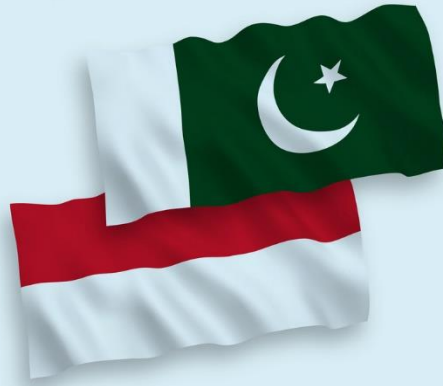




MUSLIM Institute



A Seminar

Nation-State, Islam and Democracy:

Perspective from
Pakistan and Indonesia

Thursday, 1st August 2024

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MUSLIM Institute in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia organized a seminar titled “**Nation-State, Islam and Democracy: Perspective from Pakistan and Indonesia**” on Thursday, 1st August 2024 at National Library, Islamabad. Chairman Nahdatul Ulema, Indonesia Mr. Ulil Abshar Abdalla was the Chief Guest of the Seminar. Researchers, students, academicians, journalists, political leaders, representatives of think tanks, and people from different walks of life participated in the seminar.



Remarks by the Speakers

Summary of the views shared by Speakers is as follows:



Asif Tanveer Awan

Public Relations Officer, MUSLIM Institute

Islamic teachings emphasize a broad outline of a welfare state rather than a particular form of governance. All four rightly guided Caliphs of Islam were selected through different procedures. Such procedures embraced different and diversified ways of governance as per the needs of the society. In Muslim societies, Islam does not allow representatives to constitute anti-Islamic policies that contradict Islamic values and teachings. Although in peculiar circumstances Islam allows the governing bodies to give concessions on some basic rules, these concessions cannot be given in normal conditions. Islamic Republic of Pakistan was founded on the religious principles of Islam, which serves as the unifying force for its diverse cultures, tribes, castes, and ethnicities, creating a cohesive nation-state. The founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah explained the concept of democracy in the following words and I quote,



I have had one underlying principle in mind, the principle of Muslim democracy. It is my belief that our salvation lies in following the golden rules of conduct set for us by our great lawgiver, the Prophet of Islam Muhammad (SAWW). Let us lay the foundations of our democracy on the basis of truly Islamic ideals and principles. Our Almighty has taught us that ‘Our decision in the affairs of the State shall be guided by discussions and consultations’.

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah





H.E. Rahmat K. Hindiarta

Acting Ambassador of Indonesia

Indonesia is one of the world's largest democracies with a strong economy and G20 membership, making it a significant political player. It continues to elevate its contributions globally in areas such as the economy, cooperation, peace, and security. Indonesia and Pakistan are the largest Muslim countries in the world. The two brotherly countries are also part of the big family of democracies. Significant similarities of both countries pave the way for further cooperation and collaboration. Our relationship is based on a great legacy of our respected founding fathers President Sukarno and Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The present drive toward bilateral relations is urgent and increasingly relevant for people of both countries. Our story will not find too much favor with our youth unless we make it relevant by taking concrete measures through good economic relations and strong people-to-people contact. And this event is part of people-to-people contact. Indonesia is a friend of all parties that uphold the peaceful life and harmony in the world. That's why the Indonesian Embassy is open to building relations and collaboration with all parties in Pakistan. Recently, I also visited Baluchistan and met with religious scholars in Quetta.



Tariq Osman Hayder

Former Ambassador

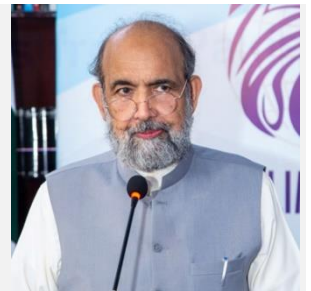
The origin of the ideology behind the movement for independence of the Muslims of the subcontinent, led by the Muslim League under Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, laid the foundation for the friendship between Pakistan and Indonesia. At the end of World War II, Indonesia was under the Dutch occupation. The Muslim League made it clear to the British rule that Muslim soldiers should not be used against any Muslim country or Muslim people. The Dutch asked the Britishers to help them to reconquer Indonesia. Around seven hundred of the Muslim troops in the British army left their posts, their families, and pensions for Indonesia. These people remained there throughout their war of liberation. That is on the level of people-to-people support but also on the level of leadership, there was close friendship between great leader Sukarno and Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. In 1965, President Sukarno offered submarines to guard Karachi and planes to bolster the country's air defense against India. This example shows the level of support and affection of Indonesia towards Pakistan. There is a great potential between our two countries in the fields of tourism, education, and especially trade which is the driver in today's bilateral relations.

We should dedicate ourselves to analyzing and exploring these potentials to their best level. Embassies in both countries should have articles published reminding the new generation of what is being done and we should encourage more scholarly writings on the foundations of this friendship.



Dr. Qibla Ayaz

Ad-hoc Member Shariat Appellate Bench,
Supreme Court



There is a significant role of Nahdlatul Ulama in Indonesia in terms of its contributions to peacebuilding, education, and moral development. Drawing from personal interactions with Indonesian scholars and officials, including former President Ajoko Wadudo, I want to say that Indonesia's commitment to bridging gaps between conflicting groups in Afghanistan is commendable.

This commitment was demonstrated through high-level meetings facilitated by Indonesian leaders, where scholars from Pakistan and Afghanistan engaged in dialogue with their Indonesian counterparts, showcasing Indonesia's dedication to regional peace. A pivotal moment was the offer by the Vice Chancellor of Indonesia's leading women's university to educate Afghan girls within Islamic and social norms, highlighting Indonesia's progressive stance on female education.

Nahdlatul Ulama prioritizes education, health, welfare, civic sense, and moral development, particularly among the youth. This indirect influence on governance has been significant, as exemplified by the involvement of figures like former President Abdur Rahman Wahid. Indonesia's geographical position, distant from conflicts in the Muslim world, allows it to play a unique and decisive role in uniting the Ummah and resolving international disputes. Given its neutral stance, Indonesia commands trust among Muslim nations, positioning it as a potential Geneva of the Muslim world, capable of fostering unity and peace across the region.



Mr Ahmer Bilal Soofi

Former Federal Law Minister, President RSIL
and Quran Covenant Research Center

There are covenants under the Quran that encompass not only historical covenants but also present-day international agreements, daily contracts, international treaties that Muslims must uphold, and legislative covenants. Every law of the land is a social contract between the state and the individual, which is covered in the definition of the words "Mesakh" and "Akhoat" in the Quran. The Quran strongly emphasizes these concepts, making it convenient for Muslims to identify commonalities and uphold the law in their country as an aspect of their faith. It is an obligation for every Muslim to uphold all "Mesakh" under the Quran, whether it is a private contract for trade or otherwise.

The Exalted Prophet (Blessings and Salutations be Upon Him) was not only a lawgiver but also an international law practitioner, as he drafted, executed, and utilized treaties to create influence. Unfortunately, this aspect of the Exalted Prophet (Blessings and Salutations be Upon Him) Sunnah has been overlooked in the Muslim community. We fail to participate in international negotiations and forums, such as the United Nations, where Shura (consultation) takes place. These forums have become venues for concentration and value exchange.

As Muslims, we need to collaborate intellectually and participate with a uniform strategy in global forums. We must excel in the art of treaty negotiations and develop expertise to bring us at par with other nations. Everyday issues, such as contracts and agreements, are tied to the covenants in the Quran. As entrepreneurs, we have a specific covenant to excel in our worldly roles, whether as businessmen, agriculturalists, scientists, or scholars. If we fulfill the mandate of the law, we ultimately fulfill the mandate of the Quran. Therefore, Muslims should perform 'amal-e-salih' (good deeds) for the state.

Chief Guest

Ulil Abshar Abdalla

Chairman Nahdatul Ulama, Indonesia



Even though we are far apart, our shared Sufi traditions bring us together. These spiritual practices have deeply influenced our cultures and religions. Sufism's teachings of purity and wisdom touch people all over the world, crossing borders and uniting us with a shared vision. I also want to pay tribute to the Sufi missionaries who spread Islam in Indonesia. Their work in promoting peace, tolerance, and spirituality has had a lasting impact on Indonesian society.

As the countries with the largest Muslim populations, Pakistan and Indonesia have a big responsibility. We must uphold and show the true image of Islam. In the past two decades, Indonesia has held six peaceful, free, and fair elections. This shows the strength and maturity of Indonesia's political system. Indonesia's experience proves that Islam and democracy can coexist, showing that Islamic values can work well with democratic principles. There is often a question about whether nationalism and Islam can go hand in hand. Drawing on the wisdom of scholars and leaders, I believe they can. When nationalism is based on justice, equality, and compassion, it is compatible with Islam.

The vision of a nation-state from our founding fathers and spiritual leaders includes diversity, promotes unity, and creates a sense of belonging for all citizens. Pakistan and Indonesia offer important lessons for the Muslim world and beyond. Our shared heritage, commitment to democratic values, and faith in Islam provide a strong foundation for a just and prosperous future. Dialogue, mutual respect, and collaboration are key to overcoming challenges and building a brighter future for everyone.



Vote of Thanks

Malik Kashif Aslam

On behalf of the MUSLIM Institute, I extend my sincere gratitude to all dignitaries, excellencies, and participants for generating thought-provoking ideas and giving valuable input at the seminar. I am especially thankful to the Embassy of Indonesia in Pakistan, and the worthy Ambassador His Excellency Rahmat K. Hindiarta, for collaborating with the MUSLIM Institute in organizing this seminar. I am also grateful and appreciate the Nahdatul Ulema especially Chairman Nahdatul Ulema Mr. Ulil Abshar Abdalla for participating in this seminar. We are hopeful that this seminar will contribute to strengthening the existing brotherly relations between Pakistan and Indonesia, and help address emerging challenges.

