

Fourth Speech in the Conference: 'The Muslim Youth... Pioneers of Real Change'

Reposition and Revitalization of Muslim Youth

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا إِلَى صِرَاطِهِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ، وَالسَّيْرُ عَلَى هَدْيِ سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ. وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ، وَمَنْ دَعَا بِدَعْوَتِهِ، وَالتَّرَمَّ بِشَرِيعَتِهِ، وَبَدَّلَ جُهْدَهُ لِإِقَامَةِ الْخِلَافَةِ عَلَى مِنْهَاجِهِ، وَمَنْ جَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ. آمِينَ

May the grace of Allah Almighty and His Blessings shower all of us, and may Allah reward you with goodness for your presence in this forum.

Dear Sisters, Distinguished Audience, and Youth Activists

We must realize that massive liberalization has been pursued by the Western countries against the Muslim children and youth in Indonesia. The West has been designing global strategies and various programs to win the hearts, minds, and allegiances of the Muslim youth, to be faithful to the idea of secular, liberal values, the Western way of life and its system. Unfortunately, these programs are facilitated by the government and are currently underway. As a result, the position of the Muslim youth defined by Islam, as being the pioneers of real change and guardians of Islam has now been lost, and their potential and vitality has become wasted.

The Western strategy to liberalize Muslim children and youth is evident in the document "*plan of action to prevent violent extremism*" adopted by the United Nations and launched on last February 12, 2016. There are two things we have to criticize. Firstly, there are efforts to keep Muslim youth away from understanding the true Islam. Secondly, there are efforts to seize the potential and vitality of the Muslim youth in order to preserve the hegemony of the Western capitalist nations - especially the US - which is behind the UN.

The efforts to keep the Muslim youth away from understanding the true Islam appear in the action plan of youth empowerment to prevent violent extremism. The UN Secretary-General mentions the result of the youth declaration in Amman in 2015, stating that the youth should become pioneers in world peacekeeping and become active in preventing violent extremism. But long before this, the West created a narrative pushing the idea that the perpetrators of violence are Islamic groups. Starting with the bombing of the World Trade Center in 2001 up until the more recent Paris attack, Ankara bomb, Sarinah bomb, and the latest bombing in Brussels this year, the perpetrators are constantly linked to Islamic groups.

And the Western strategy to counter violent extremism has no longer been concerned with physical war, but with a war of thought and politics. At the suggestion of the Rand Corporation, the US has formed a network of moderate Muslims as its partners. In addition, these priority partners include liberal and secular Muslim academics, as well as moderate young intellectuals and scholars. Senior researcher at Rand Co. Angel Rabasa defines moderate Muslims as those who accept pluralism, feminism, gender equality, democratization, humanism, and civil society.

Dear Sisters, Distinguished Audience, and Youth Activists *Rahimakumullah...*

The Indonesian government has currently been engaged in mainstreaming moderate Islam focusing on the campuses, schools, and *pesantren* (traditional Islamic boarding school). Recently, President Jokowi invited the grand sheikh of Al-Azhar and asked him to spread the ideology of moderate Islam. Furthermore, the government, through the Ministry of Religious Affairs, will change the curriculum of Islamic education to use the name of peaceful Islam or Islam *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*. The Minister of Religious Affairs has clearly stated that this curriculum has been organized with the target that students are delivered the teachings of Islam in a way that is more respectful of diversity, to promote peace and tolerance, and to promote democracy. According to him, the module can also be a way of preventing the spread of radicalism, which may arise in educational institutions. The Ministry of Defense is rolling out a national mentoring of 'country defense', especially for students, university students, and *santri* (students of *pesantren*). It is meant to instill youth nationalism in order to counteract transnational radical ideas coming into the country.

Moderate Islam is essentially a doctrine to accept everything that is contrary to the teachings of Islam. Not simply accepting the reality of a difference, but they must accept the idea of difference itself. Moderates are those that do not disturb the LGBT community and accept Kufr leaders in the name of human rights; they are happy to attend mass at church, and compromise with Kufr customs in the name of pluralism. The danger of the idea of moderate Islam has been clearly evident. Mutual suspicion has been emerging amongst the Muslim Ummah. The Ummah is fractured into radical Muslim and moderate Muslim groups. Indeed, young Muslims must be cultivated so that they have the true Islamic personality with a strong Islamic Aqeedah and noble *akhlaq* (ethics), as well as concern about the problems being faced by this Ummah. But this effort is now being hampered. Muslim student associations in schools, colleges/universities, and *pesantren* are suspected of being nests of terrorists. As a result, the young generation could be kept away from the correct understanding of Islam. And the sincere da'wah carriers who struggle to establish the laws of Allah (swt) are kept away from the Ummah or accused of being extremists. In fact, the Ummah needs political Islam to solve the multidimensional problems caused by the implementation of a system of liberal democracy and capitalist economy. However, the West wants Muslims to be hostile to the entire Shariah and its fighters. The West wants the Muslim youth - as the potential leaders of the Ummah— to be moderate, because moderate Muslims will not threaten their existence.

Dear Sisters, Distinguished Audience, and Youth Activists *Rahimakumullaah*

The second critical issue is the empowerment of youth in economic and social fields, which in truth is part of Western efforts to hijack the potential of Muslim youth. In the same document '*Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism*', the United Nations said that the triggers of violence – beside religious motives – are social marginalization and poverty. To prevent this, the UN has designed a follow-up action targeting the youth on the issues of education, skills development, employment facilitation, strategic communication, the internet, and social media.

On the issue of education, one of the points we need to address is the necessity of young people to have access to the sources of vocational education and incubation of entrepreneurial talent. The capitalist-style education system is pragmatic and pro-market; it is no longer intended to generate scientists but to produce workers. Graduates of vocational schools, diplomas and undergraduate degrees are prepared to become laborers of the companies belonging to Western capitalists. Orientation of research at the universities is no longer directed by the state to build the nation's economic independence but it becomes directed by corporate interests. And in fact, the problem of poverty itself is actually caused by the implementation of the greedy capitalist economic system.

On the issue of communication, the Internet and social media, on the pretext that these facilities have been used by extremists to spread the ideology of violence and have managed to recruit young people, the UN will support thousands of young activists and artists around the world in fighting back against violent extremism with the use of online media through music, art, film, comics, and humor. Meanwhile we know that during the last century it is the Western countries that have led the innovation in information and communications technology. They have made this technology the cultivation tool of liberal culture. By promoting a hedonistic, materialistic, consumerist, individualistic, and permissive lifestyle, they have destroyed the Muslim youth.

In today's era of a knowledge-based economy, the capitalist companies that produce communication devices and digital information technology that are used, greatly benefited from their use for reaping huge profits, direct policy. Jokowi's vision of Indonesia as the largest market for the digital economy in Southeast Asia, with a target of 130 billion dollars in 2020, has made him ask his Ministers to maintain good relations with Silicon Valley, the center of the creative industry in the US. However, who is in fact occupying that valley, often referred to as 'the valley of hope'? None other than the technology companies that promote their liberal lifestyle.

The Media have drugged the Muslim children and teens. Most of their time is used to make unimportant status updates, to chat with friends especially the opposite sex, and gossip about their idol artists' lifestyle. The idea of a tempting offer in the entertainment business; or a quick way to get rich by becoming an actress or singer have made Muslim children and youth willing to

stand in long lines in hot and cold weather for auditions of various talent events. Not to mention the soap operas that have promoted the hedonistic lifestyle and egalitarian position of parents and children, which has been educating children to be disrespectful to their parents and forming the attitudes contrary to *akhlaq* of Islam.

This is the global strategy and Western agenda to keep away the generations of Muslims from the true Islam and to hijack their potential. They have become the ambassadors of liberalism and simultaneously victims of Western values and lifestyles as well as its systems. The youth studying Islam eagerly are directed to be moderate Muslims in favor of the Western ideas, values, and systems. While others are directed to become of the '*alay*' generation that suffer crises of identity, and their future is destroyed through the idea of freedom to behave as they wish. And so they fall into the dark world, become involved in illegal drugs, illicit sex, alcohol consumption, prostitution, and other deviant behavior.

Surely by these means, we have lost our precious treasure. And we see that it was seized by the imperialists that loathe the goodness of this Ummah. We have to save them, because it is a real misguidance. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said:

«مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ»

“Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest of faith.” [Narrated by Muslim] This is an obligation from Allah (swt) upon us. To eliminate the *munkar* and seek to restore the position and role of the youth as demanded by Islam. They must be leaders of change, the trusted guardians of Islam. Like when Rasulullah (saw) faced the challenges of *da'wah* from the Quraish, the youth were there in the front row of the armed forces against the Kufr. The youth must be ambassadors of Islam as exemplified by Mus'ab bin 'Umair (ra), who was asked by the Prophet (saw) to carry the *da'wah* to Yathrib and so became the first Muslim ambassador. Mus'ab left his false pride in the *dunya* and replaced it with the real glory of the *Akhirah*. And because of his struggle, in less than one year almost the entire population of Yathrib had converted to Islam, Masha Allah... Allahu Akbar.

To restore the position, potential, and vitality of the Muslim children and youth, there must be a movement carried out by an Islamic political party to raise the awareness of the Muslim youth. If not by an Islamic political party grounded upon *mabda'* (ideas and methods) of Islam, then the goal to restore the position and vitality of Muslim youth corresponded to Islam would not be realized. It can only be an Islamic political party that will reveal the Western conspiracy to destroy the young generation of Islam, and reveal the failure of the Capitalist secular ideology and liberal democracy that has caused only misery to human lives.

Indeed, the important role of the youth will be optimized in the society that implements *kaaffah* Islam. It is the Khilafah upon the methodology of the Prophethood that will prepare everything necessary for the empowerment of the youth. The education, social, economic, and political system applied by the Khalifah will all support the realisation of the potential of the youth, as trusted guardians and protectors of Islam, that will bring progress in world civilization and secure the Ummah's welfare. Their intellects and hearts will always be tethered to Islam and the glory of the Ummah. Therefore, today's direction of intellectual improvement and empowerment of the Muslim youth is in aiming to establish the Khilafah '*ala Minhajin Nubuwwah*.

Finally, I call upon the Muslim youth with the word of Allah (swt) in Surah Kahf verse 28:

﴿وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا﴾

والحمد لله رب العالمين والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

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