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Islam in Indonesian Foreign Policy: Assessing Impacts of Islamic Revivalism during the Soeharto Era

Abstraksi: *Indonesia adalah salah satu negara Muslim terbesar di dunia. Agama Islam dipeluk oleh bagian terbesar dari seluruh masyarakatnya. Kendati demikian, penting dicatat bahwa Indonesia bukanlah negara Islam, dan, pada saat yang sama juga bukan negara sekuler. Indonesia adalah negara Pancasila yang nilai-nilainya dianggap tidak bertentangan dengan nilai-nilai semua agama di Indonesia, termasuk Islam.*

Ada beberapa indikasi yang bisa menjelaskan hal tersebut. Pertama, Pancasila sendiri, sebagai dasar negara, mencantumkan unsur kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Mahaesa sebagai sila pertamanya. Kedua, di dalam struktur pemerintahan Indonesia, selalu terdapat Departemen Agama yang bertanggung jawab terhadap berbagai permasalahan keagamaan, serta menjadi semacam “penjaga gawang” bagi terciptanya suasana rukun antarumat beragama. Ketiga, dalam berbagai jargon pembangunan yang dilaksanakan oleh pemerintah Indonesia, agama selalu dijadikan sebagai landasan etika.

Dengan realitas sosial politik demikian, karenanya, tidak terlalu sulit dipahami ketika sebagian besar masyarakat Muslim menerima Pancasila sebagai ideologi final bagi negara Indonesia, sehingga mereka tidak lagi mempertanyakan tentang ideologi dan bentuk negara Indonesia tersebut. Barangkali, di antara pertanyaan yang muncul adalah tentang sejauh mana Islam (atau lebih tepatnya Muslim) menjadi sebuah faktor signifikan bagi perumusan kebijakan dalam negeri maupun luar negeri Indonesia.

Berkaitan dengan kebijakan luar negeri, pemerintah Indonesia nampaknya tidak mempertimbangkan Islam sebagai faktor penting yang mempengaruhi perumusan kebijakan luar negerinya. Walaupun kenyataan memperlihatkan bahwa kemerdekaan Indonesia yang diproklamakan pada tanggal 17 Agustus 1945 pertama kalinya diakui oleh beberapa nega-

ra Muslim di Timur Tengah, seperti Mesir dan Saudi Arabia, Indonesia cenderung tidak secara eksplisit memasukkan Islam sebagai isu dalam kebijakan luar negeri. Kalaupun Indonesia mendukung negara-negara tertentu atau organisasi-organisasi tertentu di Timur Tengah, biasanya dukungan tersebut bukanlah didasarkan pada isu agama [Islam], namun lebih pada dukungan kepada perjuangan untuk mencapai kemerdekaan dan keadilan.

Dukungan Indonesia terhadap perjuangan rakyat Palestina misalnya dapat dijadikan contoh. Seperti yang dapat diamati, faktor Islam hampir tidak ada dalam kebijakan formal luar negeri Indonesia. Indonesia mendukung rakyat Palestina lebih didasarkan pada prinsip bahwa rakyat Palestina, sebagaimana rakyat di tempat lain, berhak untuk mendapatkan kemerdekaan, bebas dari ketidakadilan dan penindasan. Prinsip tersebut jelas tercantum di dalam konstitusi nasional Indonesia yaitu Undang-Undang Dasar 1945.

Pada level yang lain, sebagai sebuah negara dengan penduduk Muslimnya yang begitu besar, Indonesia tidak dapat melepaskan diri terlibat dengan organisasi Muslim internasional, seperti Organisasi Konferensi Negara-negara Islam (OIC). Namun perlu dicatat, bahwa keterlibatan Indonesia dengan organisasi Islam semacam itu sangatlah marginal; Indonesia belum pernah mengambil peran utama dalam organisasi Islam internasional semacam itu.

Pada tiga dekade terakhir, dunia Islam menyaksikan adanya kebangkitan Islam. Muslim di Indonesia juga terkena euphoria semacam itu. Pada dataran domestik, muncul suatu kecenderungan kuat bahwa Muslim telah berhasil mempengaruhi kebijakan pemerintah, terutama pada tahun 1990an. Oleh karena itu, menjadi sangat menarik melihat bagaimana tekanan Muslim terhadap pemerintah untuk mempengaruhi kebijakan luar negeri Indonesia, terutama menyangkut isu-isu yang berhubungan dengan Islam.

Artikel ini berusaha membahas peran Islam dalam kebijakan luar negeri Indonesia. Pembahasan artikel ini terutama dibatasi pada sikap pemerintah Indonesia dalam masalah Palestina dan Bosnia yang menjadi isu penting bagi Muslim di seluruh dunia. Sebagaimana diketahui, kedua masalah tersebut membentuk satu isu dominan dalam perkembangan politik dunia Muslim dewasa ini, sehingga bisa menjadi barometer untuk melihat sikap politik dunia internasional terhadap Islam. Lebih dari itu, untuk konteks Indonesia, kedua masalah tersebut menjadi demikian penting karena mayoritas penduduk Indonesia beragama Islam.

Islam in Indonesian Foreign Policy: Assessing Impacts of Islamic Revivalism during the Soeharto Era

خلاصة: كانت إندونيسيا ولا تزال من حيث المساحة والتعداد السكاني أكبر دول المسلمين في العالم. وبالرغم من أن أغلبية نسمتها معتنقو الإسلام إلا أنها ليست دولة تقوم على أساس إسلامي، وفي نفس الوقت ليست هي تقوم على أساس علماني، وإنما هي دولة تقوم على أساس بانتشاسيلا (Pancasila) أو المبادئ الخمسة التي لا تتعارض قيمها مع قيم في سائر الأديان بإندونيسيا.

هناك بيانات تدل على ذلك الاعتبار: أولاً، تحتوى البانتشاسيلا في البند الأول لها على الإيمان بالله الأحد (Ketuhanan Yang Mahaesa). ثانياً، إن وزارة إندونيسيا تتكون من شتى الوزارات منها وزارة الشؤون الدينية التي تتحمل هذه الوزارة مسؤولية تطوير الحياة الدينية وحفظها. ثالثاً، قد صار الدين ذاته لبنة خلقية في بناء إندونيسيا.

اعتباراً لما وقع في إندونيسيا هذا اجتماعياً كان أم وسياسياً، ليس من الصعوبة للفهم حينما اتفق أكثر مسلمي إندونيسيا على أن البانتشاسيلا إيديولوجي حاسم للدولة. ومن أجل ذلك، إنهم لا يحتاجون إلى أن يتساءلوا عن إيديولوجي إندونيسيا وصيغتها. والذي يهمننا السؤال هو السؤال عن أي مدى المسلمون دورهم في تخطيط سياسة إندونيسيا الداخلية والخارجية.

وأما بالنسبة للسياسة الخارجية، فلم تأخذ حكومة إندونيسيا الإسلام بعين الاعتبار كعامل حيوي يؤثر في تخطيط سياسة إندونيسيا الخارجية. وبالرغم من اعتراف عدة بلاد المسلمين في الشرق الأوسط باستقلال إندونيسيا ١٧ أغسطس ١٩٤٥م إلا أنها لم تضيف مبدأ إسلاميا إلى قضية سياستها الخارجية. صحيح، إن إندونيسيا تدعم بشكل واضح البلاد والمنظمات المعينة في الشرق الأوسط، ولكن ليس الدعم يقوم على أساس ديني وإنما على المكافحة للحصول على الاستقلال والعدل.

ويتمثل ذلك في دعم إندونيسيا بفلسطين. ومن الملاحظ، أننا لا نكاد نرى الصبغة الإسلامية في سياسة إندونيسيا الخارجية. وأما دعم إندونيسيا لفلسطين فمجرد أنها كغيرها من البلدان لها حضنها من الاستقلال وعدم الظلم والضغط. وينص هذا المبدأ في قانونها السياسي ١٩٤٥ (UUD 1945). وعلى صعيد آخر، فإن إندونيسيا باعتبارها أكثر المواطنين المسلمين نسمة لا مناص لها من أن تتورط لمنظمات المسلمين العالمية كمنظمة مؤتمر الدول الإسلامية (OKI). وينبغي لنا أن نذكر أن تورط إندونيسيا يمثل تلك المنظمات تورط بمعزل عن الجوهر، إذ أنها لم تلعب دورا أساسيا في أخذ القرار لسياسة المنظمة.

وفي العقود الثلاثة الأخيرة شهد المسلمون نهضة دينية في بلادهم بأسرها. ولا تخلو هذه النهضة من مسلمي إندونيسيا. ونجد على الصعيد المحلي دور المسلمين في تأثير سياسة الحكومة وفي مقدمتها في عام التسعينات. ومن هذا المنطلق، فإنه من المرغوب فيه أن نمنع نظرا إلى مدى ضغط المسلمين حكومة إندونيسيا في تأثير سياستها الخارجية.

ويتناول هذا البحث ما في دور الإسلام في سياسة إندونيسيا الخارجية. ويقتصر ذلك على النقاش في موقف حكومة إندونيسيا من قضية فلسطين والبوسنة، إذ أن هذه القضية شئ جوهري لجميع المسلمين في العالم، ومن المعروف أن قضية فلسطين والبوسنة قد أظهرت النقاش في تطوير السياسة في العالم الإسلامي المعاصر. علاوة على ذلك، تلك القضية، بالنسبة إلى إندونيسيا، أكثر أهمية لأن أغلبية نسيتها معتقو الإسلام.

In the last two decades, the Islamic world has witnessed something of an Islamic revival. Indonesian Muslims to a certain extent are likewise affected by the euphoria of Islamic revivalism; and there is much evidence to suggest that Islam, like other religions in Indonesia, is also experiencing a revival. As a result, frequently since the end of the 1980s, Muslims have succeeded in influencing the making of government domestic policy for the interests of Islam and Muslims. For this reason, it is interesting to consider how Muslims' increasing pressure on the government affect the course of Indonesia's foreign policy, so far as Islamic issues are at stake. This paper attempts to delineate the "role", or more appropriately the position of Islam in Indonesia's foreign policy by taking into consideration several cases, involving Islam directly or indirectly.

Indonesia is the largest Muslim nation of the world. Despite the fact that Muslims constitute the largest single majority of the Indonesian total population, Indonesia is not an Islamic state, nor a secular one. It is a Pancasila state which places religions—including Islam—in an important position. This can be seen, for instance, in the national ideology of Pancasila ("Five Principles"), which adopts "belief in One Supreme God" as its very first principle. Furthermore, in the cabinet, there is also the Ministry of Religious Affairs which is responsible for developing and maintaining a healthy and dynamic national religious environment. Not least important, religions are stated as one of the most important ethical bases of national development, which has been accelerated by the New Order government in the last two decades at least.

Overwhelming Muslims have accepted Pancasila as the final ideological basis of the Indonesian state. So, it seems, there is little question about national ideology and the form of the Indonesian state. Questions arise, most commonly on the extent to which Islam (or, more precisely, Muslims) becomes a factor in both domestic and foreign policies; and how Muslims influence Indonesia's foreign policy. This point seems to be significant for, as Hasjim Djalal argues, foreign policy is a reflection of domestic policy; in many cases domestic politics even dictates foreign policy; or as Jusuf Wanandi points out, the borders between internal affairs and international developments have become blurred.¹

But, so far as Indonesia's domestic politics is concerned, it appears that Islam is not regarded as a significant factor that can

influence foreign policy. Both Djalal, a former diplomat and leading scholar on Indonesian foreign policy, and Wanandi, an expert in international relations, exclude Islam as a domestic factor which influences Indonesia's policy. Instead, according to Djalal, there are several other domestic factors that influence Indonesia's foreign policy.²

The first factor is national development, particularly in the social and economic fields. Djalal argues that the foreign policy of Indonesia will continue to be "development oriented" in the sense that it will continue to support the development efforts of Indonesia. In this regard, Indonesia's foreign policy is aimed at maintaining and developing a regional or international environment for Indonesia that would promote regional peace and stability, social and economic growth, and a cooperative relationship among foreign states. Therefore, the efforts to promote international peace and cooperation will continue to gain Indonesian attention.

The second domestic factor is the issue of national unity. This factor is closely related to the fact that Indonesia is a plural state not only in terms of ethnicities, cultures, languages, and religions, but also in terms of the relative stages of economic development among Indonesia's 27 provinces. Problems could arise from each of these; and they may affect national unity and political stability, which could make it difficult to pursue an effective foreign policy. Therefore, it is a mission of foreign policy to support and promote national unity, stability, and development of Indonesia.

The third factor is the enforcement of justice and law. Djalal argues that the growing interest among Indonesian citizens in the issue of justice and law enforcement could affect the credibility of the government, thereby making it difficult to pursue an effective foreign policy. The debate on the laxity of justice and law enforcement may in turn affect the direction and essence of Indonesia's economic development strategies and, subsequently, the implementation of foreign policy as well, since foreign policy is itself oriented to economic development.³

The fourth factor concerns the issues of democratization and human rights. According to Djalal, while Indonesia maintains a certain kind of democracy based on its own experience and cultural background, the democratization process is continually pursued in order to give it more "substance" and "form". Indonesia takes a good lesson from the case of the former Soviet Union where

too quick and abrupt democratization became uncontrollable and unmanageable and, in the end, brought about disintegration of the whole system. Yet, without the proper substance and form, a slow democratization process could also create problems. Equally, human rights issues have been a global concern and, therefore, it is difficult for Indonesia to avoid such issues. Thus, the issues of democratization and human rights, particularly in East Timor and Irian Jaya will continue to influence the implementation of Indonesia's foreign policy in the future. Any retrogression in the process of democratization and promotion of human rights in Indonesia will make it more difficult for foreign policy makers to maneuver.⁴

Indonesia, Middle Eastern Countries and Islam

Thus, as it is clear from some of the arguments outlined above, that the Indonesian government is believed to have disregarded Islam as an important factor in the development of its foreign policy. Despite the fact that Indonesia generally remains on good terms with Muslim states in the Middle East, Indonesia has tended not to associate itself with Islam. This could surprise some considering the fact that Indonesian independence on August 17, 1945 was firstly recognized by some Muslim countries in the Middle East, such as Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, and that Indonesia has such a large Muslim population.

Therefore, it is important to make it clear that if Indonesia has extended supports to certain Middle Eastern countries or groups of Muslim people, then that support was basically not on the grounds of religion [Islam]. Rather, it has been on the basis that Indonesia supports those who struggle for independence and justice in order, as is stated in the Preamble of Indonesia's 1945 Constitution, to create a just international order.

One case in point, for instance, is Indonesia's support for the Palestinian struggle. Indonesia continually supports the Palestinians in their struggle against Israel on the principle, outlined in the Indonesian National Constitution of 1945, that the Palestinian people, like other peoples, are entitled to independence, free from injustices and suppression. In other words, Indonesia's support for the Palestinian cause is not based on the principle of Islamic solidarity, but on humanity. As a result, Islam is almost absent in formal Indonesian foreign policy.

Even though Muslims in the archipelago have had a long, and rich history of religio-intellectual relations with their co-religionists in the Middle East,⁵ Indonesia's diplomatic relations with Middle Eastern countries have not always been warm. From the time of Indonesian independence to the 1950's, Indonesia's foreign policy, by and large, was oriented to establishing a close political relationship. The reason for such a policy is clear: Indonesia was in need of continuing support to preserve its newly-gained independence. At the same time, Indonesia and Middle Eastern countries had similar interest in the opposition to colonialism.

The close relations between the two sides were celebrated with the Asian-African Conference which was held in Bandung in 1955. The conference was attended by 29 countries, including Middle Eastern countries such as Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Jordan, Libya, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and North Yemen. The Bandung Spirit has led the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1960 to pass the well-known resolution, namely the "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples", which was later and better known as the "Resolution of Decolonization".⁶ In the implementation of the resolution, Indonesia was appointed to be a member of the Committee of the Decolonization. Thereafter the decolonization process proceeded rapidly. By 1955, only 11 Middle Eastern countries had gained their independence; there are now 25 Middle Eastern countries that are independent.⁷

The conference succeeded not only in strengthening relations between Indonesia and Middle Eastern countries in particular, but also in enhancing Indonesia's reputation for its major role in the decolonization process of the so-called third world countries, including those in the Middle East. Furthermore, Indonesia also lent its support to Egypt when it nationalized the Suez Canal in 1956. Indonesia declared that Egypt had inalienable rights to nationalize the Canal in accordance with the Universal Company of the Suez Canal.⁸ Not only that, in November 1956, Indonesia together with Asian-African countries put forward a resolution that was accepted by the UN General Assembly on the withdrawal of British, France, and Israeli forces from Egyptian soil. President Soekarno himself cemented further Indonesia's close relationship with Middle Eastern countries through his visits respectively to Egypt and Saudi Arabia in May 1956, and to Iraq in April 1960.⁹

For all of this Indonesian support, Middle Eastern countries, in return, gave their support to Indonesia, particularly to Indonesia's struggle to win the case of West Papua (now Irian Jaya province).

Indonesia's relations with Middle Eastern countries, however, changed significantly during Soekarno's "guided democracy" era in the early 1960s. As Dipoyudo argues, during this period the makers of Indonesia's foreign policy abandoned the independent and active principle which they had adhered so far. President Soekarno, instead, created a new demarcation line against what he called the "old established forces" (Oldefos) championed by Western countries, which was led by the US. From then until the demise of Soekarno from power following the Indonesian Communist Party's abortive coup d'état on September 30, 1965, Indonesia's foreign policy became more and more radical.¹⁰

With this change in its foreign policy, Indonesia's relations with Arab countries soured. Indonesia was disappointed with most of the Middle Eastern countries which showed no solidarity with Soekarno's gestures. Indonesia had disallowed Israel's athletes to participate in the Asian Games IV held in Jakarta in 1962; but Middle Eastern countries did not support Indonesia when the latter withdrew from the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1964. Similarly, Middle Eastern countries were not supportive of Soekarno's *konfrontasi* policy against Malaysia. Even though Indonesia opposed Malaysia presence in the Non-Aligned Summit in Cairo (1964), Arab countries accepted it in the Conference as an observer.¹¹

The rise of the New Order government under Soeharto in the aftermath of the 1965 communist abortive coup d'état did not significantly improve Indonesia's relations with Middle Eastern countries. Even though Soeharto abandoned Indonesia's high profile in foreign policy implemented by Soekarno, it was not until the second half of the 1970s that Indonesia made serious attempts to improve its relations with Middle Eastern countries. In fact, some Arab countries questioned Indonesia's stand, for example, in the case of Arab-Israeli conflicts. Arab countries felt that Indonesia did not show its full support to Arab countries in their war against Israel in 1967.¹²

Driven to a large extent by economic concerns, Indonesia began to seriously improve its relations with Middle Eastern countries in the second half of the 1970s. Indonesian leaders realized

that Indonesia gained very few of Arab petro-dollars compared with the large amount of financial aid and investment made in other countries by the rich Arab states. Worse still, when the emerging industrial countries such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore were competing for and winning access to the Middle Eastern market for their products, Indonesia was unable to increase its share in Middle Eastern trade, despite the visits of Indonesian special trade missions for two years after 1973 to a number of Middle Eastern countries.

For these reasons President Soeharto visited Iran (June 1975) and a number of Arab countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria, Bahrain, and United Arab Emirates (October 1977). These visits not only ameliorated Indonesia's diplomatic relations with the Middle East, but also encouraged closer economic ties between them. In June 1978 President Soeharto instructed the establishment of the "Coordinating Team for Export Activities to the Middle East" with the Department of Trade and Cooperatives. Indonesia also took part in trade fairs in Cairo, Izmir, Damascus, Baghdad, Sharjah, and Jeddah. In addition, Indonesia held a sole trade exhibition in Jeddah and carried out market surveys in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Algeria.¹³ Economic concerns were also prominent in the latest visit (14 to 16 November 1996) of former President Soeharto to the Middle East, to be exact, to Jordan. The issue of how to boost economic cooperation dominated the talks between President Soeharto and King Hussain of Jordan. They also appealed to Israel to be serious with peace efforts in the Middle East.¹⁴

It is thus clear that religious affinities alone between the two regions proved to have played a less significant role in economic and trade considerations. Indonesia had to carry out serious and concerted efforts to gain greater economic benefit from their Middle Eastern counterparts. For this purpose, Indonesia had to make some readjustment and reorientation of its foreign policy. And this has been done apparently without involving Islam formally or explicitly.

Apart from economic motives, one should also take into account some significant developments in Indonesian domestic politics that have influenced the course of Indonesia's foreign policy. The most crucial development roughly began with Muslims' acceptance of Pancasila as the sole ideological basis of all political

and social organizations in 1985. The acceptance proved to have ended a relatively long period of mutual suspicion between Muslim groups and the Indonesian government. From then on, there has been mutual rapprochement or, as some observers call it, “honeymoon” between the Muslim *ummah* and the government. One of the most important result of the rapprochement was the establishment of the All-Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association (ICMI) in December 1990. With President Soeharto’s approval, the Minister of Research and Technology, B.J. Habibie was elected as the chairman of ICMI.

President Soeharto himself in the post 1985 period shows some signs of greater “Islamicity”. In 1990, for instance, he visited Samarkand in Central Asia, where he performed prayers in the historic Bukhârâ’s mosque. Bukhârâ is mostly known in Indonesia and elsewhere in the Muslim world as the birthplace of Imâm al-Bukhârî, one of the most prominent *hadîth* scholars in Islamic history. Therefore, the President’s visit had a special meaning for many Indonesian Muslims. Soeharto visited Bukhârâ once again in 1995.¹⁵

The most momentous of all events marking Soeharto’s new orientation to Islam was arguably his performing of *the hajj* pilgrimage to Mecca in 1991. Accompanied by his wife (who died in 1996) and his daughters and sons, Soeharto’s pilgrimage aroused a great deal of Muslim sentiment both in Indonesia and abroad; many Indonesian Muslims believed that Soeharto was (and is) now one among them. The symbolic meaning of Soeharto’s greater Islamicity was even strengthened with his acceptance of his new first name given by King Faḥd of Saudi Arabia, that is, “Muhammad” (thus, his complete name now is Haji Muhammad Soeharto) and of his wife’s first name, that is, “Fatimah” (thus her complete name is Hajjah Siti Fatimah Hartinah Soeharto).

These events led to many speculations among political observers. The question often posed is whether or not Soeharto’s pilgrimage was politically motivated. Most Muslims believed that his pilgrimage was genuine, that is in order to fulfill the Islamic obligation for every Muslim man and woman to perform the *hajj* pilgrimage at least once in his/her life-time. Many foreign observers, however, asserted that his pilgrimage was politically motivated. Michael Leiffer in his article in *The International Herald Tribune* (21 June, 1991), for instance, asserted that Soeharto’s pilgrimage

has to do with his attempts to maintain the *status quo* of his rule. Another observer, Margaret Scott in *The New York Times Magazine* (2 June, 1991) made the assertion that with his pilgrimage, Soeharto was playing "Islamic cards".¹⁶

Despite these assertions, Soeharto, accompanied by his wife and children, once again in 1995 visited Mecca on his way returning to Indonesia from attending the NAM Summit Meeting XI held in Colombia. According the Minister of State Secretariat, Moerdiono, the President performed the *umrah* ("lesser *hajj*") in order to thank God in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of Indonesian independence.¹⁷

The last case of Soeharto's winning the hearts of Indonesian Muslims worth mentioning here is his visit to war-stricken Sarajevo in April, 1995. This visit has been celebrated by Indonesian Muslims as a sign of strong universal Islamic solidarity; it was a brave action on the part of the President for his plane had been targeted by snipers in Sarajevo. In order to commemorate this historic visit, the Indonesian National Committee for Bosnian Muslim Solidarity decided to build the Haji Muhammad Soeharto Mosque in Sarajevo. The construction of the mosque is now under preparation.¹⁸

Is there any impact of Soeharto's new Islamicity on Indonesia's foreign policy? There is no easy answer to this question. Based on what we are going to argue by way of several cases below, it is fair to say that probably there is no direct relation between Soeharto's new Islamicity and foreign policy. The conduct of Indonesia's foreign policy basically remains in accord with the official old principle of keeping Islam at bay in Jakarta's international relations. But, there is little doubt, however, that at the same time Jakarta has associated itself with Islam and the Muslim world more closely.

Policy of Ambiguity

Even though Islam, as argued above, has formally not been a factor in Indonesian foreign policy, one should take a very cautious attitude for, in one way or another, the Indonesian government seems to take careful consideration when issues relating to Islam and Muslims appear at the forefront. It is correct that, on the one hand, Jakarta seems to consistently play down the Islamic factor in its foreign policy. But on the other hand, there are some cases where Islam seems to have been taken into serious account by the Indone-

sian government. Thus, as far as the Islamic factor is concerned, there is some kind of ambiguity in Indonesian government foreign policy. Leifer has summed this up in the following words:

“Indonesian governments, especially from the advent of the New Order inaugurated by General Soeharto, have taken great care not to allow foreign policy to be dictated by Islamic considerations...Islam, however, is not without influence on Indonesia’s foreign policy but that influence has been expressed much more in the form of constraint than in positive motivation”¹⁹

Some of Leifer’s conclusion might be still relevant in assessing the Islamic factor in contemporary Indonesian foreign policy. I would argue, however, that since the late 1980s, there has been some subtle shift in Indonesian foreign policy. As indicated above, Indonesia since the late 1970s has shown some sign of paying more attention to foreign policy; Indonesia plays a more active role in international affairs; Indonesia, for instance, has played a greater role in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) several years ago. Indonesia also played a crucial role in negotiations regarding the MORO problem in the Philippines. Thus after a decade of inward oriented policy of national economic development in the late 1960s and 1970s, the Soeharto government by the end of the 1980s became more and more assertive in its foreign policy, becoming an important actor in international politics.

This change, as has been shown above, to a large extent was motivated by economic concerns. In order to boost its economic development, Indonesia needed a constant flow of foreign investment as well as markets for its non-oil products. At the same time, Indonesia was facing the issue of East Timor. These in turn led Indonesia to forge a closer relation with foreign countries, including Islamic countries, especially in the Middle East. For these purposes President Soeharto visited some Middle Eastern countries in June 1975 and in October 1977. As mentioned above during these visits, Soeharto stepped up economic relations by seeking credits and capital investment. In addition, he made efforts to obtain their support concerning the East Timor issue.²⁰ In the process, Indonesia seems to have given more space for the Islamic factor to breathe. And this space seems to become wider when Soeharto showed a greater learning to Islam, as indicated above. But again, the old pattern of ambiguity towards the Islamic factor, as we will see in several cases below, remains observable.

Iranian Revolution & Libya Connection; Even though the Indonesian government had attempted to forge closer economic ties to some Middle Eastern countries, mentioned briefly above, Indonesia took a very cautious policy toward some hard-liner Middle Eastern countries, especially Iran and Libya. Especially in the late 1970s and 1980s, in the aftermath of Khomeini's Iranian Revolution, Indonesian authorities have been very suspicious of what they called "Iranian Connection" or "Libyan connection". Iran or Libya had been often accused by certain high-ranking Indonesian officials of giving some financial aid and even military training to certain radical groups in Sumatra and Java. For example, Indonesian military authorities accused an organization called the "Indonesian Islamic Revolution Board" of seeking Iranian support to overthrow the government. There have also been charges that "Muslim radicals" in Indonesia have sought to implement an Islamic state in the pattern of Iran.²¹

Not only that, the government was also very suspicious of some Indonesians returning from their travels or studies in certain Middle East countries. In the mid -1980's the Indonesian government formally barred its citizens from studying in 32 countries. Of those states, 21 were communist, four (Israel, South Africa, Taiwan and Portugal) were those with which Indonesia had no diplomatic relations for politically sensitive reasons, and six were Muslim countries defined as "extreme" which included Libya, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Algeria.²² It is not hard to understand why Indonesian officials suspected that returning students from Libya or Iran, in particular, would spread radical ideologies on Indonesian soil. Therefore, many of them were put under military surveillance. As a result, many of these Libyan or Iranian graduates returned to Indonesia through other countries where they "suppressed" evidence of their staying in Libya or Iran by applying for new passports at the Indonesian Embassy in the given country.

This cautious policy toward Iran and Libya appears to have been significantly loosened towards the end of the 1980s. The issue of Iranian or Libyan connection in Indonesia is conspicuously absent in the Indonesian media by the 1990s. Indonesian officials also stopped accusing certain individuals of having Iranian or Libyan connections. Instead, Indonesia was now active in the efforts to lift economic and air travel sanctions imposed by the UN

on Libya. In response to Libya's appeal to him as the chairman of the NAM, towards the end of 1993 President Soeharto sent the Indonesian ambassador for the NAM to negotiate with the UN and US, asking them to lift sanctions and treat Libya in a more normal way.²³

The case is the same with Iran. It seems that the Indonesian government began to show a warmer attitude towards Iran. Putting religious issue aside, Jakarta once again attempted to establish a firmer economic relationship. This can be seen, for example, when Indonesia made serious efforts to make the most of a visit by Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to Jakarta in the middle of October 1994. In his talks with Rafsanjani, President Soeharto revealed Indonesia's plan to invest in Iran, particularly in textile, mineral water, and palm oil. Both presidents agreed to bolster trade between the two states, and to form a joint team for this purpose. Rafsanjani was also warmly welcomed by Muslims in general; he was surrounded by large crowds when he did his Jum'ah prayers in the Istiqlal Mosque, Jakarta.²⁴

Iraq Case: The attack by U.S. and its allies on Iraq in the middle of January 1991 had created strong reactions among Muslims and Islamic organizations in Indonesia. Muslim youth staged demonstrations in various cities to protest U.S. military actions against Iraq which had earlier occupied Kuwait. The two largest Muslim organizations in Indonesia, respectively the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) strongly deplored the American military action in Iraq. The Muhammadiyah, after a meeting with President Soeharto, appealed for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The Muhammadiyah also urged the Indonesian government to play a more active role towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict.²⁵

What was the reaction of the Indonesian government to these Muslim organizations? Indonesia's official position in this case was "neutrality". The Indonesian Foreign Ministry supported the U.N. resolution opposing Iraqi aggression and allowing the U.N. Security Council to use force in order to liberate Kuwait from Iraq aggression. Jakarta, however, did not accept the Saudi proposal to join the multinational military forces.²⁶

Furthermore, government officials, by and large, played down the Islamic factor in this question; they apparently feared that if they recognized the Islamic factor, then they could give a way for

Muslims to dictate Indonesia's foreign policy, for instance, by formally condemning the U.S. and its Western allies. While, in fact, Indonesia is one of the U.S.' best friends. At the same time, however, Indonesia was also concerned with conflicts and divisiveness among Middle Eastern Muslim countries. In this last respect, Jakarta always emphasized that no religious elements were involved in those conflicts.

This can also be clearly seen in the statement of the Minister of Religious Affairs, Munawir Sjadzali, who pointed out that the Gulf War was not a religious war. He appealed to the Indonesian people to believe that it was not a war between religions.²⁷ This statement was confirmed by President Soeharto himself when he stated that the Gulf War was not a religious but a political one; he reiterated at the same time Indonesia's official "neutral position" that Iraq should leave Kuwait so that a peaceful settlement could be achieved.²⁸ In accordance with this neutral policy, Indonesian army leaders discouraged the idea of some followers of the *Qâdiriyyah tarekat* in Kediri, East Java, to go to Iraq in order "to save" the tomb of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qâdir al-Jîlânî, the founder of the Muslim brotherhood, in Baghdad.²⁹

Thus, like in the cases of Iran and Libya mentioned earlier, the Indonesian government also put religious issues aside in the controversies surrounding Iraq's case. Instead, Indonesia stressed the humanitarian and economic issues. Based on humanitarian grounds, President Soeharto once again appealed that the U.N. should respect Iraq for implementing U.N. resolutions.³⁰ And economic motives were strongly present when the Iraqi Vice-President, Taha Yasin Ramadan visited Indonesia in the middle of May 1995. After thanking Indonesia for its continued support to lift the U.N. economic embargo on Iraq, Ramadan proposed that the two states form a joint economic committee to bolster Indonesian-Iraqi trade.³¹

Palestinian Question: From the time of independence, Indonesia has officially supported the Palestinian cause, including the unconditional withdrawal of Israel from the Occupied Territories and the fulfillment of the rights of Palestinian people to have an independent state. As President Soeharto said; "Our attitude has always been clear from the beginning, that is, we stand on the side of the Arab peoples and that of the people of Palestine who

are fighting for their just rights against the arrogant Israel".³²

However, as von der Mehden suggested, this public rhetoric has not been able to hide Indonesia's "real" foreign policy toward the Palestinian cause. In his opinion, since the days of Soekarno, Jakarta has tended to present its criticism of Israel in anti-imperialist rather than an Islamic terms. For his part, Soeharto has also tended to avoid religious factors in defining Jakarta's position.³³

Thus, despite its continuing support to the people of Palestine, the Indonesian government again shows its ambiguity and is very cautious about idea of "the Palestinian state" and its leaders. For instance, PLO leader Yasser Arafat did not visit Jakarta for the first time until July 1984. During his visit, the Soeharto government promised that the PLO could set up a bureau in Jakarta. Probably acquainted with Indonesia's attitude outlined above, Arafat was careful enough to underscore that his organization was not an Islamic movement but was pluralist in religious composition. Despite Arafat's assurance, Indonesia was only willing to give diplomatic support to the PLO in the U.N., but was worried about its having an office on Indonesian soil.³⁴

Thus, Indonesia for a relatively long period did not actually approve the establishment of a Palestinian embassy in Jakarta. Therefore, it is not surprising that Zuhdi Labib Tarzi, Palestinian Ambassador to the UN, raised this issue once again when he visited Indonesia on 27 January 1989. He hoped that in the near future, the Indonesian government would give its approval for the opening of a Palestinian Embassy in Jakarta.³⁵ However, it took two years (1991) before the opening of the Palestinian Embassy in Jakarta took place.

Meanwhile, when Israel and Palestine signed a peace pact in September 1993, controversy soon erupted in Indonesia. Most Muslim leaders and organizations condemned Arafat for, in their opinion, being fooled by the Israeli government. At the same time they appealed to the Indonesian government not to open diplomatic relations with Israel on the grounds that it would be a violation of the Indonesian National Constitution of 1945 which, among other things, opposes any kind of colonialism.³⁶

Responding to this development, Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Alatas, stated that Indonesia would not recognize the state of Israel as long as the Jewish state had not solved its problems with the Arab countries. Alatas added that the talks about

recognition of Israel was premature because political developments in the Middle East after the signing of the Israel-PLO Pact were still unclear. He was of the opinion that the implementation of the Pact would be very difficult. Alatas also gave some explanation on his meeting with the Israeli Foreign Minister, Simon Peres, which led to speculations that Indonesia would soon open diplomatic relations with Israel. According to Alatas, it was an "accidental meeting" which took place at an international conference in Vienna, Austria; in conformity with the alphabetical order of the names of their countries, they sat side by side. On that occasion, Peres asked him when Indonesia would recognize Israel; and Alatas answered, "shortly after the problems between Israel and Arab countries have been settled".³⁷

In the meantime, Indonesia's support of the peace initiative was again voiced by President Soeharto. On 24 September 1993, Yasser Arafat, accompanied by his wife, Suha Arafat, and a delegation, arrived in Jakarta from Beijing, for a one day visit. In his meeting with Arafat, President Soeharto in his function as chairman of the NAM stated that he welcomed the agreement. Soeharto expected that it would become the first step towards a comprehensive settlement of the Middle Eastern problems, particularly through establishment of a sovereign state for the Palestinian people on their own land. Moreover, the President said that Indonesia was ready to offer real support to the struggle of the Palestinian people for the implementation of the Pact.³⁸

Arafat's visit was followed by an unofficial visit of the Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin on October 15, 1993. Rabin who met President Soeharto in his capacity as the chairman of the NAM appealed for Indonesia's support of the peace process that was taking place in the Middle East. To avoid any potential controversy surrounding the Rabin visit, President Soeharto dismissed any possibility of Indonesia opening diplomatic relations with Israel. Thus, Soeharto's position was successful in silencing any criticism of his receiving Rabin's visit.³⁹

Controversies, however, erupted when some Indonesian Muslim leaders who seemed to be very enthusiastic about the prospect of a peaceful settlement of the Palestine question visited Jerusalem and Israel in January 1994. They were Abdurrahman Wahid, chief leader of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU); Habib Chirzin, a leader of Muhammadiyah; and Djohan Effendi, a leading Muslim intel-

lectual. They were condemned by various sectors of Muslim society who opposed any gesture to Israel; and Effendi was finally dismissed from his office at the State Secretariat.⁴⁰ Until the end of 1996 (or in fact until today), Indonesia remains faithful to its policy not to open diplomatic relations with Israel.⁴¹

Bosnian Crisis: In this case, Indonesia also attempted to adopt the policy of "neutrality". This was implemented in two ways. Firstly, by emphasizing that the conflict in Bosnia had nothing to do with religion. In other words, the Serbian Christian Orthodox genocide of Bosnian Muslims was not motivated by religious conflict. Secondly, by emphasizing Indonesian "neutrality"; and instead appealing to international organizations such as the UN and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to play a greater role. These policies, however, could not be strictly maintained by the Indonesian government; in fact it had to take into consideration Indonesian Muslims' strong show of solidarity to their Bosnian co-religionists as well as to the Muslim world at large.

As I argued elsewhere, the Bosnian crisis was one of the largest displays of Muslim solidarity in contemporary Indonesia. It appears that the response of Indonesian Muslims to Bosnian crisis has been far more passionate than to the Palestinian plight. One might wonder why Indonesian Muslims express so passionate solidarity to the Bosnian Muslims. Religious feeling is of course the main factor; but this soon becomes entangled with political reasons, particularly in connection with Western political double-standard and military gimmick, and with Indonesia's ambiguous official attitude to the crisis.⁴²

Therefore, it is easy to understand why the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Alatas left for Istanbul to attend the extraordinary meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on June 17th, and 18th, 1992. The meeting, which was held to discuss the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, had been organized by the OIC because the war continued in spite of a series of cease-fire announcements. The Conference appealed to all sides in Bosnia to start negotiations in order to reach a political settlement.⁴³

Two Indonesian cabinet ministers reacted to the flood of Indonesian Muslims' feeling of solidarity with the Bosnian Muslims and of appeals to the Indonesian government to take a firmer stand.

Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs, Munawir Sjadzali, again emphasized that the oppression in Bosnia had nothing to do with religion; but it was a humanitarian and political problem. Nevertheless he pointed out that the government would seek ways to provide assistance to the Bosnian people; apparently not on the grounds that the Bosnians were Muslims, but simply because they were humanbeings who had been oppressed by the Serbian's.

Meanwhile Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Alatas asserted that Indonesian government had from the beginning taken a clear and firm stand on the conflict in Bosnia. According to Alatas, Indonesia had recognized the existence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, together with Croatia and Slovenia, as independent states on May 20, 1992. In addition, Indonesia had also voiced its concern and criticism in the meeting of OIC in June 1992 and supported the U.N. initiatives to put an end to the conflict.⁴⁴

But, in reality how much can Indonesia put its recognition of Bosnia into practice? In this respect, one would again sees Indonesia's ambiguity. Indonesian Muslims, for instance, had been very insistent that in accordance with Indonesia's policy to recognize Bosnia, it should break its diplomatic relations with "Yugoslavia" which was in fact dominated by Serbia. Responding to this, Alatas argued that as future chairman of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM), Indonesia should also seek a consensus for a solution of the conflict, the more so because Yugoslavia was the actual president of the NAM and the presidency should be transferred to Indonesia in a smooth way. Therefore, Indonesia, could not give up its diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia.

This position, was once again, reiterated by the Director General of International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hadi Wayarabi. Responding to appeals by the Muslim community that Indonesia should break off its diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, he pointed out that in order not worsen the problem, the Indonesian government would not take such a step. In the meantime, Bosnia-Herzegovina had applied for the status of observer at the up coming conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Jakarta. Wayarabi said that the application would be discussed at the beginning of the conference.⁴⁵

The Bosnian application for membership in NAM was later put aside in the discussion at the NAM Conference in Jakarta. While at the same time, "Yugoslavia" retained its membership .

The Bosnian case was of course put into light once again by President Soeharto in the opening ceremony of the Tenth Summit Conference of NAM, held in Jakarta from September 1st to 6th 1992. Soeharto stated in his speech that quick and resolute action was needed to end the Bosnian tragedy and uphold the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and cultural heritage of Bosnia-Herzegovina. For that reason, he urged the UN Security Council to give the UN Secretary General the necessary authority and support in order to be able to restore peace in that region. He also urged NAM to play a more active role in the peaceful settlement of the issue.⁴⁶

Thus, instead of involving itself directly in the peace process, Indonesia passed the buck to international organizations. At the same time, Indonesia showed some token of solidarity to the Bosnian people on the grounds of humanitarianism. Thus, on October 2, 1993, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Indonesian government would give an amount of US\$ 100,000 in cash for humanitarian aid to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The aid would be channeled through the UNHCR.⁴⁷

In accordance with the principle of using international organizations—in this case, NAM—on June 24, 1993, President Soeharto ordered the co-ordinating bureau of NAM in New York to urge the UN to end arms embargo to the former Yugoslavia. Soeharto also revealed his plan to send a diplomat to Europe on his behalf as the NAM Chairman. According to Nana Sutresna, the executive assistant to the Chairman of NAM, NAM would press the world community to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia, so that Bosnian Muslims could defend themselves against the well-armed Serbian forces. NAM also demanded that the U.N., especially its Security Council, take a more resolute stand against the Serbian forces so that they would end their violence in Bosnia. In addition, Sutresna criticized the efforts of the U.S. and its allies to introduce “safe havens” in Bosnia, which could be interpreted as a justification of the Serbian use of aggression to gain territories.⁴⁸

Such policies clearly failed to appease Indonesian Muslims. Confronting a flood of criticism that the Indonesian government had done very little to halt Serbian atrocities in Bosnia, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Alatas, said that the Indonesian government was well aware of what was going on in Bosnia. He stated that President Soeharto himself was very concerned about the Bosnian tragedy. As Chairman of NAM, the President had sent Ahmad

Tahir, ambassador-at-large to NAM, to Geneva to obtain information about the situation in Bosnia before making further policy. The President agreed that Indonesia should take more concrete steps to deal with the problem, but there were limits to what Indonesia could do.

What Alatas further revealed would give some more clues of Indonesia's ambiguity in its foreign policy. According to Alatas, OIC members had suggested Indonesia send its troops outside the U.N. framework, but Indonesia declined this suggestion. The reason was that Indonesia would maintain its long-held principle that military aggression could not be confronted with similar aggression. It was reported during a meeting in Pakistan that seven members of the OIC had pledged to send more than 17,000 troops to join with the U.N. peace-keeping forces in Bosnia. Indonesia, which took part in that meeting, was not among these seven.⁴⁹ Later, after a meeting with President Soeharto, Alatas said that Indonesia was considering dispatching its troops to Bosnia. But this plan had not yet been finalized as talks on the subject were still going on between his ministry, the Minister of Defence and Security, Edi Sudrajat, and the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, Gen. Faisal Tanjung.⁵⁰

In the end, the Indonesian government decided to send only some military officers and observers rather than combat units. After a meeting with several ministers, the Co-ordinating Minister for Politics and Security, Soesilo Soedarman, said that Indonesia was unable to send its troops because it would take an extraordinary preparation to organize, train and equip Indonesian military units in order to be well-prepared militarily in Bosnia. He also pointed out another important problem was that the terrain in Bosnia was very different from that in Indonesia or Cambodia where Indonesian troops were participating in a U.N. peace-keeping force.⁵¹

OIC and Other Muslim International Organizations: Indonesia, as stated above, had never played a prominent role nor occupied an important position in international Islamic organizations. This was an official position of the Indonesian government, not simply the result of other Muslim countries underestimating Indonesia, its large Muslim population. Indonesia simply did not want to identify itself closely with international Islamic organizations.

This attitude can be clearly seen in the establishment of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). Indonesia did not officially participate in the conference of Muslim heads of government in Rabat (1969), which addressed the question of the burning of the Aqsâ Mosque and other issues. Nor in the Jeddah Conference (1970) where Muslim foreign ministers agreed to set up a permanent secretariat that led to the establishment of OIC. Indonesia did send a delegation to the Jeddah meeting in March 1972 which promulgated the charter of the OIC. But Indonesia declined to sign the charter and seek formal membership of the OIC.⁵²

This position resulted in controversy in Indonesia. On the one hand, Muslim leaders regretted the Indonesian government taking such a position. On the other hand, non-Muslims, particularly the Catholic-dominated Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) applauded Indonesian's position. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adam Malik, by the end of 1972 issued a press statement to the effect that the government was not yet prepared to sign the Islamic Charter because the Republic was not an Islamic state.⁵³ This was elaborated further by an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who stated that Indonesia did want to have an Islamic orientation in its foreign policy. He questioned what Indonesia would gain by joining OIC formally and fully. To him, for practical purposes it did not really matter whether or not Indonesia was a signatory of the Islamic Charter. It was a non-issue.⁵⁴

However, this issue was not yet resolved. Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs after Adam Malik, was also continuously confronted with this issue. In the end he stated that "Indonesian membership in the ICO [OIC] is an indication that our foreign policy cannot ignore the reality that 88 per cent of our population belongs to the Muslim religion".⁵⁵ Furthermore, Kusumaatmadja maintained that the involvement of Indonesia in the OIC was also partly motivated by Jakarta's policy to prevent this organization from becoming a pan-Arab organization with its traditional Islamic learning. Indonesia, instead encouraged the OIC to become a mainstream movement among developing countries.⁵⁶

The very same explanation was given by some Indonesian Muslim members of parliament when a number of their counterparts in the OIC proposed in 1996 to form an organization of Islamic

parliaments which would represent every Muslim state. The Indonesian MPs argued that Indonesia was not an Islamic state; so that it was not appropriate for Indonesia to be officially involved in such a parliament of Muslim states. They instead proposed that an association of Muslim members could be formed; thus, they would represent themselves, not their respective state.⁵⁷

Partly because of the resurgence of Islam in Indonesia, in the ensuing years, however, the Republic has been getting closer to the OIC. Indonesia signed the General Agreement on Economic, Technical, and Commercial Cooperation among Member Countries of the Islamic Conference, and hosted the OIC's Islamic Chamber of Commerce in 1983. Indonesia has always been represented in the Secretariat of Islamic Countries and Islamic Development Bank (IDB). The IDB itself since 1974 has invested US\$ 50,000,000 in Indonesia. This is a rather small amount compared to the IDB investments in Turkey and Syria.⁵⁸ The Indonesian rapprochement to the OIC and its affiliated institutions has led Hâmid al-Gâbid to praise Indonesia. After the Jeddah Conference in April 1989, he paid a visit to Indonesia as an official guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He praised Indonesia for its genuine membership and regular payment of contributions to OIC.⁵⁹

The new Indonesian leaning toward a closer relations with OIC and other international Islamic organizations was strengthened further when President Soeharto for the first time attended the Sixth Summit Conference of the OIC, which was held in Dakar from the 9th to 12th of December 1991. That Indonesia sought closer relations with the Islamic world as a whole could be seen in Soeharto's official address in the Summit. He, among others, welcomed the Saudi Arabian proposal to hold an international conference on society and Muslim minorities in Mecca. He also said that Indonesia was ready to share its successful experience in agricultural development, especially in food production, with other Muslim countries. At the same time Soeharto was also willing to share information about Indonesian's successful in family planning program with other Muslim countries. Therefore, he reminded the Conference of the "Aceh Declaration", formulated in the international conference on Islam and population policy, which was held in Lhokseumawe, Aceh, in February, 1990. He hoped that the Summit would recommend that OIC member countries use the guide book on family planning management which had been produced by a "Workshop on Family Planning according to

Islamic Orientation and Guidance” as a follow up of the Aceh Conference. In addition, he reinstated the Summit of Indonesia’s willingness to develop the Center for Telecommunication Training in Bandung as a training facility for the OIC member states.⁶⁰

The President’s gesture was quickly seized by Indonesian high ranking officials. Undoubtedly, the most prominent among them was the Minister of Research and Technology, B.J. Habibie, whom was elected with the President approval as the Chairman of the All Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association (ICMI) in late 1990. In the middle of April 1992, he visited Saudi Arabia and Egypt, where he met King Faḥd and President Ḥusni Mubârak. In his meeting with high ranking Saudi Arabian officials, Habibie was able to secure IDB co-operation with the Indonesian government to organize a seminar on the marketing of products of Indonesian strategic industries to member countries of the OIC to be held in Jakarta in November 1992. He also revealed that Indonesia would hold an exhibition of these product in Jeddah in October 1992, which, on the request of the Egyptian President, would be continued in Cairo at the end of October. Habibie said that Indonesia produced airplanes, ships, heavy equipment, and the means of telecommunication which were ready to be marketed in the OIC countries. Minister Habibie, who also acted as the chairman of the ICMI, on various occasions introduced this organization and revealed the ICMI plan to build an Islamic Center in Jakarta, including a mosque with sermons in foreign languages as well as a library with collections of scientific book from all over the world. After hearing about this plan, Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince Sa’ûd and the president of IDB, Aḥmad Muḥammad ‘Alî, promised to support the development of the Islamic center.⁶¹

Conclusion

Indonesia, as one might observe, feels the need to maintain good relations with Middle Eastern [Muslim] countries partly for historical and political reasons; it was Middle Eastern countries, that is Egypt and Saudi Arabia which were among the first to recognize Indonesian independence. Most of them were also strong supporters of Indonesia’s rule East Timor. Another issue is economics. With the growth of its economy, Jakarta regards Middle Eastern countries as potential markets for Indonesian products.

At the same time, however, the Indonesian government is very cautious about religious (or Islamic factor) in its relations with Middle Eastern countries. Admitting the Islamic factor in its foreign policy would mean that the Indonesian government surrenders to Muslim pressures. This in turn, could create certain domestic political repercussions.

Endnotes

- * Paper presented in the Workshop on "Islamic Revivalism and State Response", Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore, 2-3 June, 1997.
1. See, for instance, Hasjim Djalal, *Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia Menghadapi Abad ke 21*, Bandung: Universitas Padjadjaran, 1996, 34; an English version is included in the second part of the book. Cf. Jusuf Wanandi, "Indonesian Domestic Politics and Its Impact on Foreign Policy", *The Indonesian Quarterly*, Vol. XVII, No. 4, Jakarta: CSIS, 1989, 356; Roeslan Abdulgani, "Sekitar Konperensi Asia-Afrika dan Maknanya bagi Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia", *Analisa*, 4, Jakarta: CSIS, 322. All of these articles, however, give no assessment of impacts of the rising Islamic pressures in domestic politics upon foreign policy.
 2. Djalal, *Politik Luar Negeri*, 35-6. For the purpose of this paper not all factors proposed by Djalal are listed here.
 3. See, *Ibid*, 41-3.
 4. See, *Ibid*, 43-4; cf. Wanandi, "Indonesian Domestic Politics", 351-2.
 5. See, Azyumardi Azra, "The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian 'Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1992; Fred R. von der Mehden, *Two Worlds of Islam: Interaction between Southeast Asia and the Middle East*, Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1992; Mona Abaza, "Islamic Education, Perceptions and Exchanges: Indonesian Students in Cairo", Paris: *Cahier d'Archipel* No. 23, 1994.
 6. See. Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, *Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia dan Pelaksananya Dewasa Ini*, eds. Eddy Damian and Budiono Kusumohamidjojo, Bandung: Alumni, 1983.
 7. Kirdi Dipoyudo, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy towards the Middle East and Africa", *The Indonesian Quarterly*, XIII, No. 4, 1985, 479.
 8. See, Departemen Luar Negeri R.L., *Dua Puluh Lima Tahun Departemen Luar Negeri 1945-1970*, Jakarta: Kawal, 1971, 251-2.
 9. See, C.L.M. Pender, *The Life and Times of Soekarno*, Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1975, 98-9.
 10. See, Roeslan Abdulgani, "Sekitar Konperensi Asia-Afrika dan Maknanya bagi Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia", *Analisa*, No. 4, 1985, 324-5.
 11. See, O. Sutomo Roesnadi, "Hubungan antara Indonesia dan Timur Tengah", *Analisa*, VIII, No. 3, 1979, 250.
 12. *Ibid*, .252.
 13. See, von der Mehden, *The Two Worlds of Islam*, 26-7.
 14. *Jakarta Post*, 13 November, 1996.
 15. *Pelita*, 4 October, 1995.
 16. Cited in Abdul Aziz Thaba, *Islam dan Negara dalam Politik Orde Baru*, Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1996, 322. For a complete account of Soeharto's pilgrimage, see, *Perjalanan Ibadah Haji Pak Harto*, Jakarta: Departemen Agama R.L., 1993.
 17. See, *Pelita*, 31 October, 1 November 1995; *Media Indonesia*, 31 October, 1995.
 18. See, *Kompas*, 10 April, 15 August, 9 November, 1996; *Jakarta Post*, 9 November, 1996; *Pelita*, 19 August, 1996.

19. Michael Leifer, "The Islamic Factor in Indonesia's Foreign Policy: A Case of Functional Ambiguity", in Adeed Dawisha (ed.), *Islam in Foreign Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, 144.
20. *Antara*, 20 October, 1977/B.
21. See, *Indonesia Reports—Human Rights Supplement*, 18 (October 1986), 5-7; *Indonesia Reports* 13 (November 1985), 36; and *Indonesia Reports* 16 (June 1986), 45. Cf. Fred R. von der Mehden, "Malaysian and Indonesian Islamic Movements and the Iranian Connection", in J.L. Esposito (ed.), *The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impact*, Miami: Florida International University Press, 1990.
22. *Al-Nahdah*, 5, No. 3 (1985), 50.
23. *Pelita*; *Jakarta Post*, 24 September, 1993.
24. *Jakarta Post*, 15 October 1994; *Kompas*, 14, 15 October, 1994.
25. *Kompas, Suara Pembaruan*, 22 January, 1991; *Jakarta Post, Kompas*, 29, 30 January, 1991.
26. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 24 January, 1991.
27. *Kompas*, 26 January, 1991.
28. *Jakarta Post*, 2, 13 February, 1991.
29. *Editor*, 19 January, 1991.
30. *Jakarta Post*, 13 May, 1995.
31. *Media Indonesia*, 18 May, 1995.
32. Cited in Michael Leifer, "The Islamic Factor", 156; Cf. K. Dipoyudo, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy towards the Middle East and Africa", in *Trends in Indonesia*, Jakarta: CSIS, 1981; 475-85.
33. von der Mehden, *Two Worlds of Islam*, 48.
34. *New Straits Times*, 27 July, 1984.
35. *Kompas*, 28 January, 1989.
36. *Jakarta Post*, 20 September, 1993.
37. *Republika*, 20 September, 1993.
38. *Pelita*, 25 September 1993; *Republika*, 25, 26 September, 1993.
39. *Kompas*, 16 October, 1993; *Republika*, 16 October, 1993.
40. *Kompas*, 3 March, 1994; *Media Indonesia*, 4 March, 1994.
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