

## MAINSTRAMING RELIGIOUS MODERATION AMONG ISLAMIC PREACHERS (*DA'I-DAI'YAH*)

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### Abstrak

*Radikalisme dan ekstremisme kekerasan yang dibenarkan atas nama agama masih menjadi tantangan serius dalam lanskap sosial-keagamaan masyarakat Indonesia. Dalam konteks ini, para pendakwah (dai) dan pendakwah perempuan (daiyah) menempati posisi strategis sebagai agen perubahan dalam mempromosikan pemahaman keagamaan yang moderat, inklusif, dan berorientasi pada perdamaian. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran pengarusutamaan moderasi beragama dalam memperkuat kapasitas dai dan daiyah dalam menangkal berkembangnya narasi keagamaan yang eksklusif dan intoleran. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi lapangan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen terhadap aktivitas dakwah para pendakwah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan literasi keagamaan yang kontekstual, kesamaan visi dan misi dakwah, serta ketersediaan pedoman dakwah berbasis moderasi beragama berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap efektivitas dakwah yang damai dan konstruktif. Lebih jauh, pengarusutamaan moderasi beragama tidak hanya meningkatkan kompetensi para pendakwah, tetapi juga berfungsi sebagai kerangka literasi dakwah yang memastikan praktik dakwah tetap selaras dengan ajaran Islam yang autentik serta berorientasi pada harmoni sosial dan kesejahteraan masyarakat.*

**Kata kunci:** Moderasi Beragama, Pendakwah, Dakwah Islam, Radikalisme

### Abstract

*Radicalism and violent extremism in the name of religion remain serious challenges in the socio-religious life of Indonesian society. In this context, preachers (dai) and Islamic preachers (daiyah) play a strategic role as agents of change in shaping moderate, inclusive, and peace-oriented religious understanding. This study aims to analyze the role of mainstreaming religious moderation in strengthening the capacity of preachers (dai) and Islamic preachers (daiyah) to prevent the development of exclusive and intolerant religious narratives. This research employed a qualitative approach with field study methods through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis of the da'wah activities of preachers (dai) and Islamic preachers. The results indicate that increased contextual religious literacy, a shared vision and mission for da'wah, and the availability of da'wah guidelines based on religious moderation contribute significantly to the effectiveness of peaceful and constructive da'wah. Mainstreaming religious moderation not only strengthens the competence of da'wah preachers (dai) but also serves as a reference for da'wah literacy, ensuring da'wah practices remain within the framework of authentic Islamic teachings and oriented towards the welfare of the community.*

**Keywords:** Religious Moderation, Preachers, Islamic Preaching, Radicalism

## Introduction

Indonesia is the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, and it has consistently maintained and preserved the idea and practice of diversity.<sup>1</sup> The reality of multiculturalism in this country has caught the attention of many, leading them to recognize Indonesia as a Muslim-majority nation that has managed to distance itself from all forms of destructive religious conflict and terror.<sup>2</sup>

Although Indonesia is recognized as a country with a Muslim majority, it has relatively moderate, inclusive and tolerant religious thoughts, attitudes and practices, especially compared to other Muslim countries such as those in the Middle East,<sup>3</sup> History in the post-Reformasi era reveals a slightly different reality, particularly regarding the high incidence of radicalism, extremism, intolerance, and religious violence.

In 2018, the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) of the State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta and Convey Indonesia conducted research on the issue of intolerance and its relationship to the discourse of jihad and terrorism. The study involved 1,859 students, as well as 322 teachers and lecturers in 34 provinces and 68 cities across Indonesia.<sup>4</sup> The results of the study showed that 86% of the students and university students, and 87.89% of the teachers and lecturers who were respondents, agreed that the government should ban the existence of minority religious groups that are considered to deviate from Islamic teachings. Among all respondents, 91.23% of them agreed that Islamic law should be implemented at the state level, 37.71% agreed that jihad means "qital" or taking up arms to fight against non-Muslims, 37.71% agreed that suicide bombings are part of the teachings of jihad in Islam, and 61.92% understood that the caliphate system is a system of government recognized in Islam.

Hate speech in the media, often in the name of religion, has the potential to spark horizontal conflict, both within and between religious communities. Information containing hate speech can trigger disputes between religious communities and within religious circles. According to him, this phenomenon is an inevitable part of the disruption of technological development.

Radical acts that tend toward violence are influenced by religious understanding in the areas of muamalah (religious affairs) and jihad, support for radical organizations, and sermons containing hostility and suspicion. Other factors considered to contribute to someone's susceptibility to intolerance and radicalization include culture, educational background, economic status, and social status. Based on the data above, it is clear that cases of radicalism, extremism, and religious intolerance are steadily

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<sup>1</sup> K.A. Steenbrink, "The Pancasila ideology and an Indonesian Muslim theology of religions," *The Muslim World*, Vol. 85, No. 3-4 (1998); D.E. Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam and the ideology of tolerance* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002); B.F. Intan, *Public Religion and the Pancasila-Based State of Indonesia: An Ethical and Sociological Analysis* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Irwan Abdullah, "Politik Bhinneka Tunggal Ika dalam keragaman budaya Indonesia," [The Politics of Unity in Diversity in Indonesian Culture] *Jurnal Masyarakat dan Budaya*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2003): 1-13; Parsudi Suparlan, "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika: Keanekaragaman Sukubangsa atau Kebudayaan?," [Unity in Diversity: Ethnic or Cultural Diversity?," Anthropology of Indonesia] *Antropologi Indonesia*, Vol. 72 (2003); Abdurrahman Wahid, *Ilusi Negara Islam: Ekspansi Gerakan Islam Transnasional di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Wahid Institute, 2009); Farid Masdar Mas'udi, *Syarah Konstitusi: UUD 1945 dalam Perspektif Islam* [Constitutional Commentary: The 1945 Constitution in an Islamic Perspective] (Ciputat: Pustaka Alvabet, 2010)

<sup>3</sup> Nurcholish Madjid, "Islamic Roots of Modern Pluralism: Indonesian Experience," *Studia Islamika*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1994); Robert W. Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Jeremy Menchik, *Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: Tolerance without Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> PPIM UIN Jakarta dan Convey, *Api dalam Sekam: Keberagamaan Muslim Gen-Z, Survei nasional tentang Keberagamaan di Sekolah dan Universitas di Indonesia* [Fire in the Chaff: The Religiousness of Gen-Z Muslims, a National Survey on Religiousness in Schools and Universities in Indonesia] (Jakarta: PPIM UIN Jakarta and Convey Indonesia, 2018).

increasing. This implies that the level of religious radicalization accompanied by violence in Indonesia remains high, potentially having a negative impact on the state and society.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, in facing the challenges of religious radicalism and violent extremism disguised as religion, it is essential for da'wah activists (dai-daiyah) to play a strategic role in changing the religious views of society. This is because the religious understanding of society is usually heavily influenced by da'wah preachers. These da'wah preachers actively construct the community's religious understanding through continuous da'wah activities carried out at various opportunities.

## Method

The research methodology used is a qualitative approach. With data collection techniques through semi-structural interviews (with preachers and daiyah, religious leaders, and participants (congregation or community) to explore views, experiences, and challenges in mainstreaming religious moderation), participant observation (directly observing da'wah activities, religious studies, or social interactions carried out by da'wah/daiyah to see the application of moderation values in real contexts, Documentation and Literature Studies (analyzing da'wah materials (text, audio, video), da'wah training curriculum, and official documents related to the religious moderation policy of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to obtain secondary data) and also with Focus Group Discussions (FGD): Focused discussions with da'wah/daiyah groups to understand group dynamics and shared consensus regarding religious moderation. Data Analysis Techniques using data triangulation. This section describes the tools of analysis along with the data and their sources.

## Result and Discussion

The discourse on moderation has been a hot topic of debate among Indonesian Muslim scholars. Citing the opinions of Azyumardi Azra and Din Syamsuddin, who explain that the term "moderate Islam" is equivalent to the term "ummatan wasaṭan" or "al-din al-wasaṭ." Also, the opinion of Iranian scholar Ali Shariati and Muhammadiyah figure HAMKA, who argues that "al-din al-wasaṭ" means that Islam lies between Christian esotericism and Jewish exotericism. Burhani ultimately emphasizes that the term "al-din al-wasaṭ," as defined in QS 2:143, should be interpreted as "center" or "heart," meaning religion that is the center and heart of civilization.<sup>6</sup>

"Moderate" is defined as an attitude or view that consistently avoids extreme behavior or expressions, or tends toward a middle dimension or path. (KBBI, 589). In the English dictionary, the word "moderate" means: 1) not extreme; 2) of or having (political issue) opinions that are not extreme (political views that are not extreme; for example political views that are not extreme left or extreme right; 3) keeping or kept within limits that are not excessive (keeping within limits that are not excessive); eating or drinking within limits that are not excessive.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID) 2006.*

<sup>6</sup> Ahmad Najib, "Islam Moderat Adalah Sebuah Paradoks" ["Moderate Islam Is a Paradox"], dalam Muhammadiyah Studies. *Jurnal Ma'arif*, Vol. 3, No. I. 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), h. 798.

Moderation, or wasathiyah, is a middle ground, not excessive, but firmly upholding the principles of Sharia. This is as referred to in Surah al-Baqarah 1:143.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا...

“And thus We have "I have made you (Muslims) a moderate community, that you may be witnesses over mankind, and that the Messenger (Muhammad) may be a witness over you" (Quran, Al-Baqarah: 143).

Islamic moderation is a religious understanding of Islam that embodies the most essential teachings of Islam. These teachings prioritize not only a good relationship with God but also a good relationship with all humanity. Moderation prioritizes an attitude of openness to differences, which is a blessing for humanity (sunnatullah). Islamic moderation also involves a stance that does not easily blame or label individuals or groups with differing views as infidels.

The moderate position in Indonesia is represented by the two largest religious organizations in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. These two organizations are categorized as a version of Islamic moderation due to their disagreement with the religious attitudes and views of hardliners who resort to violence or transform the public sphere in a revolutionary-radical manner. Both organizations have also opposed the idea of an Islamic state, a latent issue championed by hardline Muslims. For both, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), with Pancasila as its ideological foundation, the 1945 Constitution as its constitutional basis, and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika as its motto, is sufficient to accommodate the substantive elements of moderate Islamic teachings, which embrace the vision of rahmatan lil'alam (blessing for all the universe).

Religious moderation is the process of understanding and practicing religious teachings in a fair and balanced manner, avoiding extreme or excessive behavior when implementing them. Religious moderation does not mean moderating religion, because religion itself already contains the principles of moderation, namely justice and balance. It is not a religion if it teaches destruction on earth, injustice, and anger. Religion does not need further moderation. However, one's religious practice must always be pushed towards a middle path, must always be moderated, because it can become extreme, unfair, or even excessive.<sup>8</sup>

The limits on whether a religious understanding or experience can be considered excessive are when it violates three principles: first, humanitarian values;<sup>9</sup> second, mutual agreement;<sup>10</sup> and third,

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<sup>8</sup> Compilation Team of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Questions and Answers on Religious Moderation, Research and Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta: Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> If someone, in the name of religious teachings, for example, commits an act that demeans the dignity, worth, and worth of humanity, or even eliminates the existence of humanity itself, it can be considered a violation of humanitarian values. Their actions are clearly excessive or extreme. A concrete example is, under the pretext of religious jihad, someone detonates a bomb in the middle of a market, killing dozens or even hundreds of innocent people instantly. This is clearly an extreme act. When a person is praying and someone nearby is near death after falling into a well, they are obliged to interrupt their prayer and then help their brother who has fallen into the well. They can worship God after helping their brother. Another example is a doctor who must rush to fulfill his religious obligations. However, at the same time, there is a patient in an emergency that requires immediate treatment and cannot be postponed. In such a situation, the doctor must immediately save the patient and postpone his prayer, and then fulfill his religious obligations after helping the patient. In fact, this human nature also leads a religious person to respect nature and the lives of other creatures, even animals. For example, in Islam, a person who is about to pray must first purify himself and perform ablution with water. Suppose he is about to perform ablution with limited water, and suddenly a thirsty dog crawls beside him, needing water, which should he

public order. <sup>11</sup>This principle also emphasizes that religious moderation means balancing the goodness associated with God with the social well-being of the community.

#### Fundamental Differences (Right), Moderate (Center), Liberal (Left)

Description		Fundamental (Right)	Moderate (Center)	Liberal (Left)
1	Theology	Theocentrism (God's Power)	- Theocentrism - Anthropolism (Human Power) <sup>12</sup>	- Separation of religion - Spiritualism (previously there was no religion )
2	Epistemology	Textualist	Text, Reason and Reality (in accordance with the reasoning built in the sciences of jurisprudence etc.)	Rationalism, Pragmatism and Positivism
3	Tradition	There is no tradition (Haram, Bid'ah)	Tradition as an instrument of da'wah/ as the main thing and as a foothold. <sup>13</sup>	Hedonism, materialism, pragmatism (abstract only, for example celebrating <i>Valentine's Day</i> , Hi
4	Relationship between Religion and State	Integralistic (religion and state become one/state cannot stand alone without religion) <sup>14</sup>	Symbiotic/ synergistic (the State must have it), <i>maqasid al- shari'ah</i> .	Secularistic
5	HAM	There are no human rights, there are only Allah and human obligations. <sup>15</sup>	Protection of <i>maqasid al-shari'ah human rights</i> . <sup>16</sup>	Protection of mere freedom. <sup>17</sup>

prioritize? He should help the dog and then find another alternative way to purify himself, such as performing tayammum (cleansing with water) or purifying himself with dust. That is the spirit of balance emphasized in religious moderation. Thus, religion must be practiced to spread mercy and compassion for nature and all its contents. KH Maimoen Zubair: "If you see an ant slip and fall in the water, then pick it up and help it, perhaps that will be the cause of your forgiveness in the afterlife."

<sup>10</sup>Yes, if someone, in the name of religious teachings, violates the principles of Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), which have become a collective agreement of the Indonesian people in their nation and state, that can be considered extreme and a violation. In terms of community life, there are undoubtedly many regulations that have been mutually agreed upon by all residents in the neighborhood. If a citizen, in the name of their religion, violates these collective agreements, then they can also be considered excessive.

<sup>11</sup> Ahmad Najib, " Moderate Islam Is a Paradox " , in Muhammadiyah Studies. *Ma'arif Journal* , Vol. 3, no. I. 2008.

<sup>12</sup>Tawheed: al-As'ari and al Maturidi

<sup>13</sup>Reason thinks in *al- 'there is al- muh k kama h*.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore , the state must be in the form of a caliphate.

<sup>15</sup>Just return to the text of the Koran and there are no rules

Religious moderation is part of the nation's strategy for nurturing Indonesia. As a highly diverse nation, from the very beginning, the nation's founders successfully inherited a form of agreement for the nation and state: the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, which has clearly succeeded in uniting all religious, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural groups. Indonesia is not a religious state, but it also does not separate religion from the daily lives of its citizens. Religious values are upheld, combined with local wisdom and customs. Several religious laws are also institutionalized by the state, and religious and cultural rituals intertwine harmoniously and peacefully. This is the true identity of Indonesia: a deeply religious nation, characterized by politeness, tolerance, and the ability to engage in dialogue with diversity. Religious moderation must be part of a cultural strategy to maintain this identity.

The key to moderation is not to overdo it. <sup>18</sup>For example, a religious follower might label a fellow believer of the same religion as an infidel simply because they differ in religious beliefs, even though only God knows whether someone is an infidel or not. Someone who prays continuously from morning to night without regard for the social problems around them could be called excessive in their religion. Someone could also be said to be excessive in their religion if they deliberately belittle the religions of others, or indulge in insulting sacred figures or symbols of a particular religion. In such cases, they have fallen into an extreme that is inconsistent with the principles of religious moderation.<sup>19</sup>

Another extreme example is someone eating food or drinking something clearly forbidden according to their religion, simply because they want to tolerate other religious groups. Or they might vandalize a place of worship because they disagree with their religious beliefs. Another extreme behavior is participating in the basic rituals of another religion out of tolerance. None of this is acceptable. Moderation is simply respecting others and not interfering with them. They should be firm in their beliefs; there's no need to compromise their faith!

So where do moderate people stand between the two extreme poles?

A moderate person must be in the middle, standing between these two extremes. He or she is not excessively religious, but also not excessively trivializing religion. He or she is neither so extreme as to glorify religious texts without regard for reason, nor so excessively deify reason that it ignores the texts. In short, religious moderation aims to mediate and encourage both extremes in religion to move toward the middle, returning to the essence of religious teachings: humanizing humanity.<sup>20</sup>

According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, the principles of moderate religion encompass two things: justice and balance. Being just means putting everything in its place while implementing it properly and as quickly as possible. A balanced attitude, on the other hand,

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<sup>16</sup> *hifz al-din, hifz al-nafs, hifz al'aql, hifz al-mal, and hifz al-nasl-wa al-'ird*. Example: women's rights (right to support and shelter)

<sup>17</sup>For example, freedom of same-sex marriage, freedom not to religion, gay freedom etc.

<sup>18</sup>The Compilation Team of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Questions and Answers on Religious Moderation, Research and Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta: Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019

<sup>19</sup>Compilation Team of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Questions and Answers on Religious Moderation, Research and Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta: Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019.

<sup>20</sup>Compilation Team of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Questions and Answers on Religious Moderation, Research and Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta: Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019.

means always standing in the middle between the two poles. In terms of worship, for example, a moderate believes that religion is a form of devotion to God through carrying out His teachings, oriented towards efforts to glorify humanity. Extreme people often fall into the trap of practicing religion in the name of God solely to defend His glory, while neglecting the human aspect. Religious people in this way are willing to kill fellow human beings "in the name of God," even though preserving humanity itself is part of the core of religious teachings.<sup>21</sup>

Another question that often arises is, are moderates not religiously steadfast? Of course not. A moderate must also have firm convictions and a strong religious spirit. However, he must be able to distinguish between the core teachings of the religion, where he must take a firm stand, and which interpretations of the teachings, where he must be tolerant, respect the views of others, and avoid blaming. Regarding fundamental religious matters, there should be no compromise in terms of belief and practice. However, for religious matters where the legal nature is debated and where there are diverse views, a moderate will adopt a certain legal stance for himself, but not force that law to apply to others. That is the meaning of tolerance.

The moderate position in Indonesia is represented by the two largest religious organizations in Indonesia, namely Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. These two organizations are grouped into a version of Islamic moderation because of their disagreement with the religious attitudes and views of hardliners who use violent methods or transform the public sphere in a revolutionary-radical manner. Both organizations have also from the outset opposed the idea of an Islamic state, a latent issue championed by hardline Muslims. For both, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), with Pancasila as its ideological foundation, the 1945 Constitution as its constitutional basis, and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* as its motto, is sufficient to accommodate the substantive elements of moderate Islamic teachings that envision *a blessing for all the worlds*.

Meanwhile, Azyumardi Azra and Din Syamsuddin explained that the term moderate Islam has an equivalent word with the term *ummatan wasaʿatan* or *al-din al-wasaʿat*, also the opinion of Iranian scholar Ali Syariati and Muhammadiyah figure HAMKA, that *al-din al-wasaʿat* means that Islam is in the middle between Christian esotericism and Jewish exotericism, in the end, Burhani emphasized that the term *al-din al-wasaʿat* as intended in QS 2; 143 must be interpreted as *center or heart*, namely religion which is the center and heart of civilization.<sup>22</sup>

Islamic moderation is a religious ideology that embodies the most essential teachings of Islam. These teachings emphasize not only a good relationship with God but also a good relationship with all humanity. Moderation emphasizes an open attitude toward differences, which is a blessing for humanity (*sunnatullah*). Islamic moderation also involves a stance that does not easily blame or accuse individuals or groups with differing views.

For NU, Islamic moderation is Islam *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jama'ah* (Aswaja), Islam that is different from other nations, which is guided by the Qur'an, Al-Sunnah, Al-Ijma', and Al-Qiyas. In the field of faith, it follows the school of thought. Imam Abu Hasan Al-Ash'ari and Imam Abu Mansur al-

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<sup>21</sup>Compilation Team of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Questions and Answers on Religious Moderation, Research and Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta: Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019.

<sup>22</sup> Ahmad Najib, "Moderate Islam Is a Paradox", in Muhammadiyah Studies. *Ma'arif Journal*, Vol. 3, no. I. 2008.

Maturidi; in the field of fiqh, it follows one of the four schools of thought (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali; and in the field of Sufism it follows the school of Imam al-Junayd al-Baghdadi and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali ) .

The operational form of Islamic moderation is the process of realizing Islamic values through the form of da'wah. In terms of da'wah, there are 4 main characteristics that are the basis of NU's Ahlussunnah da'wah:

- a) *Al-Tawassut* means having a middle, moderate attitude, neither extreme left nor extreme right, as summarized from the word of Allah SWT in the Qur'an, Surah Al Baqarah, verse 143.
- b) *al-Tawazzun* or balance in all things, including the use of 'aqli arguments (arguments originating from rational thought) and naqli arguments (originating from the Qur'an and Hadith) as stated in the Qur'an, Surah al-Hadid, verse 25.
- c) *Al-'I'tidal* or upright, namely being fair and not being unjust to fellow human beings just because of an attitude of hatred as revealed in the Qur'an, Surah al-Maidah, verse 8.
- d) *Tolerance* , or tolerance, refers to appreciating differences and respecting those with differing life principles. However, this does not mean acknowledging or justifying these differing beliefs in affirming one's own beliefs.

The establishment of religious moderation requires collective effort, both by individuals and institutions, both society and the state. Moderate religious groups must speak out and no longer choose to be the silent majority. Moreover, the involvement of women will be crucial in efforts to strengthen religious moderation, given that violence in the name of religion can be perpetrated by both men and women. Every component of the nation must be confident that Indonesia possesses the social capital to strengthen religious moderation. This social capital consists of local cultural values, the rich diversity of customs, traditions of deliberation, and the culture of mutual cooperation inherited from Indonesian society for generations. We must nurture this social capital to create a harmonious life within cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity. If carried out together, Indonesia can become a global inspiration in practicing religious moderation.

Religious moderation is believed to be an important social capital in supporting sustainable national development. Religious moderation has been legally established as a supporting factor for national development in Presidential Decree Number 18 of 2020 concerning the 2020-2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN). The Ministry of Religious Affairs is mandated as the main institution (leading sector) in developing a moderate religious life for the Indonesian nation. Based on the above considerations, training to strengthen religious moderation for State Civil Apparatus (ASN) within the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia is very significant in ensuring ASN have a moderate understanding and practice of religion. This module is designed to conceptually and operationally guide the implementation of Religious Moderation Training for ASN within the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.

Religious moderation is a perspective, attitude, and behavior that takes a middle ground, always acting fairly, balanced, and not extreme in one's religious beliefs. Moderation also refers to a balance between commitment to one's religion and respect for the beliefs of others. Indicators of Religious

Moderation: 1. Humanity 2. Public Welfare 3. Justice 4. Balance 5. Constitutional Obedience 6. National Commitment 7. Tolerance 8. Anti-Violence 9. Respect for Tradition

### Implementation of religious moderation

There are at least three frameworks for implementing religious moderation in Indonesia.

#### 1) Moderation related to state commitment.

Commitment to the nation is a crucial indicator of adherence to the fundamental national consensus, particularly regarding the acceptance of Pancasila as the state ideology . If someone loses their commitment to national agreements, it can be assumed they have lost their moderate character.

#### 2) Strengthening Tolerance ( *Tasamuh* )

Strengthening tolerance, including social, political, and religious tolerance. Tolerance is an attitude of giving space and not interfering with the rights of others to believe, express their beliefs, and express opinions, even if these differ from our own. The aspect of tolerance is not only related to religious beliefs, but can also relate to differences in race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, culture, and so on. Tolerance is the result of a moderate attitude in religion. Moderation is a process, tolerance is the result. A moderate person may disagree with an interpretation of religious teachings, but they will not blame others who disagree with them. Likewise, a moderate person will certainly have a bias towards a religious interpretation, but they will not force it on others.

#### 3) Anti-radicalism.

Radicalism here is understood as an ideology and understanding that wants to make changes to the social and political system by using violent/extreme methods. The counter-narrative strategies of the daiyah in preaching are: 1. Millennial language style approach , 2. Instilling the Four Pillars as a guideline for the nation and state , 3. Developing the Inclusive & Moderate Teachings of Islam *Rahmatan Lil 'Aalamiin* , 4. *Hubbul Wathon Minal Iman* . 5. *Respecting Pluralism and Cultural Diversity* . Two approaches that must also be developed by daiyah are soft and hard power approaches. Soft power includes: 1. Strengthening the Majelis Ta'lim, Tahlilan, Yasinan, Kenduren Culture, Arisan, etc. 2. Introducing and Providing References to Moderate Ustad and Kiai (Gus Baha, Gus Miftah, Habib Lutfi, Ustadah Maria Ulfah Anshor, etc.) . 3. Religious and National Dialogue . 4. Empowerment of millennial groups through creative-innovative activities . 5. Strengthening the values of *Aswaja* ( *Tasamuh, Tawazun, Tawassuth, I'tidal, Mabadi' khaira ummah, amar ma'ruf nahi munkar bil ma'ruf* ) . Hard power approach: 1. Disbandment of Prohibited Organizations . ) 2. Legal and Regulatory Certainty . 3. Synergy-Coordination with the TNI-Polri, Densus 88, BNPT . 4. Firm Action Against Matters That Threaten Security and Community Harmony (Report to the RT, RW, and the police any indication of secret religious gatherings / unknown to the local community .

## **Conclusion**

Religious moderation is necessary because extreme attitudes in religion are inconsistent with the essence of religious teachings. Extreme behavior in the name of religion often leads to conflict, hatred, intolerance, and even wars that destroy civilization. Such attitudes need to be moderated. Religious moderation is an effort to restore religious understanding and practice to its essence: to safeguard human dignity, honor, and civilization, not the other way around. Religion should not be used for anything that would actually damage civilization, because since its inception, religion has been essentially intended to build civilization itself.

The role of Islamic preachers (daiyah) goes beyond serving as a source of religious knowledge, but also as a place for the community to ask questions and consult on various issues, including family matters, social issues, politics, culture, and so on. The strategic role of Islamic preachers (daiyah) can serve as a resource for detecting signs of radicalism within their congregations and simultaneously developing community-based prevention mechanisms against the influence of radical and extremist movements.

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