indonesia and African countries in deepening their relationship through educational partnerships, focusing on three key objectives: increasing understanding of Indonesia-Africa relations, exploring the role of HEIs, and identifying areas for cooperation.

1. Increasing Understanding: The Importance of Indonesia-Africa Relations

The diplomatic relations between Indonesia and African countries have historical roots, dating back to Indonesia's leadership in the 1955 Bandung Conference, where it championed the cause of decolonization and global South-South cooperation. Despite this rich history, the potential for cooperation between Indonesia and Africa remains underdeveloped compared to partnerships with other regions. Strengthening these ties is vital for mutual benefit, especially in an increasingly interconnected world.

Africa is a continent of dynamic growth, with several emerging economies and a youthful population that presents opportunities for innovation, trade, and investment. Indonesia, as Southeast Asia's largest economy, offers



expertise in industrialization, agriculture, and digital technology that could benefit African nations. However, to unlock these opportunities, a deepened understanding of cultural, economic, and political contexts in both regions is necessary. This is where higher education institutions come into play, offering platforms for research, exchange programs, and academic discourse that can enhance understanding and cooperation.

2. Exploring Higher Education's Role in Improving Indonesia-Africa Relations

Higher education institutions are uniquely positioned to enhance Indonesia-Africa relations by promoting academic cooperation, facilitating research partnerships, and fostering intercultural exchanges. Universities act as hubs for knowledge production and cultural diplomacy, where students and academics can collaborate on global challenges, share expertise, and build networks that extend beyond national borders.

2.1 Academic Exchange Programs

Student and faculty exchange programs between Indonesian and African universities could significantly improve mutual understanding. These programs allow students from both regions to study abroad, learn about each other's

cultures, and develop academic and professional skills that will serve their countries in the future. Indonesia has a growing network of scholarships, such as the Darmasiswa Scholarship, which provides opportunities for international students to study in Indonesia. Expanding these programs to include more African students would not only increase academic mobility but also help build long-term relationships between future leaders of both regions.

In the African context, the African Union's Agenda 2063 emphasizes the importance of educational collaboration for the continent's transformation. African universities, in partnership with Indonesian institutions, can contribute to achieving these goals by sharing expertise in areas like sustainable development, health, and technology. Through collaborative research and joint degree programs, HEIs can help develop innovative solutions to common challenges such as poverty, climate change, and education inequality.

2.2 Collaborative Research and Development

Research partnerships are another means through which higher education institutions (HEIs) can strengthen Indonesia-Africa relations. Both regions face similar developmental challenges, such as ensuring food security, improv-



ing healthcare systems, and enhancing infrastructure. Collaborative research projects between Indonesian and African universities can generate knowledge to address these shared concerns. For example, research in agriculture and sustainable development is a crucial area for cooperation. Indonesia's expertise in tropical agriculture can benefit African nations, many of which have similar agricultural conditions. Joint research in these areas can lead to innovations that improve crop yields, support rural economies, and enhance food security in both regions.

Additionally, partnerships in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields can help both regions leapfrog into the digital age. By promoting research in digital technologies, HEIs in Indonesia and Africa can contribute to the development of smart cities, e-governance, and digital education systems. These innovations will not only improve the quality of life for citizens but also boost economic competitiveness on the global stage.

2.3 Strengthening Institutional Capacities

Higher education institutions in both regions can also collaborate to strengthen their institutional capacities. Capacity-building initiatives, such as faculty development programs, curricu-

lum enhancement, and the sharing of best practices in university governance, can improve the quality of education and research in both Indonesia and Africa. By sharing resources and expertise, universities can develop more robust academic programs that cater to the needs of their societies.

Moreover, partnerships with international organizations and private sector stakeholders can further enhance institutional capacities. For example, collaborations with multinational corporations can provide universities with access to advanced technologies and training programs, ensuring that students are equipped with the skills required in today's global economy.

3. Potential Cooperation: Opportunities for Indonesia-Africa Higher Education Collaboration

The potential for cooperation between Indonesian and African higher education institutions is vast. Several opportunities stand out as particularly promising, ranging from curriculum development to joint research initiatives and beyond.

3.1 Developing Joint Degree Programs

One of the most impactful forms of collaboration is the development of joint



degree programs. These programs allow students to earn degrees from both an Indonesian and an African university, giving them a more global perspective and making them more competitive in the job market. Joint degree programs in fields such as business administration, environmental science, and engineering could be particularly beneficial, given the economic and developmental priorities of both regions.

Joint degree programs can also serve as a platform for knowledge transfer between faculty members, enabling the exchange of pedagogical techniques, research methodologies, and academic resources. This academic cooperation will not only enhance the educational offerings of both regions but also ensure that graduates are well-prepared to tackle global challenges.

3.2 Creating Research Consortia

HEIs in Indonesia and Africa could form research consortia focused on addressing global challenges such as climate change, public health, and renewable energy. These consortia would pool resources, share expertise, and collaborate on research projects that have a global impact. For example, a consortium focused on renewable energy could explore innovative solutions for providing affordable, clean energy to

rural communities in both Indonesia and Africa.

Moreover, these consortia could foster collaboration between students and faculty from various disciplines, promoting interdisciplinary research that addresses complex problems. Research findings could be disseminated through joint conferences, publications, and policy briefs, ensuring that the knowledge generated has a real-world impact.

3.3 Promoting Industry-Academic Partnerships

Another potential area for cooperation is the promotion of industry-academic partnerships. Universities in both regions can collaborate with the private sector to develop internships, research opportunities, and job placements for students. Industry-academic partnerships are essential in ensuring that graduates are well-equipped with the practical skills needed in the workforce. For example, Indonesian companies investing in African markets could partner with African universities to offer internships and apprenticeships for students. Similarly, African firms could collaborate with Indonesian universities to provide research opportunities and on-the-job training for students. These partnerships would benefit both the pri-



vate sector and educational institutions, while also strengthening economic ties between Indonesia and Africa.

Conclusion

In conclusion, higher education institutions play a critical role in strengthening Indonesia-Africa relations. By fostering academic exchange, facilitating collaborative research, and promoting institutional capacity building, HEIs can help both regions address shared challenges and unlock new opportunities for growth and development. As Indonesia and African countries continue to build upon their historical ties, the role of universities and educational institutions will become increasingly important in shaping a prosperous future for both regions.

By enhancing mutual understanding, exploring the role of higher education, and identifying areas for cooperation, this article has highlighted the vast potential for Indonesia and Africa to deepen their relationship through education. The time is ripe for both regions to invest in higher education partnerships that will benefit not only students and academics but also the broader societies and economies of Indonesia and Africa.

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Chapter 5:

Strengthening Religious Moderation in Education (Opportunities for Religious Moderation in Education between Indonesia and Africa)

By Felisitas Yuswanto



Introduction

Creating sustainable communities are important in today's everchanging, unpredictable, and chaotic world. Sustainable communities improve the quality of life and provide safe, healthy, and productive environment for people living in that community. These communities value preservation of natural resources and environment, use of renewable energy resources such as solar and wind energy, encourage the growth of organic fruits and vegetables, minimize waste of resources, harvest rainwater, and develop waste recycling among many others (Nicoli, 2024).

The cooperative relationship in education between Indonesian and Ethiopian universities has a long history, beginning with the Asia-Africa Confer-

ence in 1955 and continuing through the Indonesia Africa Forum (IAF) in September 2024. This collaboration is a strong example of fostering ties between the two countries in education and strengthening interfaith tolerance, particularly for the younger generation.

Religious moderation education in Indonesian and Ethiopian universities holds great potential for shaping a young generation that is tolerant, inclusive, and capable of coexisting peacefully. Both countries have rich religious and cultural diversity, making religious moderation education highly relevant in a multicultural society.

A common feature in the social fabric of Indonesia and Ethiopia is their strong cultural and religious diversity. Indonesia is home to a variety of ethnic groups, languages, and cultures, as well



as diverse religions: Islam (87.2%), Protestantism (6.9%), Catholicism (2.9%), Hinduism (1.7%), Buddhism (0.7%), and Confucianism (0.05%). Similarly, Ethiopia has Ethiopian Orthodox (43.5%), Islam (33.9%), Protestantism (18.6%), Traditional beliefs (2.6%), and Catholicism (0.7%). This diversity can be a source of conflict between religious and ethnic groups but also offers the potential for fostering interfaith tolerance, particularly in education.

One approach to fostering harmony in educational collaboration between Indonesia and Ethiopia is through religious moderation. Religious moderation is a form of interfaith tolerance displayed by universities as a model for a future world that is tolerant and capable of coexistence.

The Role of Education in Realizing Religious Moderation

“Religious moderation is a perspective, attitude, and practice of religion in a common life by embodying the essence of religious teachings, which protects human dignity and builds public benefits based on the principles of fairness, impact, and obeying the constitution as a national agreement.”¹

Education can shape a person’s character and values, including the values of

tolerance between religious communities. This can be realized at the tertiary level. Catholic State Higher Education, Pontianak where I teach is an illustration of religious moderation seen from the side of the lecturers. The lecturers at Catholic State Higher Education, Pontianak have ethnic and religious diversity. This is unique because we are the institution that specifically produces Catholic religious teachers, but many of lecturers, are Muslim, Hindu, Protestant, and Catholic. This diversity shapes students to get to know different religions from individuals but have one common goal, which is to form a religious teacher who has high tolerance for other religions.

In this article, I would like to share my real-life experience as a lecturer regarding the implications of religious moderation. In the lectures that I teach, I introduce to students about religious moderation in Theology lectures. In particular, I introduce to students that the essence of religion is to humanize people. This is the social teaching of the Catholic Church in the *Populorum Progressio* Document which respects brotherhood between people regardless of their differences with one another². In addition, in the *Gravissimum Educationis* Declaration³, the Catholic Church leads its people to serve the new humanism, which is to be a social person who

¹ Lukman Hakim, *Moderasi Beragama*, Jakarta 2023

² Paus Paulus VI, *Populorum Progressio*, Translate by R. Hardawiyarna, Jakarta: Dokumentasi dan Penerangan KWI, 1994

³ Konsili Vatikan II. *Deklarasi tentang Pendidikan Kristen, Gravissimum Educationis*. Translated by R. Hardawiyarna, Jakarta: Dokumentasi dan Penerangan KWI, 1993



speaks and works for the realization of the common good.

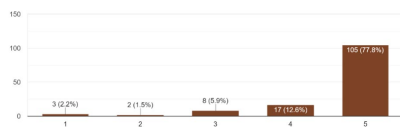
The two basic Catholic church documents above are two of the many articles submitted by the Catholic Church in realizing tolerance between religious communities. This is also conveyed in courses in the field of Theology as a real application of the teachings of the Catholic faith. The religious moderation that I include in the lecture material leads to an awareness of the meaning of living together in a pluralistic society. Students do not live in the same religion, but live together with other religions and cultures.

This realization was evident in the research I conducted in September until December 2023. The research involved 137 randomly selected individuals who were asked several questions about their

answered that it is necessary. It appears that the awareness of living together harmoniously in coexistence with other religions has been realized by the students. We can see in the table below.⁴

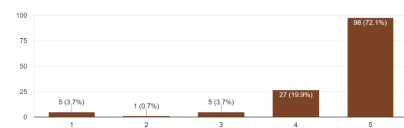
The importance of religious moderation in the life of Indonesian society according to students of Catholic State Higher Education, Pontianak shows satisfactory results. 98 respondents (71%) viewed it as very important and 27 respondents (19.9%) viewed it as very necessary to be developed. The basis of the statement that religious moderation is very necessary for a multicultural society is based on the diversity of society and the situation of diverse lecturers on campus. This condition proves that diversity among ethnicities and religions has an impact on the need for religious moderation in life at universities and in the wider community.

I believe that religious moderation is very necessary to maintain harmony in national life
135 responses



understanding of pluralism in West Kalimantan. From the research question about the need to maintain harmony in the life of the nation, 105 respondents (77.8%) answered that it is very necessary and 17 respondents (12.6%)

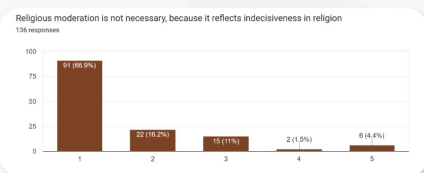
For me, religious moderation is very necessary for multicultural Indonesian society
136 responses



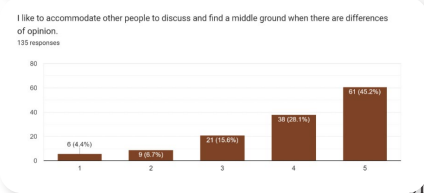
In the negative statement that I gave, namely religious moderation is not needed because religious moderation brings religious indecision, students answered with results that lead to goodness. 91 respondents (66.9%) answered

⁴ Note: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = usual, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree

strongly disagree, and 22 respondents (16.2%) agreed. This shows that religious moderation among students and in life together in society does not show any religious indecision because by doing religious moderation, they realize that students are increasingly humanizing people. Just like the teachings of the Catholic Church in the *Populorum Progressio* document.



Students of Catholic State Higher Education, Pontianak in this research also showed that they tend to be willing to be moderators to find a middle way in a difference of opinion. This shows that after they are familiar with religious moderation in general and combined with an understanding of the teachings of love in the Catholic Church, students are willing to become agents of religious moderation who have the nature of middle ground in resolving a conflict.



Education, Pontianak in this research also showed that they tend to be willing to be moderators to find a middle way in a difference of opinion. In an open-ended questionnaire given to students regarding whether they need to respect other religious adherents in their daily lives, according to students of Catholic State Higher Education, Pontianak, in general they answered that tolerance between religious communities is very necessary. This shows that the goal of religious moderation has been embedded in the lives of students. They have an awareness to live harmoniously in society and combined with an understanding of the teachings of love in the Catholic Church, students are willing to become agents of religious moderation who have a middle way nature in resolving a conflict.

Potential Cooperation between Indonesia and Ethiopia in Education

Pope Francis in the document of Frateli Tutti said: Life is an “art of encounter” with everyone, even with people on the margins of the world and with indigenous peoples, because “each of us can learn something from the other. No one is useless and no one should be excluded.” Its mean that every people can learn for life and education gives new vision to better lives.



From the research conducted, I offer a real cooperation in building a common life in diversity between Indonesia and Ethiopia. Lecture materials related to religious teachings when given special attention regarding the understanding of religious moderation produce a tolerant person and harmony of life together in society can occur. Religious education has a positive impact in building tolerance and religious moderation in social life.

One example of material that can be used in cooperation between the two countries is to develop an independent learning curriculum in religious matters that raises issues of religious tolerance and moderation. For example: in the Catholic Theology course, the role of the Church in building a pluralistic society is one of the important things as an implication of tolerance between religious communities. In addition, lecturers with different religious backgrounds can foster a high sense of tolerance. Students can see firsthand the harmony in the lives of lecturers who harmoniously maintain tolerance in work and society. Hopefully this brief sharing will provide new inspiration in cooperation between the two countries in the education of the two countries.





Chapter 6:



Strengthening Indonesia-Africa Relations: The Role of Higher Education Institutions



By Abraham Woncheso Mishika and
Mardianto Hasudungan Marpaung

Introduction

Indonesia and African nations share a deep-rooted historical relationship, dating back to Indonesia's support for decolonization efforts during the Bandung Conference in 1955. Over the years, this relationship has evolved beyond political and economic partnerships to encompass broader areas, such as culture, education, and technology. As global challenges—such as economic instability, climate change, and public health—demand more transnational collaboration, higher education institutions (HEIs) in Indonesia and Africa can play a transformative role in fostering and sustaining bilateral relations.

This article will explore how HEIs can strengthen Indonesia-Africa relations by increasing mutual understanding, investigating the role of educational institutions in international diplomacy,

and uncovering opportunities for cooperative engagement.

1. Increasing Understanding of Indonesia-Africa Relations

1.1 Historical Overview

Indonesia and Africa have shared experiences with colonialism and the struggle for independence, which laid the foundation for their partnership. Indonesia's leadership in the Bandung Conference (1955), where the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) took shape, set the stage for solidarity between newly independent nations in Asia and Africa. This conference focused on issues such as racial equality, economic independence, and non-interference, which continue to resonate today.

In the post-colonial period, Indonesia and many African countries strength-



ened diplomatic ties, including through the establishment of embassies and bilateral trade agreements. However, while these efforts have led to stronger political and economic cooperation, the educational and cultural dimensions of Indonesia-Africa relations remain underdeveloped. Enhanced collaboration in education could provide the necessary boost to deepen the bond between these regions.

1.2 The Current State of Indonesia-Africa Relations

In recent years, economic relations between Indonesia and Africa have shown promise. Trade volumes have increased, with Indonesian exports of machinery, palm oil, and textiles being exchanged for African natural resources, such as oil and minerals. In 2018, the inaugural Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF) was held to bolster economic cooperation between both regions. This event underscored the growing importance of Africa to Indonesia's foreign policy and highlighted Africa's strategic significance in terms of market access, raw materials, and investment opportunities.

However, despite these economic advances, there is a need to expand cooperation into other domains, particularly higher education. As the Fourth Industrial Revolution transforms global labor markets, education and skills

development become crucial areas for collaborative growth. In this context, HEIs can play an essential role in cultivating intercultural awareness, fostering intellectual exchanges, and enabling research and innovation.

2. Exploring Higher Education's Role in Indonesia-Africa Relations

2.1 Educational Diplomacy and International Cooperation

Higher education institutions have increasingly become key players in international diplomacy. Through academic exchange programs, research collaborations, and joint conferences, HEIs create platforms where future leaders, researchers, and policy-makers from different nations can collaborate, share ideas, and build lasting partnerships. These institutions often serve as the incubators for future diplomatic and economic ties.

For Indonesia and Africa, HEIs can facilitate educational diplomacy by promoting cross-cultural understanding. Universities in both regions can exchange students and faculty, allowing for direct exposure to different educational systems, teaching methods, and cultural norms. Such exchanges help build a cadre of graduates who are knowledgeable about both regions,



better equipping them to navigate cross-continental business, governance, and social dynamics. Furthermore, academic partnerships contribute to mutual capacity-building by sharing best practices in administration, pedagogy, and research.

2.2 Research and Knowledge Exchange

Collaborative research is another crucial aspect of higher education's contribution to Indonesia-Africa relations. HEIs can spearhead research in areas where both regions face common challenges, such as sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, climate change, and public health. For instance, Indonesia and several African countries are vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels, droughts, and deforestation. Joint research on climate adaptation strategies, disaster risk management, and sustainable urban development could yield valuable insights for both regions.

In the field of public health, HEIs in Indonesia and Africa can collaborate on addressing shared concerns, such as communicable diseases, maternal health, and the impact of pandemics. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the need for global cooperation in health research and technology, an area where

Indonesian and African universities can pool resources to enhance health outcomes.

2.3 Capacity Building and Institutional Development

Capacity-building initiatives are another way HEIs can strengthen ties between Indonesia and Africa. Many African countries continue to face challenges related to access to quality education, infrastructure development, and human capital formation. Indonesian HEIs, some of which have strong programs in vocational education, teacher training, and digital literacy, can assist African universities in building their institutional capacities.

For example, Indonesian universities that excel in engineering, technology, and agriculture could share knowledge with African counterparts through faculty exchange programs, curriculum development partnerships, and online learning platforms. Such initiatives would improve the capacity of African universities while promoting the internationalization of Indonesian education.

3. Potential Cooperation Between Higher Education Institutions

3.1 Student and Faculty Exchange Programs



One of the most direct forms of educational cooperation is through student and faculty exchange programs. Indonesian and African universities can establish exchange programs that allow students to spend a semester or a year abroad, gaining first-hand knowledge of their host country's culture, society, and educational system. Faculty exchange programs, where professors teach and conduct research in a partner university, would similarly strengthen academic ties and encourage knowledge transfer.

For instance, Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) in Indonesia could establish a faculty exchange program with institutions like Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, focusing on fields such as agricultural science, environmental studies, or public health. Such collaborations would not only enhance academic offerings but also lay the groundwork for joint research initiatives.

3.2 Collaborative Degree Programs

HEIs from Indonesia and Africa can also explore collaborative degree programs, which enable students to earn a joint degree from both institutions. These programs allow students to benefit from diverse academic experiences and access to a wider range of resources. Collaborative degrees could focus on areas of shared interest, such as inter-

national development, agricultural technology, environmental management, and digital innovation.

Collaborative degrees would also support labor mobility between Indonesia and Africa, as graduates would be better equipped to work in either region. This could prove valuable for industries such as technology, renewable energy, and public administration, which require skilled professionals capable of operating across borders.

3.3 Joint Research and Innovation Hubs

Another significant opportunity for cooperation lies in the establishment of joint research and innovation hubs. HEIs in both regions could pool their intellectual and financial resources to create centers dedicated to addressing critical global challenges. These hubs could focus on sectors where both Indonesia and Africa have a strategic interest, such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and health innovation.

For example, a joint innovation hub focused on agricultural technology could draw on Indonesia's expertise in tropical agriculture and Africa's vast agricultural potential. Research outputs from such hubs would benefit both regions by promoting food security, reducing envi-



ronmental degradation, and fostering economic development.

3.4 Digital Platforms and Online Education

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of digital education and the need for HEIs to adopt new learning modalities. HEIs in Indonesia and Africa can collaborate on developing digital platforms that facilitate online learning, virtual research collaboration, and distance education. These platforms would expand access to education, especially for students in remote or underserved areas.

Indonesian universities with experience in delivering online education, such as Universitas Terbuka, could assist African universities in setting up similar platforms. These partnerships would enable more students to access higher education, regardless of geographical barriers.

Conclusion

Strengthening Indonesia-Africa relations through higher education institutions offers a path toward more robust and sustainable cooperation between the two regions. By increasing mutual understanding, enhancing educational diplomacy, and exploring opportunities for collaborative research, innovation,

and capacity-building, HEIs can play a pivotal role in shaping the future of this strategic partnership. As global challenges become more complex, transnational educational collaborations will be critical to fostering shared solutions and sustainable development.

The potential for cooperation between Indonesian and African HEIs is vast, and with the right investments in student exchanges, joint degree programs, research initiatives, and digital education, this relationship can flourish in the years to come. By embracing these opportunities, both regions can build a stronger, more interconnected future.

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Chapter 7:



The Asian-African Conference Amidst Multipolar World



By Gustaf Hariyanto



Abstract

This article aims to review several writings of the 1955 Bandung Asian-African Conference (AAC) and link them to the multipolar world. The influencing AAC might be typical, such as unipolarity, bipolarity, or tri-polarity. It might be possible at the time the AAC emerges. But currently, in contrast to a unipolar world where one nation dictates the rhythm or a bipolar world where two dominant nations lead the dance, a multipolar world is akin to a grand orchestra where each nation plays its part in harmony or dissonance, contributing to the symphony of global dynamics. This multipolar world is a stage of diverse actors, where the script of international events is written collaboratively, and the balance of power constantly shifts and evolves. It's a dynamic, complex, and sometimes chaotic reality of our increasingly interconnected world.

Keywords

Spirit of Bandung, Asian-African Conference, postcolonial, postwar, decoloniality

This article examines those ideas supporting Bandung's Spirit, its aftermath, and the multipolar world. It also explores work that fundamentally critiques racism or colonialism related to contemporary multilateral politics. This writing uses existing literature to demonstrate these interrelations in three dimensions: (1) postcolonial-emerging, (2) the legacy spirit of the Bandung Asian-African Conference (AAC), and (3) the multipolar world. The article begins by exploring how postcolonial ideas have been conceptualized and influenced over the 20th century by the newer reconstructions of the historical conceptualizations of racism in international politics. It first examines how the word "postcolonial" has become a designated resistance to the colonial idea since the term was used and how this enables the



implausible deniability of racism in contemporary post-racial international politics, where racism is almost universally condemned and relegated to history. At the same time, it simultaneously shapes the present in fundamental ways by multipolarity.

Postcolonial

One of the most critical points of AAC is that it has produced a concept of “postcolonial” (Acharya, 2016; Eslava et al., 2017; *Nomination Form International Memory of the World Register Asian-African Conference Archives*, 2003; Lee, 2020; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2019; Saffari, 2022; Sharma, 2019; Subotic & Vucetic, 2017; Umar, 2019; Wulandari, 2021). Acharya (2016), for instance, talks about several historical events and their concepts, such as post-war, the significance and legacies of the Bandung conference, the Western attempts to ‘sabotage’ the Conference, the delegitimization of collective defense pacts, the development of the Non-Aligned Movement, the emergence of a Southeast Asian regionalism; the strengthening of emergent global norms affirming decolonization, human rights, universalism, and the United Nations; and support for the ‘comity,’ over the ‘clash,’ of civilizations. On the other hand, Acharya (2016) also canvasses the negative legacies of the Conference, including the polariza-

tion of Asia and the encouragement of authoritarian tendencies and regional interventionist impulses. He concludes by drawing on the Conference’s implications for studying global international relations.

Eslava et al. (2017) explored postcolonial to the extent to which almost all Asian countries attained independence in 1955 when European states still colonized most of Africa. Delegates from the Gold Coast (Ghana) attended Bandung while their government was at a critical stage in their independence negotiations with the British (finally achieving complete independence in 1957). Countries on the cusp of independence, such as Ghana and Kenya, were aware that “self-determination” would be affected by the international landscape as much as by factors internal to their nations. While Asian states may have instigated Bandung, African states took it. They continued to push for and assert their independence with their Declaration of the First Conference of Independent African States (held in Accra on April 15–22, 1958). Later, Latin America, in the form of some states and an expanding network of liberation movements, all of them postcolonial creations, joined their Asian and African counterparts to push for an even more robust anti-imperial agenda in the 1966 Tricontinental Conference.



Lee (2020) views AAC as postcolonial – a decolonizing endeavor. He examines the visual archive of the 1955 Asian-African Conference held in Bandung. Better known as the Bandung Conference or simply Bandung, this diplomatic meeting hosted 29 delegations from African and Asian countries to address questions of sovereignty and development facing the emergent postcolonial world. Several well-known leaders attended, including Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Zhou Enlai of China, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and Sukarno of the host country, Indonesia. Given its importance, the meeting was documented extensively by photojournalists. He argues that the resulting visual archive has contributed to Bandung's enduring symbolism and mythology as a moment of Third World solidarity. More specifically, the street photography style of many images – with leaders walking down the streets of Bandung surrounded by adoring crowds – depicted an informality and intimacy that conveyed an accessible, anti-hierarchical view of the leaders who were present.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2019) evokes the 'Bandung spirit of decolonization' pre-dates and post-dates the physicality of the Bandung Conference of 1955. The concept of the 'spirit' encapsulates a melange of resistance and struggles against colonial encounters, colonial-

ism, and coloniality— going as far back as the time of the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804). He also quotes Prashad's provoking statement on Bandung Spirit: From Belgrade to Tokyo, from Cairo to Dar es Salaam, politicians and intellectuals began to speak of the 'Bandung Spirit.' The meaning was simple: the colonized world had now emerged to claim its place in world affairs, not just as an adjunct of the First or Second World, but as a player in world affairs. Furthermore, the Bandung spirit was a refusal of economic subordination and cultural suppression—two of the significant policies of imperialism. The Bandung Conference of 1955 occupies a place of pride at the center of decolonization and decoloniality.

Saffari (2022) noticed that for years after the original publication of Gharbzadehi (1962) by dissident Iranian writer Jalal Al-e Ahmad, the controversial book remains an essential marker in the formation of the mid-and late-twentieth-century perceptions of Iranian intellectuals about the relationship between their country's past, present, and future. Building on the recent scholarship that considers Gharbzadehi as an alternative vision of the future rather than a nostalgic call for a return to the past, this article situates the book's piercing critique of the Pahlavi state's modernization and development agenda in a decolonial



register. It is done through a reading of Gharbzadegi against the background, on the one hand, of the 1955 Bandung Conference at which representatives from various Asian and African nations gathered to discuss the futures of their countries after colonialism, and on the other hand, of the local experiences of semi-coloniality and dependent development. This reading helps to foreground an alternative conception of modernity in Gharbzadegi and a decolonial vision in the development book by delinking from Eurocentric designs.

In the review *Meanings of Bandung: Postcolonial Orders and Decolonial Visions* in 1955, Sharma (2019) restated that a large group of Asian and African states—many newly independent—gathered in Bandung, Indonesia, to affirm their desire for independence and their refusal to align with the world powers. It was an essential landmark in the growth of cooperation among Asian-African states, which fought against the vestiges of European imperialism, celebrated foreign policy activism through the “spirit of Bandung,” and led to the emergence of the “non-aligned movement.” Amongst these states’ significant concerns were mitigating the rising hostility between the ideologically polarized world, addressing concerns about the destructive capabilities of nuclear weapons, and voicing the opinions of the Global South. Despite its international agenda,

the Bandung Conference has seldom been discussed within the discipline of international relations (IR) beyond the existing problematics, such as strategic self-interest and statesmanship.

Subotic & Vucetic (2017) writes that the 1955 Afro-Asian Summit at Bandung is regarded as a pivot in the formation of Third World-ism and of colored solidarity against Western colonialism and global white supremacy. But while this anti-imperialist spirit was undoubtedly present at Bandung, so were many other spirits, including those of Cold War realpolitik. They consider the different meanings of Bandung by examining the critical role Yugoslavia played in the rise of the Non-Aligned Movement in the years that followed the summit. Drawing on primary historical documents, it shows that Yugoslav leaders consistently failed to appreciate the racism of the international society and their own racialized privilege in it. Yugoslav leaders did enjoy, however, that performing solidarity with the decolonized and decolonizing nations would bring significant status rewards to Yugoslavia in the context of the East-West showdown. The leaders can thickly envelop that self-consciously anti-imperialist and anticolonial positions in white ignorance, suggesting the need for more critical International Relations analyses of race, racism, and racialized international hierarchies.



Umar (2019) said that the significance of the 1955 Asian And African Conference (referred to in the article as “the Bandung Conference”) in International Relations has been discussed by many International Relations scholars. The Conference was held in Bandung, Indonesia, from 18–24 April 2019 and was attended by 29 countries from Asia and Africa. Due to prior meetings in Colombo and Bogor, it was organized by five countries—Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Ceylon/Sri Lanka, and Burma. Recent literature in international relations and global history appreciates the importance of the Bandung Conference in shaping the current international order. However, despite some reference to Bandung as the precursor of Asian internationalism or its contribution to regionalism, scholars appear to be skeptical about the legacy of Bandung in the contemporary international order. For example, the study of Bandung has been trapped in an impulse of post-coloniality, which constrained the fulfilment of its emancipatory premises.

Wulandari (2021) restated that holding the Asian-African Conference (AAC) in 1955 in Bandung had a considerable impact. For Indonesia, the AAC gave a legacy of an honorable position in post-colonial diplomacy. However, the effect of this Conference was felt not only by Indonesia in general. But this Conference also changed the image of Band-

ung, the city where the meeting is held. Therefore, her studies discuss the condition of Bandung City and its people after the AAC. This study uses historical methods with archives, magazines, and newspapers as primary resources. The results of this study indicate that after the city, this city also became a connected space for global political actors. Ironically, these achievements and modernity were followed by social changes that showed the different side of Bandung. Many social and economic problems were widespread in this city, ranging from poverty to moral degradation.

In *Nomination Form International Memory of the World Register Asian-African Conference Archives* (2003) seeing that The Asian-African Conference (AAC) Archives is a set of documents, pictures, and films related to the Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia, on 18 – 24 April 1955. The Conference was the first international assembly of Asian-African nations to promote world peace, cooperation, and freedom from colonialism and imperialism. Initiated by Indonesia, Burma (now Myanmar), Pakistan, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), and India, the Conference was attended by 29 Asian and African countries. The Conference is a historical landmark, setting the path to establishing the Non-Aligned Movement, which balanced two conflicting superpowers during the Cold War. The Conference’s Final Communique, pop-



ularly known as “The Ten Principles of Bandung,” recognized the urgency of promoting economic, cultural, and political cooperation among and beyond Asian-African nations and achieving freedom.

The Other Perspective

The legacy of Bandung AAC dominates the previous exploration of its significance. It is the starting point of post-war, the Western attempts to ‘sabotage’ the Conference, the delegitimization of collective defence pacts, the development of the Non-Aligned Movement, the emergence of a Southeast Asian regionalism, the strengthening of emergent global norms affirming decolonization, human rights, universalism, the United Nations; supporting for the ‘comity,’ over the ‘clash,’ of civilizations, etc. by all means, the Bandung AAC inspiring the emerging of postcolonial and decolonizing era. In other words, the Spirit of Bandung epitomized the revival of decolonized designated postcolonial. The following writing will explore the postcolonial from different angles: The binary categories of Western and Eastern, or Western and non-Western, represent one way of dividing the world according to an imperial imaginary, multiple studies of anticolonial agencies, and the problem of non-Western authenticity.

Murray (2019) uses the following terms, post-imperial and post-Western, and makes its distinction. ‘Post-imperial’ means addressing how colonial empires divided the world into separate realms of human capability and thought. Moreover, the binary categories of Western and Eastern, or Western and non-Western, represent one way of dividing the world according to an imperial imaginary. He critiques the imperial division of the world by drawing on the intellectual trajectories of two thinkers who struggled against empire in the 20th century, WEB Du Bois and Frantz Fanon. Du Bois and Fanon were both aware of how ethnic and cultural foundations for politics could reproduce imperial order and, therefore, offer potential alternatives to Western/non-Western ontologies. Murray (2019) also quotes Vitalis’ argument that political and economic entanglements – not race or non-Western identity – are more robust in explaining the ‘solidarity’ of anti-imperial elites who attended the Bandung Conference in 1955.

Sumba (2023) noted that multiple studies of anticolonial agencies have been published in the last five years. *Meanings of Bandung: Postcolonial Orders and Decolonial Visions* (Pham & Shilliam 2016) represents an important step towards analyzing the post-war order from the vantage point of the non-



aligned movement or the Third World, the history of which was forgotten in the 1980s and 1990s after Global South replaced the term and a seemingly derogatory rhetorical usage of the phrase third-world country emerged. Meanings of Bandung gathered reflections on the Bandung Conference, which brought together African and Asian leaders in Indonesia in 1955. The volume treats the Conference as the seminal event of the 20th century that announced, envisaged, and mobilized for a decolonized global order. The book conceptualizes Bandung as a cultural and spiritual moment in which formerly colonized peoples came together as global subjects with multiple entanglements and aspirations to deliberate on a just settlement of the colonial global order. From this perspective, Bandung represents an inquiry into the meaning of the decolonial project and the pronunciation of a different globalism that contrasts with liberal and neoliberal globalism.

Vieira (2019) argued that the problem of non-Western authenticity precludes some decolonizing strategies in studying global politics. He questions the idea of an identifiable non-Western geo-cultural context that could significantly reconstitute what already is a post-Western subject. He claims that, in most cases, the asymmetrical encounter between the colonized and the colo-

nizer has fundamentally and extensively redefined human subjectivity in a way that negates decolonial emancipatory projects. This results from the all-encompassing penetration of Western coloniality (in its political, economic, and cultural representations) into the spaces of pre-colonial or uncolonized forms of subjectivity. He draws from Frantz Fanon's and Jacques Lacan's theories to argue that attempts to recover non-Western forms of self-identification are helpful albeit illusory psychological mechanisms to stabilize hybrid postcolonial subjectivities rather than an actual restoration of non-colonial and purified forms of existing in the world. He suggests that a practical anticolonial politics of resistance will necessarily entail understanding post-Western subjectivity in terms of psychological 'hybridity' rather than decolonial 'authenticity.'

A Multipolar World

A multipolar world is different from other forms of the international system, such as unipolarity, bipolarity, or tripolarity. A multipolar world is a world where there are multiple centers of power and influence rather than one dominant superpower or a bipolar rivalry. In a multipolar world, different regions and countries have their interests, values, and agendas, and they



cooperate or compete with each other on various issues. A multipolar world is often seen as more diverse, dynamic, and complex than a unipolar or bipolar world. Some examples of current or emerging world power poles are the United States, China, India, Russia, the European Union, Japan, Brazil, and South Africa. A multipolar world's challenges and opportunities include managing global governance, trade, security, climate change, human rights, and development. A multipolar world is a worldwide system in which power is distributed among multiple states or blocs of states rather than concentrated in one (unipolar) or two (bipolar) dominant powers. This concept is primarily used in international relations and geopolitics (CSR, 2023).

Martill & Ten Brinke (2020) said that the world is diffusing from west to east, and non-democratic powers are among those that are rising the fastest. These changes have been in the offing for decades, but their effects are increasingly manifest. The world is becoming more multipolar as power diffuses gradually, and a host of formerly regional powers have begun to set out their designs for the international system. Several countries, including China and India, have developed extraordinarily rapidly on the back of the American-led liberal international order. China has

done so with the aid of a strong state that has—contrary to Washington Consensus thinking—allowed the regime to bolster its productivity and thus its economic (if not political) development. Other countries, such as South Africa, Brazil, and Turkey, have become regional power centers in their own right and have clamored for more significant global influence, often representing their regions in international forums. Russia, for its part, has not only moved a long way from its previous embrace of democratic norms in recent years, but it has also increasingly sought to articulate a more forceful philosophy of international affairs.

Whether multipolar dynamics make for a more or less stable international system remains an open question. Multipolar systems may seem unstable in some respects: Alliance patterns are more fluid and prone to swifter change, coordination is more complicated, institutions are correspondingly more challenging to maintain, and the presence of diverse worldviews allows for a near-endless assortment of fault lines of interests undermines the ability of states to achieve political or ideological hegemony, thereby increasing the need for genuinely multilateral institutional forums and diplomatic norms and promoting balancing dynamics, which may increase the leverage of more petite



actors in the system. The increase in potential conflicts also makes individual conflicts less salient since divergence on fundamental issues becomes a fact of life rather than an existential challenge. As with other international orders, it will take a long time before the dynamics of multipolarity become evident. However, whether stable or unstable, these dynamics differ from those before (Marshall & Ten Brinke, 2020).

Naim & Hasanah (2024) examines the rise of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and its impact on the global political economy through Hardt and Negri's concept of "Empire." BRICS has challenged Western dominance by leveraging economic globalization to build influential networks, reflecting trends of deterritorialization and decentralization. Key strategies include China's push for internet sovereignty and Russia's market realignment under Western sanctions. The recent expansion of BRICS to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE underscores its growing influence in reshaping global governance. However, the study also identifies elements of "Empire" within BRICS, such as using economic leverage and power to exert control. These findings reveal a complex interplay between power and resistance, where BRICS, while challenging Western hegemony, also replicates some control

mechanisms. This research contributes to the theoretical discourse on globalization and provides practical insights into the evolving multipolar world order.

The world economy is amidst a transformative change. One of the most visible outcomes of this transformation is the rise of several dynamic emerging-market countries to the helm of the global economy. It is likely that, by 2025, emerging economies—such as Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, and the Russian Federation—will be significant contributors to global growth alongside the advanced economies. As they pursue growth opportunities abroad and are encouraged by improved policies at home, corporations based in emerging markets are playing an increasingly prominent role in global business and cross-border investment. The international monetary system will likely cease being dominated by a single currency. Emerging-market countries, where three-fourths of official foreign exchange reserves are currently held and whose sovereign wealth funds and other pools of capital are increasingly important sources of international investment, will become critical players in financial markets. In short, a new world order with a more different distribution of economic power is emerging, thus shifting toward multipolarity (Horizons, 2011).



Conclusion

Talk about a “Multipolar World”; think of it as an international playground where power does not exist in a monopoly but is shared among many. It is a global stage where numerous nations have significant influence, like several suns, each casting their light and shadow across different regions. In this planetary tapestry, multiple significant players shape the world order, each with their distinct culture, economic might, and military prowess. Their voices resonate in the world’s geopolitical choir, and they mold the sculpture of international affairs together. Each power center is like a distinct star in a constellation, shining brightly and asserting its presence.

In contrast to a unipolar world where one nation dictates the rhythm or a bipolar world where two dominant nations lead the dance, a multipolar world is akin to a grand orchestra where each nation plays its part in harmony or dissonance, contributing to the symphony of global dynamics. This multipolar world is a stage of diverse actors, where the script of international events is written collaboratively, and the balance of power constantly shifts and evolves. It’s a dynamic, complex, and sometimes chaotic reality of our increasingly interconnected world. Referring

to the “Strengthening Indonesia-Africa Relations: The Role of Higher Education Institutions,” one might consider the current world constellation of the multipolar world.

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Chapter 8:

Indonesia-Africa: Tighten the Relation, Elevate the Education

By Nevy Rusmarina Dewi

Asia-Africa Conference was held in Bandung in 1955, it becomes historical moment which signs diplomatic power and solidarity among countries in Asia-Africa, especially Indonesia. Indonesia and African countries support each other in the process of freedom and development. This is a solid foundation as the basic of developing cooperation in some life aspects. So far, those countries have got sustainable cooperation. Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF-2024) which was held in Bali on September 1-3, 2024 has generated cooperation agreement among Indonesia and African countries in the field of strategic industries in the amount of 173.5 US Dollars (Kompas.com, 2024). Those strategic industries include health, agriculture, energy, technology, and banking. Through this cooperation, Indonesia shows its commitment to African countries. Therefore, in the future we hope that the cooperation will enhance the role of strategic industry globally and

also tighten Indonesia's role internationally (kemlu.go.id, 2024).

Meanwhile, African countries also see Indonesia as a strategic partner which has experience and valuable knowledge to share with, specifically in the field of education. Africa has got some reputable universities in certain fields, for instance; Cape Town University in South Africa is well-known for its multicultural. Ghana University in Ghana has got its excellence in social, technology, and science. Nairobi University in Kenya is excellent in research. And also some other universities like Al-Azhar University and Cairo University in Egypt, Ibadan University in Nigeria and Makerere University in Uganda.

Some potential and excellence of universities from the countries (Indonesia-Africa) have got big potential as cooperation partners in the field of education. Technology transfer, joint



research or sharing experience as the universities' role to develop countries. Specifically in the field of education in Indonesia, cooperation with foreign university partner is important in order to enhance education quality as reflected in the university accreditation assessment (Junaidah & Ayu, 2019) in education, research, and community service. Some potential cooperation among universities of Indonesia-African countries can be as follows:

1. Education Program

In Education Program, the cooperation will be conducted in developing some programs focusing on cultural exchange and training in the fields of environment conservation, arts, and technology. This program can be in form of guest lecture, workshop, and edutourism (education and tourism). This program certainly needs supporting infrastructure and facilities such as study centers or international study center to guarantee that this program meets international standard. The development of sister university and double degree are really needed in the prospective cooperation.

Curriculum is needed in the prospective education cooperation by developing curriculum that covers intercultural and globalization, and some relevant

topics in context of Africa and South-east Asia. By developing Shared-Curriculum inter-universities, for both Indonesia and partners, this will be relevant to global needs and can be more beneficial for the students. Besides that, this shared-curriculum will also have positive impact for access enhancement and ease the access of high-quality learning material for the students in partner-countries.

Student Exchange and Lecturer Exchange are parts of sustainable development program and poverty alleviation. The exchange programs can be conducted by internship, comparative study, and academic exchange with some universities in Africa. For instance; Lecturers of UGM (Gajah Mada University) can share their knowledge through seminar, workshop about development and economy, facilitating lecturer visit to teach or give guest lecture. Student Exchange Program can be in form of short course program, term exchange, or overseas internship. Some advantages that can be taken from this exchange program are the students and lecturers can get international experience and broaden their cultural and academic insight. Other benefit for Education Quality Enhancement is that the lecturers can spread innovative teaching method and newest research result to the colleagues globally. International



student exchange can encourage the students to improve their soft skill, especially communication skill, teamwork, and leadership (Yohana & Wijiharta, 2021).

Ghana University is well-known for its programs in social, humanities, and health science. These programs are often internationally acknowledged. Meanwhile, Al-Azhar is rich of academic tradition, mainly in Islamic studies and humanities. This university is famous in Islamic world, it is good at fiqh (Islamic laws), theology, and Quran studies. In social studies, African universities have got important role in developing studies related to social development, human-rights, and public policy. Some universities like Nairobi University in Kenya and Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia offer some programs focusing on social studies and relevant development to African context.

Cooperation can open the opportunity for knowledge exchange in the field of social and public policy. Universities in Africa are potential to grow in the field of knowledge, technology, and social. Some African universities has shown their development significantly in research and innovation. Makerere University in Uganda has got cooperation with industry sector, in which it supports relevant curriculum develop-

ment to job market needs. Similarly in Economic Development, this university actively conducts some research to support economic and social development in Uganda and its surrounding area. These programs are similar as some programs conducted by UGM Yogyakarta in terms of sustainable development and economic alleviation.

2. Community Service Program

Community service is one of Higher Education Three Pillars (Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi) that aims for sustainable development, specifically for the development of education quality and reducing inequality in society (Puwaamijaya. Et.al, 2004). A lot of potential in community service cooperation can be conducted by universities in Indonesia and African countries internationally. Since most of Indonesian population is Muslim, so some State Islamic Universities have got main program called Halal Institution Center. LP3H (Companion Institution for Halal Product Process) was pioneered by (State Islamic University) UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. his institution is formed and certified by BPJPH (Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency) by Religion Ministry of Indonesia Republic. Its duty is to recruit, train, and generate companion for PPH (Halal Product Process). The companion for Halal Product



Process has the duty to accompany or assist small and medium enterprises so that their products are guaranteed halal by submitting halal product certificate using self-declared scheme.

Through this program, universities in African countries whose most population is Islam can take the benefit from this program in the scheme of community service cooperation. Undergoing companion program by PPH (Halal Product Process), it is aimed to transfer knowledge to encourage businessmen or enterprises to register their products for getting halal certificate. Other than that, with this program hopefully African countries with Islam population can absorb some knowledge and experience during companion process. Therefore, the role of the university is shown by educating and assisting some enterprises or businessmen related to halal products so that they get halal certificate.

3. Collaboration in Research and Development

Some universities in Indonesia have got a lot of potential in relevant research to global challenge. There are several benefits in international research cooperation, not only transferring knowledge and technology transfer, but also encouraging research output like scientific publication or copyright

(patent) (Nugroho, 2021). Some universities in Indonesia are good at research, for instance ITB (Bandung Technology Institute) which focuses on technology development and IPB (Bogor Agriculture Institute) which focuses on agriculture. Indonesia also has got religion-based universities such as UIN, IAIN, STAIN, and so on. These universities can take part in collaboration with African universities in conducting research in the field of social, culture, and religion. Considering that both Indonesia and Africa are countries with plurality.

Besides social-culture, there are several other potentials of beneficial research cooperation in the field of technology such as health, information technology, agriculture, and environment. Some possible research can be in form of study about endemic disease in Africa, eco-friendly technology development, building joint laboratory or research center for a joint project that can be used for both parties, collaborating with private and public sectors to design and conduct research program, facility support in form of joint research center and advanced and modern equipment to guarantee research sustainability and positive impacts for human's life.

In the field of technology, some African universities are active in conducting some research and developing relevant technology to local needs. For



instance; Cape Town University (UCT) in South Africa and Makerere University in Uganda has conducted some research projects focusing on information and communication technology and also technology-based solution for health and agriculture matters. UCT has got prominent research center such as Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine. This initiative shows its commitment to life quality development through technology innovation. Other university is Ghana University. It also has got medical school that is internationally acknowledged and given big contribution to medical research and public health in Africa.

4. Edutourism Development related to Cultural Studies and Interfaith

Edutourism can be one of prospective cooperation that needs developing. Edutourism can provide integrated knowledge and experience (Winarto, 2016). Edutourism needs developing significantly since universities in Indonesia has got a lot of potentials, some of the potentials are culture and interfaith. Gajah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta has got interfaith program called Center for Religious and Cross-Cultural Studies (CRCS). CRCS provides religious experience and strives for critical analysis through religious experience related to identity, politics, organization, and

thought using method and theory. Some cross-disciplinary will also be taken like sociology, philosophy, politics, theology, gender, culture, and other field.

CRCS has its specificity, it has interaction and joint study for students, lecturers and staff with various identity and background in learning about themselves. This will be a prospective cooperation as Indonesia and African countries have various culture and religion. Culture and faith studies can develop edutourism program involving seminar and workshop about interfaith and culture dialog and also direct experience in the field by visiting local cultural and religious community. This program can attract participants from Africa who are interested in studying about plurality and social harmony. Not only cultural studies and interfaith, other studies will also be interesting in edutourism-packed.

Cape Town University in South Africa is one of universities in Africa with its distinctive characteristic in multicultural. It is well-known for its plurality and inclusivity as the reflection of diversity. African universities can also provide the same edutourism experience for lecturers and students related to diversity in African countries through UCT. Some activities that can be conducted by two parties are by joint promotion in an international forum, tourism fair,



and education fair. These activities are aimed to attract African students and academics. An effective marketing can promote the uniqueness of Indonesia edutourism to the African audiences.

There are many ways to have prospective cooperation in the field of education, specifically related to Higher Education Three Pillars (Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi), however Indonesia and African countries have not explored more. Meanwhile, in the world of education, international cooperation among universities is necessary, it will provide big contribution to the quality of the universities. Therefore, through the same spirit that has been connected since independence period, the two parties will be more active to cooperate in the future so that they can share knowledge and success in developing education that will be beneficial for the community survival.

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Chapter 9:

The Asian-African Conference Amidst Multipolar World

By Wolter Weol and Charstar Arstilo Rumbay



Introduction

The Tigray region in Ethiopia, Africa, has experienced a significant conflict crisis in recent years. Despite its potential to become a prosperous nation, the ongoing strife and war in Tigray threaten the very survival of its people. The leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the local government in Tigray are the two opposing factions fueling the war to this day. Bimo Pragilaksono asserts that the conflict is driven by similar yet conflicting objectives and interests. Justice is the key concept at stake, with the federal government emphasizing justice for all Ethiopians, while the local government in Tigray demands justice for its ethnic group.⁵ One side is pursuing spatial justice, while the other prioritizes universal interests. Although Abiy Ahmed was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019, he has since had to struggle to deliver justice and unity to his nation. This is why the core issue in Tigray is justice, which makes achieving unity a difficult task.

Similar upheavals have also posed challenges to the Indonesian nation in the past, and even today, although the tension is not as intense as it once was. The establishment of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945 faced extraordinary challenges. In comparison, over the last 30 years, Ethiopia has experienced significant conflict between the central government under Abiy Ahmed and the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which began on November 4, 2020. This conflict is rooted in Ethiopia's socio-political history, particularly since the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) became the dominant political force in the 1990s. The EPRDF succeeded in overthrowing the government of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, known for his repressive military rule, in 1991. Afterward, the EPRDF took control of the government, with Meles Zenawi from the TPLF serving as the first prime minister. During almost 30 years of EPRDF rule, Zenawi introduced a system of ethnic federal autonomy that granted

⁵ Bimo Pragilaksono, "Konflik Berkepanjangan Ethiopia: Sebuah Penghampiran Mediasi Ethiopia-Tigray," *Jurnal Sentris* 3, no. 1 (2022): 16-26.



privileges to dominant ethnic groups in certain regions, resulting in injustice for minority ethnic groups. The Tigrayans, due to the close ties between the EPRDF and the TPLF, received greater privileges in politics and the military, leading to dissatisfaction among other parties and ethnic groups. After Zenawi's death in 2012, the power vacuum triggered internal fractures within the EPRDF and mass protests for reform. In 2018, Abiy Ahmed, an ethnic Oromo, was appointed prime minister, succeeding Zenawi.⁶ Thus, Ethiopia is indeed a federal state but faces significant challenges related to justice and unity. Indonesia's long journey also involved extensive discussions on the formation of a federal state, democracy, monarchy, and other systems.

Observing the challenges of social justice and unity in the future, the founders of Indonesia, particularly the first president, Ir. Soekarno, conceived the state ideology known as Pancasila to weave together justice and unity in Indonesia. For example, the conflict in Minahasa, known as the Universal Struggle (Permesta), highlighted issues of justice for the local Minahasan people and ethnic groups, as the Indonesian government at that time focused its attention primarily on development in the island of Java.⁷ Additionally, religious, political, and ethnic conflicts rooted in

issues of justice—such as the freedom to worship, participate in politics, and have equal opportunities in holding strategic government positions, which threaten national unity—can be mitigated through Pancasila, particularly the third principle of Indonesian unity and the fifth principle of social justice for all Indonesians.

From an anthropological perspective, countries in Africa and Asia, including Ethiopia and Indonesia, are considered high-context cultures. Edward Hall, in his book *The Silent Language*, describes high-context cultures as those that emphasize polite communication, indirectness, and a deep respect for the feelings of the interlocutor.⁸ In other words, the context of these societies is highly abstract. This is why an abstract ideology is necessary, one that can be interpreted and implemented in practical terms. This contrasts with low-context cultures, which require concrete rules to guide their communities. From this standpoint, an abstract ideology can serve as a framework for resolving conflicts and similar potential disputes in both Indonesia and Ethiopia. Based on this understanding, the main argument presented is that the concept of Pancasila, particularly the principles of Indonesian unity and social justice for all Indonesians, represents an ideological formula that could serve as

⁶ Jon Temin and Yoseph Badwaza. "Aspirations and Realities in Africa: Ethiopia's Quiet Revolution." *Journal of Democracy* 30, no. 3 (2019): 139–153.

⁷ Dhoni Frizky Aryasahab. "Sejarah PRRI/Permesta: Awal mula munculnya otonomi daerah secara menyeluruh di Indonesia." *Historis: Jurnal Kajian, Penelitian dan Pengembangan Pendidikan Sejarah* 8, no. 1 (2023): 37–44 and Maulida, Faishal Hilmy. "HITAM PUTIH PRRI-PERMESTA: KONVERGENSI DUA KEPENTINGAN BERBEDA." *Paradigma* 8, no. 2 (2018): 174–185.

an alternative model for nation-building in Ethiopia. This concept could be disseminated through public and religious educational institutions.

Thus, this paper begins by presenting an analysis of the third and fifth principles of Pancasila and their implementation in relation to horizontal conflicts. It then discusses the role of public and Christian education in disseminating the Pancasila ideology to the public. The final section offers a consideration of Pancasila-inspired ideology as a potential model for nation-building in Ethiopia, which could be conveyed through educational institutions.

Pancasila: The Third and Fifth Principles

The third principle of Pancasila is “The Unity of Indonesia,” which consists of the words “unity” and “Indonesia.” The word “unity” is derived from the word “one” with the prefixes “per-” and the suffix “-an.” According to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), unity means a combination or bond of several parts that have become one. Meanwhile, “Indonesia” refers to the territory, nation, and state. Fitri Sari and Fatma Najicha mention that the concept of the Unity of Indonesia implies that all elements are united within the single entity of Indonesia.⁹ This third principle is rooted in the ideas put forth

by Ir. Soekarno, known as Indonesian Nationalism. In the context of cultural diversity, the Unity of Indonesia means that society can live in harmony, peace, mutual respect, and acceptance of the existing cultural diversity. The symbol of the banyan tree on the emblem of Garuda Pancasila, which represents the Unity of Indonesia, depicts a large and lush tree under which people can find shelter. This reflects the unity and cohesiveness of the Indonesian nation as an intact and undivided entity.

The fifth principle, social justice for all Indonesians, according to Piter Bua, David Samiyono, and Tony Tampake, is one of the fundamental principles essential for national life and governance. This principle emphasizes the importance of justice in various aspects of life, particularly in political and economic realms. Political justice reflects equal rights and opportunities for every citizen to participate in the decision-making processes that affect collective life. This means that every individual, regardless of their background, has the same right to express opinions, vote, and be elected within the existing democratic system. On the other hand, economic justice pertains to the fair distribution of resources and wealth among all members of society. The concept of “equal share, equal feeling” underscores that everyone is entitled to a fair share of the available wealth and resources according to their

⁹ Edward T Hall. *The silent language*. Anchor, 1973.

⁹ Fitri Lintang and Fatma Ulfatun Najicha. “Nilai-nilai sila persatuan Indonesia dalam keberagaman kebudayaan Indonesia.” *Jurnal Global Citizen: Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan* 11, no. 1 (2022): 79-85.



contributions and needs. This includes equal access to employment opportunities, education, healthcare, and other basic needs, ensuring that no group is left behind or neglected.¹⁰

The principle of social justice is built on the values of kinship and mutual cooperation, where the entire community works together to achieve collective well-being. The spirit of mutual assistance emphasizes that every individual has a responsibility to help others and that communal welfare is more important than personal interests. Thus, the social justice mandated by the Fifth Principle is not merely about fair distribution but also reflects social solidarity and togetherness in building a just and prosperous nation. Furthermore, social justice in this context also means that all policies and programs formulated by the government must be oriented toward the overall welfare of the people. There should be no discrimination or inequality arising from economic, social, or political differences.

Social justice necessitates the protection and empowerment of disadvantaged groups so that they can stand on equal footing with other groups in society. Thus, the Fifth Principle of Pancasila not only serves as a moral guideline but also provides direction for state policies aimed at creating a just, prosperous, and thriving society for all Indonesians.

Pancasila Education and Ideological Education in Ethiopia

Pancasila education, particularly emphasizing the Third Principle (The Unity of Indonesia) and the Fifth Principle (Social Justice for All Indonesians), can play a significant role in conflict resolution efforts in Tigray, Ethiopia, through an inclusive and humanistic approach to religious education. The Third Principle teaches the importance of unity in diversity, which serves as a fundamental basis for building constructive dialogue among the various ethnic and religious groups in Ethiopia. By instilling values of togetherness, respect for differences, and the significance of unity in diversity, education can act as a bridge connecting groups that were previously divided by conflict and prejudice.

More than just teaching tolerance, the Third Principle encourages social integration that values the cultural and religious identities of each group while maintaining national unity. This is particularly relevant in Ethiopia, where conflicts are often exacerbated by sharp ethnic and religious differences. Through education that prioritizes these values, Ethiopia's youth can be shaped into agents of change who promote peace and unity amidst diversity.

¹⁰ Piter Randan Bua, David Samiyono, and Tony Christian Tampake, "Misi Gereja Dalam Mewujudkan Keadilan Sosial: Sebuah Perspektif Dari Sila Kelima Pancasila". *KUROS (Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen)* 5, no. 2 (November 1, 2019): 109–124. Accessed September 3, 2024. <https://www.stpb.ac.id/e-journal/index.php/kurios/article/view/97>.

Meanwhile, the Fifth Principle, which emphasizes social justice for all, provides an ethical framework for addressing the political and economic injustices that are at the root of many conflicts in Tigray. Social justice encompasses not only equitable distribution of wealth and resources but also the recognition and protection of the rights of every individual, regardless of ethnic or religious background. In the context of Tigray, education based on the principles of social justice can play a role in promoting more inclusive and equitable policies, reducing existing inequalities, and improving relations between the central government and the Tigrayan community.

By integrating the values of Pancasila into the religious education curriculum, the Ethiopian community can be guided toward a deeper understanding of the importance of solidarity, justice, and unity in building a peaceful and harmonious nation. This education not only shapes individuals with noble character but also strengthens the social structure that can mitigate future conflicts. Thus, Pancasila, as an ideology that promotes unity and justice, offers a holistic and sustainable solution for conflict resolution in Tigray and can serve as a model for other countries facing similar challenges.

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Chapter 10:

Decolonization Through Education: Strengthening Indonesia-Africa Relations through Higher Education Institutions

By Subandri Simbolon

Introduction

The relationship between Indonesia and Africa boasts a long history, yet there remain numerous challenges in terms of self-determination amidst global pressures. Since the Bandung Conference, the issue of true independence has been central. Both continents share a history of prolonged colonization. However, the question arises: has genuine independence truly been achieved? Or do colonized mentalities still permeate the foundations of these nations?

Diplomatically, this relationship has been strengthened through various international activities. Several conferences with emphatic topics have been discussed and have become the basis for policy creation at both national and global levels. However, it is undeniable that actual issues deeply rooted in national identity as sovereign nations

with distinct national identities still leave much to be addressed. In various fields, African nations remain constrained by old paradigms as colonized, underdeveloped, primitive, and uncivilized peoples (Aboh, 2016). Similarly in Indonesia, albeit in different forms, colonization has transformed into centralization in several aspects (Benda, 1965).

Within this historical context, I direct attention to the role of Higher Education. In both these vast regions, thousands of higher education institutions have been established. In Indonesia alone, according to the Higher Education Database, there were 4,000 higher education institutions, both private and public, as of 2023 (PDDikti, n.d.). This indicates that almost all regions of Indonesia have higher education institutions. However, the question remains: what is the role of these institutions in promoting decolonization efforts in Indonesia?

What contributions have universities made in this endeavor to ensure Indonesia becomes a truly sovereign nation? Or, are these campuses actually contributing to strengthening colonial mentalities in young generations and Indonesian society? It must be acknowledged that colonialism still influences educational curricula, where the legacy of the colonial education system emphasizes European narratives that tend to marginalize local perspectives and non-Western intellectual traditions. This is clearly evident in Indonesia and many African countries previously colonized by Europe.

Indonesia-Africa Relations: Historical Context and Contemporary Dynamics

Indonesia and Africa share a rich historical background, particularly in their struggles against colonialism. Although official diplomatic relations were established in the 1990s, historical connections date back to the 17th century, with early interactions recorded around 1694. These relationships have grown stronger over time, especially through events such as the Asian-African Conference (AAC), which has reinforced diplomatic and collaborative ties between Indonesia and various African nations (Emovwodo, 2019).

A key milestone in the relationship between these two major regions was the 1955 Asian-African Conference held in Bandung (the Bandung Conference). In the context of newly independent nations and some still under colonial rule, especially with the Cold War between East and West, leaders from these regions conducted this historic conference. The AAC itself was led by Sukarno, Indonesia's first president, aiming to build solidarity among Asian and African countries in facing imperialism and colonialism (Yeremia, 2020). This conference gave birth to the spirit of anti-colonialism, South-South solidarity, and non-alignment principles that continue to influence to this day.

In the contemporary era, this relationship continues to be built in various fields such as economics, social affairs, and culture. During Jokowi's leadership (the president of Indonesia), the Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF) was organized, inspired by the spirit of Bandung (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023). However, the main aspects emphasized in this forum are food security, health security, energy security, and mineral security (Mahardhika, 2024). In other words, there is an important task that has not yet received primary attention in efforts to maintain the Bandung spirit, one of which is strengthening the sovereignty of countries in both regions. This means there needs to be a spirit of decolonization



where each party helps to strengthen national sovereignty from the onslaught of globalization and colonial practices.

Decolonization: Utopia?

The concept of decolonization has historically emerged during the colonial era. The desire for independence constitutes the fundamental spirit of decolonization. However, scholars continue to question whether independence guarantees the eradication of oppression. Gerber (2018), for instance, expands its meaning to encompass the spirit of reconceptualizing the world after the dominance of the “Western worldview” and its oppressive practices. This implies that although a nation may have achieved independence, it may not necessarily be free from oppression. Some scholars refer to this phenomenon using terms such as neocolonialism, neoliberalism, and other manifestations of domination. Even in the modern world, where humanity has attained a high level of recognition, latent oppression persists. In the realm of natural resources, many populations are deprived of the opportunity to benefit from them due to capitalist pressures. Indonesian citizens, for example, must purchase clean water despite being surrounded by forests and mountains. Moreover, in the field of education, African and Indonesian scholars still struggle to articulate the characteristics of their local educational systems

clearly at the international level. The educational systems in these two vast regions continue to perpetuate colonial legacies.

Wane (2006) posits that decolonization is not a finite project but rather an ongoing process. Its characterization as a utopian ideal for formerly colonized nations stems from the pervasive nature of colonial legacies in postcolonial societies. This utopian conceptualization is further reinforced by the internalization of orientalist paradigms, wherein Western constructs of the East have been imposed upon and assimilated by Eastern societies (Said, 1977). The entrenchment of these ideologies has led to a diminution of critical consciousness regarding systemic oppression.

To transcend the utopian framing of decolonization, it is imperative to recognize tangible instances of successful decolonial initiatives. These include movements for the repatriation of cultural artifacts (Soussi, n.d.), reforms in educational curricula (Battiste, 2008), and the recognition of indigenous rights (*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, n.d). These examples demonstrate that decolonization efforts, while challenging, are not inherently utopian. Wane (2006) elucidates that decolonization is a continuous process that encompasses both individual and collective dimensions, aimed at



re-articulating diverse local narratives in opposition to dominant discourses. In this context, education emerges as a critical domain for the realization of sovereignty and the advancement of decolonial objectives.

Higher education constitutes one of the pillars of a nation's civilization. The generation of knowledge and the cultivation of a civil society represent crucial objectives that must be achieved. As centers for the development of science and knowledge, institutions of higher education can be viewed as beacons of enlightenment in conditions of civilizational darkness. However, we must not overestimate their potential. Colonization is also a product of higher education. Those who formulate the domination of power over others are the direct descendants of these educational institutions. What, then, should be done, especially by higher education institutions in Indonesia and Africa, to strengthen the relationship between these two regions? I argue that if higher education institutions do not mainstream decolonization efforts, both internally and externally, the resulting relationship between these two regions will be one of domination. Thus, this effort becomes a necessity in the context of strengthening mutually reinforcing relations, especially when considering the shared history of formerly colonized nations.

Higher Education: A Fundamental Cornerstone

The decolonization of educational systems and curricula emerges as the primary and foremost imperative in realizing the aspiration of how a nation can achieve its independent and dignified ideals. The process of educational decolonization encompasses efforts that promote both academic and political activities that reconsider epistemology, challenge Eurocentric dominance, and incorporate diverse perspectives, particularly those of marginalized groups (Pillay & Swanepoel, 2018). In other words, meaningful decolonization necessitates the deconstruction of asymmetric power relations, political will, structural changes, and shifts in knowledge production practices (M. Moghli & L. Kadiwal, 2021).

These academic and political activities require serious attention from various parties involved in the educational formulation process. Academics provide input based on rigorous analysis using anti-colonial perspectives to eradicate power inequalities that have long been infiltrated into education. Meanwhile, political efforts are expected to serve as crucial support because education itself is closely related to the broader society. This implies that decolonization activities that strengthen collective solidarity must become public activities based on



historical awareness full of inequality, discrimination, and latent oppression (Zembylas, 2023).

The decolonization of education and curriculum represents a crucial step in liberating African countries and Indonesia from the residual colonial influence in their academic systems. This process demands a critical assessment of the content, methods, and perspectives that have hitherto dominated higher education. Curricular transformation must encompass local knowledge, indigenous philosophies, and narratives that have been neglected, to achieve a balance between global insights and local wisdom (Chinn, 2007).

The implementation of decolonization in higher education also necessitates a paradigm shift in teaching that has hitherto been centered on Western thought. This entails creating more inclusive teaching methods sensitive to local cultural contexts, as well as promoting the use of local languages alongside international languages as instructional tools (Dei, 2016). Through this approach, higher education institutions can facilitate the construction of a more authentic academic identity relevant to postcolonial conditions, while preparing students to play roles in sovereign national development (Mbembe, 2016; Shahjahan et al., 2022).

Rewriting History

The rewriting of national civilizational history constitutes a vital component in the decolonization agenda, aiming to reconstruct historical narratives from indigenous perspectives that have hitherto been distorted or neglected (Nordholt et al., 2008). This process involves in-depth research into local sources, oral traditions, and cultural artifacts that can provide alternative viewpoints to historical interpretations that have been dominated by colonial narratives. Through these efforts, higher education institutions can play a role in dismantling colonial myths and revealing the complexity and richness of pre-colonial civilizations that have often been simplified or ignored in conventional historiography.

Furthermore, the rewriting of history also necessitates the development of more inclusive and multidimensional historiographical methodologies. This approach not only focuses on major events or famous figures but also integrates the experiences and contributions of hitherto marginalized groups, including women, ethnic minorities, and lower social classes. Consequently, the resulting historical narratives will be more comprehensive and representative of the diversity of societal historical experiences. The role of higher education in this context is to provide platforms and



resources for research, discussion, and dissemination of these new perspectives, thereby fostering a more critical and reflective collective understanding of national identity and cultural heritage.

Assisting in Building Civil Society

Higher education plays a crucial role in building civil society, which is part of the broader decolonization process. Tertiary institutions play a central role in shaping critical, actively participating, and responsible citizens—key characteristics of a healthy civil society (Arthur & Bohlin, 2005). Through curricula that emphasize critical thinking, civic ethics, and understanding of democratic rights and obligations, higher education can produce individuals ready to engage in public discussions and collective decision-making.

Moreover, higher education serves as a catalyst for strengthening civil society institutions through applied research, community service, and cooperation with various stakeholders. Initiatives such as capacity development programs for non-governmental organizations, public dialogues, and participatory research help strengthen grassroots democracy and create dynamic public spaces. Thus, higher education functions not only as a place for knowledge production but also as an active agent of social change in shaping a more just and

inclusive post-colonial socio-political landscape (Nahirna, 2021).

Revitalizing “Therefore, colonialism throughout the world must be abolished” Preamble to the 1945 Constitution

The revitalization of the anti-colonial spirit embodied in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution represents a moral and constitutional imperative for higher education institutions in Indonesia. In the contemporary context, colonialism no longer manifests in the form of territorial occupation, but rather in more subtle forms such as economic domination, cultural hegemony, and technological dependence. Therefore, higher education has the responsibility to recontextualize this concept of colonialism and develop relevant strategies to address it in the era of globalization.

The implementation of this principle in the academic realm can be realized through several approaches. First, the development of study programs that focus on issues of national sovereignty, diplomacy, and sustainable development based on local strengths and resources. Second, encouraging research aimed at enhancing technological independence and indigenous innovation. Third, promoting South-South knowledge exchange and academic collaboration as an alternative to the epistemic domination of the Global North. Through



such initiatives, higher education can play an active role in realizing the holistic vision of independence as mandated by the nation's founding fathers, while positioning Indonesia as a sovereign and equal entity in the global order.

Conclusion

The historical trajectory of Indonesia-Africa relations is characterized by a longstanding interconnectedness that necessitates reinforcement across multiple domains. The vision articulated by the nations' progenitors posits that comprehensive independence is contingent upon the realization of sovereignty in its fullest form. In this context, tertiary education institutions assume a pivotal role in fortifying this vision, particularly through the consistent reinforcement of decolonization imperatives, with education serving as the primary locus of transformation.

For nations with a shared colonial legacy such as Indonesia-Africa, the imperative of decolonization transcends mere historical rectification to become an ontological necessity. The concept of national sovereignty is intrinsically linked to the emancipation of the populace from external hegemonic forces, the auto determination of cultural and political identities, and the unencumbered expression of national consciousness. This multifaceted process of decoloniza-

tion thus emerges as a crucial paradigm in the reconfiguration of postcolonial societies and their global positioning.

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Authors Profile

Prof. Dr. H. Rosihon Anwar, M.Ag



Prof. Dr. H. Rosihon Anwar, M.Ag, Department of Theology, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Jl. A.H. Nasution 105 Cibiru Bandung Jawa Barat 40614, Indonesia. Dr. in Quran Studies, Professor at the State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung in the Department of Theology, Rector of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung up to 2027, author of many scientific publications, including articles, books and editor-in-chief of Journal Wawasan. He has experience in multiple international educational and research projects. He is also active as a religious lecturer in several places.

Prof. Dr. H. Ahmad Ali Nurdin, MA., Ph.D



Prof. Dr. H. Ahmad Ali Nurdin, MA., Ph.D., Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Jl. A.H. Nasution 105 Cibiru Bandung Jawa Barat 40614, Indonesia. Ph.D., in Southeast Asian Studies, Professor at the State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung in the Department of Political Science, Dean of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung up to 2027, author of many scientific publications, including articles, books and editor-in-chief of Journal of Asian Social Science Research (JASSR). He has experience in multiple international educational and research projects as a manager and educators.

Mardianto Hasudungan Marpaung SE, MBA, PhD



Mardianto Hasudungan Marpaung, SE, MBA, PhD, Ak, CA, ASA (Aust.), ACPA, ASEAN CPA, CTA was born in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. He completed his Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from Universitas Advent Indonesia (UNAI), Bandung, West Java in December 2002 and his Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Philippine Christian University, Manila in July 2007, as well as his PhD in Business Management in March 2011. He earned his Indonesia Accountant Profession (Ak) from Universitas Katolik Atma Jaya, Jakarta in September 2014. Besides formal academic degrees, he holds certifications such as Chartered Accountant (CA) Indonesia from Ikatan Akuntan Indonesia (IAI), Associate CPA Indonesia and Certified Teaching Audit (CTA) from Institut Akuntan Publik Indonesia (IAPI), Associate CPA Australia from CPA Australia, ASEAN CPA (Chartered Professional Accountant), and is a member of ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) based in London, UK.

He worked as an accountant at West Indonesia Union Mission (WIUM), Jakarta from February 2004 to August 2005, as an accountant at Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD), Manila, Philippines from September 2005 to June 2010, and as a finance controller at WIUM from July 2010 to December 2014. Since January 2015, he has served as an internal auditor at General Conference Auditing Service (GCAS) Trans Asia-Pacific, Region D, based in Jakarta and Bandung until October 2022. Currently, he is a professor and MBA Program Coordinator at Ethiopia Adventist College, Africa, since November 2022.



Dwi Maryani Rispatiningsih, M.Pd



Dwi Maryani Rispatiningsih, M.Pd., has been lecturing at STABN Raden Wijaya since 2018. I hold a Bachelor's degree in English from Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta and a Master's degree in the same field from Universitas Negeri Semarang. While pursuing the Master's degree, I also completed a Bachelor's in Primary School Teacher Education at Universitas Terbuka.

My hobbies are writing and reading. Among the books I have authored are Learning Management, English Language Teaching Strategies, Teaching Methods, Introduction to Education, and Internalizing Pancasila Values in English Language Education.

I take great pride in engaging in discussions and collaborations with colleagues. For in-depth discussions, please feel free to contact me at dwimaryani@radenwijaya.ac.id.

Dr. Felisitas Yuswanto, S.S., M.Hum



Dr. Felisitas Yuswanto, S.S., M.Hum., born in Malang, March 7, 1984. Education History: Christian Philosophy Study Program at STFT Widya Sasana Malang, Master of Humanities Study Program with the concentration of Systematic Theology at STFT Widya Sasana Malang. In 2017 continued his Doctoral Studies Concentration in Interfaith Studies at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. Currently teaching at Catholic State Higher Education, Pontianak in the field of Theology and its application in social life. Active in the commission of inter-religious relations and beliefs of the Archdiocese of Pontianak.

Ester Karosekali, SPd, MAEd, PhD



Ester Karosekali, SPd, MAEd, PhD was born in Kabanjahe, North Sumatra, Indonesia. She completed her Bachelor's Degree in English Education from Universitas Advent Indonesia (UNAI), Bandung, West Java in May 2003. Then, she completed her Master of Art in Education (MAEd) emphasis Counselling Psychology and Education Administration from the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIIAS), Silang, Cavite, Philippines in March 2006. After that, she completed her Philosophy Doctoral (PhD) in Development Administration from the Philippines Christian University (PCU), Manila, Philippines in March 2011. Now, she is writing a dissertation for her Doctor in Psychology from Universitas Persada Indonesia (UPI) – Yayasan Administrasi Indonesia (YAI), Jakarta. She started to work as a graduate assistant at AIIAS Admission Office (scholarship student) in March 2004 – August 2005. Then, she worked as a graduate assistant at Adventist University of the Philippines (AUP), Silang, Cavite, Philippines in September 2005 – February 2006 at AUP Academy Guidance & Counselling Office (field work). After that, she worked as an assistant teacher and librarian for AIIAS Junior Academy in April 2007 – May 2010. Further, she worked as administrative secretary at West Indonesia Union Mission (WIUM), Jakarta a not-profit organization in April 2011 – April 2017. After that, she worked as lecturer of education/English department and Graduate Studies at Universitas Advent Indonesia (UNAI), Bandung in June 2018 – October 2022. Since November 2022 until now, she has been working as an associate professor and Director of Guidance and Counselling at Ethiopia Adventist College (EAC).



Abraham Woncheso Mishika, PhD



Abraham Woncheso Mishika, PhD., was born on July 20, 1964, in the Kambata region, Southern Ethiopia. He earned his PhD in Business from Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS), Philippines, in March 2016. Prior to that, he completed his Master's degree in Leadership from Adventist University of Africa (AUA), Kenya, in August 2006, and his Bachelor's degree in Management from the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, Kenya, in October 2004. Dr. Abraham has served Ethiopia Adventist College (EAC) for an extended period, fulfilling various roles, including as a Mameluke High School teacher, Boys Dormitory Dean, College Lecturer, College Professor, Academic Dean, and currently as the Head of the Department of Business Management and MBA Professor. Recently, he was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor. Dr. Abraham Woncheso is married to Mrs. Felekech Desta, and they are blessed with three wonderful children—Selam, Isaac, and Tihitina—all of whom have completed their undergraduate studies.

Gustaf Hariyanto



Gustaf Hariyanto is a lecturer at Sekolah Tinggi Agama Katolik Negeri Pontianak. He graduated from Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Driyarkara, Jakarta. Before studying philosophy, he completed studies in civil engineering at Universitas Mpu Tantular, Jakarta. He received a master's degree in sociology from Universitas Tanjungpura, Pontianak. Nowadays, he is a doctoral student in sociology at Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung. For several years, he taught at Sekolah Tinggi Pastoral St. Agustinus Keuskupan Agung Pontianak. He is also an editor and writes some articles and books.

Nevy Rusmarina Dewi



Nevy Rusmarina Dewi, S.IP., M.A., is a lecturer of Communication Studies Program, Raden Wijaya State Buddhist College Wonogiri since 2024, has interest in studying general election, political communication and local politics, and a scientific work on the study was published on national-accredited journal. She completed her undergraduate degree from UPN “Veteran” Yogyakarta majoring in International Relation, and post graduate degree from UGM Yogyakarta, majoring in International Relation. In 2017-2024 she was a lecturer of Political Thought Program, IAIN Kudus.



Wolter Weol



Wolter Weol was born in Amurang and is dedicated to being a teacher. He graduated from the Doctoral Management program at Universitas Negeri Manado. He is currently working as the Director of Postgraduate Studies at the Institut Agama Kristen Negeri (IAKN) Manado. His expertise lies in curriculum and education management.





Christar Arstilo Rumbay



Christar Arstilo Rumbay is a visiting lecturer at the Institut Agama Kristen Negeri (IAKN) Manado. He has contributed to several joint research projects with local professors at IAKN Manado. He graduated from Universitas Negeri Manado, with a dissertation focused on education, culture, and management.



Subandri Simbolon, M.A



Subandri Simbolon, M.A., is PhD student at Radboud University in the Department of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies. He is affiliated as a lecturer at the State Catholic College of Pontianak, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. His field of study is religion and culture, more specifically on the relationship between religion and the environment. He also pays attention to indigenous religion, especially in Indonesia.



Ethiopia, 4-8 August 2024

Indonesia-Ethiopia Interfaith Dialog Program in Pictures















Strengthening Indonesia-Africa Relations

The Role of Higher Education Institutions

In recent years, Indonesia and African countries have recognized the potential for mutual growth through increased collaboration, particularly in education. This relationship is driven by shared historical experiences, economic aspirations, and efforts to achieve sustainable development goals. Higher education institutions serve as important platforms for fostering the exchange of knowledge, research, and cultural understanding, which create a solid foundation for strong diplomatic and economic relations.

“Strengthening Indonesia-Africa Relations: The Role of Higher Education Institutions” is a collaborative effort by experts and academics from universities in Indonesia and Ethiopia to address global challenges such as sustainable development and technological advancement. This book aims to demonstrate how Indonesia, Ethiopia and countries in Africa can strengthen their relations in economy, culture, and politics through higher educational cooperation. The authors emphasize the importance of embracing cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious diversity as a means to foster innovation and improve the quality of education.

Filled with real-world examples and thorough analysis, each chapter explains how educational collaboration can lead to richer cultural exchanges, economic growth, and a more interconnected global community. Overall, this book serves not only as a source of information but also as an inspiration for educational institutions to continue innovating and adapting in their pursuit of mutually beneficial partnerships.

