INTERFAITH DIALOGUE IN INDONESIA’S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Novita Rakhmawati

Department of International Relations,
Universitas Prof. Dr. Moestopo (Beragama) Jakarta
Email: vitanice@yahoo.com

Abstract

Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan program dialog antar kepercayaan dan aktivitas diplomasi Indonesia terkini, melihat sebab-sebab mengapa pemerintah Indonesia, terutama Direktorat Diplomasi Publik, Kementerian Luar Negeri, terlibat dalam dialog antar kepercayaan, dan untuk memberikan analisis kritis. Tulisan ini berargumen bahwa sejak dibentuknya Direktorat Diplomasi Publik tahun 2002, pemerintah Indonesia telah mendukung berbagai program dialog antar kepercayaan tingkat nasional, regional, dan internasional. Penulis menemukan bahwa pengadopsian dialog antar kepercayaan dalam diplomasi publik Indonesia ini dipengaruhi kondisi ‘intermesik’ (internasional dan domestik) tertentu. Aktivitas ini merupakan perkembangan positif dalam diplomasi Indonesia karena menyadari peran komunitas beragama dalam proses pembuatan kebijakan luar negeri. Akan tetapi, penulis merekomendasikan agar dialog antar kepercayaan ini dibuat lebih praktis, melibatkan tingkat akar rumput, dan menjadi lebih responsif terhadap kondisi ‘intermesik’ terkini.

Keywords: religion, International Relations, foreign policy, public diplomacy, interfaith dialogue, Indonesia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

“Interfaith dialogue, both regional and trans-national has become a mainstream in diplomacy today”

- N. Hassan Wirayuda -

I. Introduction

When some plane hijacker attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in September 11, 2001, using the name of Allah in their action, and then answered by President Bush’s call for a “crusade” against terrorism, hence the debate over how religion motivates violence has raised. This condition has impelled almost every country in the world to build a
great deal efforts and resources on devising the ways and means to find and capture the terrorists, to uncover and root-out their network and to bring them to the court. There were also many conferences and cooperation had established to prevent terrorist attacks and to deal with the post attacks condition. In Indonesia, the accusations of being the home for terrorist become strengthen and the image of radical Islam increase significantly. The deadly Bali bombing in 2002, which killed 202 persons, 164 of whom were foreign nationals obviously made the situation worsen. To respond a global war on terrorism compelling by the United States, the Indonesian government attempts to implement a moderate way. One of an effort was promoted and advocated interfaith dialogue program in diplomacy.

This new policy brings greater support on interfaith dialogue programs and activities that previously have been implemented by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The basic consideration to implement interfaith dialogue in Indonesian diplomacy was the statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Nur Hassan Wirayuda at the opening ceremony of the International Interfaith Dialogue at Yogyakarta, 2004:

"Our success in the fight against terrorism, in the medium and long term, will depend on the success of our efforts in empowering the moderates—both within our respective societies and among the moderate countries."

Consequently, some interfaith dialogue projects have been initiated by the Indonesian government, particularly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The existing research deal with Indonesian diplomacy, are mostly discussing about the role of the Islamic factor in influencing Indonesian foreign policy. They have yet to discuss interfaith dialogue activities in Indonesian diplomacy and how interfaith dialogue becomes new concern in Indonesian diplomacy. Therefore, a research about interfaith dialogue in Indonesian diplomacy is a new topic and will produce advance discussion in Indonesian recent diplomacy.

II. Interfaith Dialogue Programs and Cooperation in Indonesian Public Diplomacy

Since 2002, Indonesian government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has special attention to interfaith dialogue activities. This special attention has reflected from various programs in national, regional, and international scale on interfaith dialogue, which has been initiated and sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Interfaith dialogues become one of the priorities in Indonesian public diplomacy, which is a part of the 'total
Total diplomacy means the diplomacy that attempts to engage all nation-states component in making diplomatic policy. The analogy of this diplomacy is similar with total football, where the ‘goal’ in the football game is produced by the involvement and the cooperation of each player. Hence, each player has his contribution to create the goal.\textsuperscript{4}

Total diplomacy has a comprehensive and reciprocal characteristic. Comprehensive means, in the implementation of total diplomacy, Indonesian government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs generates to engage all components of society. Hence, to make the implementation of total diplomacy successful, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs not only involves the government branch but also components of civil society such as academicians, community figures, and religious leaders as well. Whereas the reciprocal characteristic means that the total diplomacy needs a mutual process from the government to civil society as well as from civil society to government. These characteristics express that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attempts to accommodate ideas, opinions, and aspirations from all nation-state components.\textsuperscript{5}

Interfaith dialogue agenda in Indonesian public diplomacy corresponds with the role of the Directorate of Public Diplomacy, which promotes and supports interfaith dialogue programs and activities in recent years. The Directorate of Public Diplomacy is a new division in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that established in March 2002. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this restructurization was an effort to adjust contemporary development in international and domestic circumstances. In this regard, several programs have become priorities in the public diplomacy, such as, (1) activities which promote the implementation of democracy; (2) interfaith dialogue, and empowering the moderates; and (3) economic recovery efforts. One of the missions of the Indonesian public diplomacy is to support the Indonesian government effort, which has explicit rejection and relates terrorism with certain religion.\textsuperscript{6}

There are two reasons why the Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has adopted public diplomacy. First, the Indonesian government realized the importance of partnership between the Department of Foreign Affairs and all nation-state components. This importance relates to the capability to carry out the role in reaching out non-state actors and public abroad. Second, there is a need to build foreign policy constituent, which has sufficient information about foreign policy issues. From this partnership, on one hand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is capable to absorb people’s opinion, which is very important as an input in the process of foreign policy making and its implementation. On the
other hand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a competency to build foreign policy constituent, which can be understood, or the most important is the constituent that can support the policy. 7

The role of the public diplomacy in supporting Indonesian foreign policy is to empower the moderate, enhance people-to-people contact, disseminate information about foreign policy, embrace and influence public domestically and internationally, collect advice and input for implementation of foreign policy. In dealing with its role, Indonesian public diplomacy performance is mainly directed to promote a new image of Indonesia as the moderate, democratic and progressive and to build diplomatic constituents by cooperation and embracing all stakeholders in foreign policy. 8 Therefore, to fulfill those purposes, since being established in 2002, the activity of the directorate of public diplomacy inside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was included interfaith dialogue, has involved religious leaders, the mass media, scholars, think-tank, and other components in civil society.

The Indonesian government has initiated several interfaith dialogue programs and activities that attempt to be the permanent features of Indonesian diplomacy in years to come. One of the programs that involve some countries from Asia Pacific region is the International or Regional Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation. This forum is a meeting among the Asia-Pacific countries to discuss problems and share their experiences in interfaith dialogue. In this regional interfaith dialogue, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, and Philippines become the co-host and co-sponsor. Up to 2009, there are five regional interfaith dialogues.

The first regional interfaith dialogue held on December 6-7, 2004 in Yogyakarta. This International Dialogue on Interfaith Cooperation brought the theme: "Dialogue on Interfaith Cooperation: Community Building and Harmony." This event was co-sponsored by the Governments of Indonesia and Australia, together with Muhammadiyah, one of the largest mass Muslims organizations in Indonesia. 9 This first Regional Interfaith Dialogue was followed by the "Cebu Regional Interfaith Dialogue," which was held in Cebu, Filipina on March 14-16, 2006. This event was attended by 15 countries, including all ASEAN countries, Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste, and Fiji. Approximately 175 participants were attending this event. The important result from this second interfaith dialogue was "the Declaration of the Cebu Dialogue on Regional Interfaith Cooperation for Peace, Development, and Human Dignity." The Cebu Declaration has recorded the need for the improvement of educational system and curricula; increasing dialogue and network between academic and government, religious leader and media as the important result from
participants and working groups.\textsuperscript{10}

The next forum held was "the third Regional Interfaith Dialogue" which held in Waitangi, New Zealand on May 2007. The theme of this event was "Building Bridges" and resulted "The Waitangi Declaration and Plan of Action." In this plan of actions, several fields have been included within the deal, such as education, media, "building bridges," and "Alliance of Civilization." The following regional interfaith dialogue held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in May 2008 with theme: "Phnom Penh Dialogue 2008 on Interfaith Cooperation for Peace and Harmony." This event has resulted the "the Phnom Penh Declaration" by which called for commitment to implementing interfaith cooperation; giving peace as the top priority; increasing participation from women and youth; sharing successful experiences in interfaith dialogue and interfaith cooperation to the society and encourage other people to participate; and increasing interfaith cooperation on important issues in societies such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, human rights, environment and disaster.\textsuperscript{11} The latest is in Australia in 2009.

The Indonesian government also initiated inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue between Asia and Europe in the framework of ASEM (Asia-European Meeting) by holding co-sponsored and co-hosted ASEM Interfaith dialogue in Bali on July, 2005 with the theme:"Building Interfaith Harmony within the International Community." Indonesia also co-sponsored the second ASEM dialogue, which was held in Cyprus on July 2006 and actively participated in the third ASEM Interfaith Dialogue in Nanjing, China on June 2007; the fourth ASEM Interfaith Dialogue held in the Netherlands on June 2008 and the current meeting would be in Seoul, South Korea on September 2009.\textsuperscript{12}

The Indonesian government also initiated an "APEC Intercultural and Faith Symposium", which was held in Yogyakarta on October 2006. The symposium endorsed a recommendation with titled "Building Mutual Trust and Acceptance for the Stability and Prosperity of the APEC Region." The Indonesian government has not only been actively involved in the regional and international interfaith dialogue, but also in the bilateral interfaith dialogue.

This bilateral interfaith dialogue is cooperation between the Indonesian government and other states government in interfaith dialogue. Several bilateral interfaith dialogues, which performed by the Indonesian government, such as\textsuperscript{13} Indonesia-Australia Interfaith Dialogue, which was held in Melbourne dan Sydney, in September 2005, Indonesia-the
Vatican Interfaith Dialogue, which was held in Vatican, in September 2005 and November 2007, Indonesia-Canada Interfaith Dialogue, which was held in Ottawa, Canada, in October 2007, Indonesia-Lebanon interfaith dialogue in 2008, Indonesia-Rome interfaith dialogue in 2009, Indonesia- the United Kingdom Interfaith Dialogue. Particularly, with the United Kingdom, the Indonesian government has launched the Indonesia-UK Islamic Advisory Group (IUIAG). This forum has established in London in Januari, 2007. The next bilateral interfaith dialogue will be between Indonesia-Austria, in May 2009, Indonesia-Russian in June 2009, and Indonesia-Hungary, in June 2009.14

Furthermore, the Indonesian government and the government of Norway co-sponsored a Global Inter Media Dialogue (GIMD) in Bali in September 2006 with the theme "Freedom of Expression and Diversity: the Media in a Multicultural World". The main purpose of this event is to promote an inter-media dialogue by creating a forum for leading media actors from different continents, countries, and cultures to discuss ways and means in promoting freedom of expression and greater tolerance. The second GIMD then took place on Oslo, Norway in June 2007 with the theme “Prime Time for Diversity: Journalism in a Troubled World”, and the latest forum was the third GIMD which was held in Bali in May 2008 with the theme “Ethical Journalism in Extreme Conditions: the Challenge of Diversity.” Connected to the role of the media, the Department of Foreign Affairs has also sponsored the establishment of the School of Journalism in 2008 and facilitated the exchange of journalists between two television broadcasting companies, TV 2 from Norway and Metro TV from Indonesia.15

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also works together with local religious non-governmental organizations such as ‘Nahdlatul Ulama’ and ‘Muhammadiyah’. In collaborating with Nahdlatul Ulama, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has established the International Conference of Islamic Scholars (ICIS). This forum attempted to engage Islamic scholars from all over the world, especially from Muslim countries to share their experience and knowledge in some recent religious issue, particularly about conflicts in Muslim countries. The first conference was held in Jakarta in February 2004 with the theme: "Upholding Islam as Rahmatan lil Alamin.” This conference, which was attended by 209 participants from 54 countries has discussed about how to overwhelm Islamophobia, within the Islamic communities and in the context of building global understanding.16

The second ICIS was held in Jakarta on June, 2006 with the theme:” Upholding Islam as Rahmatan lil Alamin towards Justice and Peace.” The third ICIS with the theme...
"Upholding Islam as Rahmatan lil 'Alamin: Peace Building and Conflict Prevention in the Muslim World" was held in Jakarta on 29 July to 1 August 2008. The goal of this forum was to create cooperation and solidarity, which aimed to build peace and prevent conflict, especially in the Muslim world through the transformation of Islam as Rahmatan lil 'Alamin in the form of life and state. All results of ICIS III had become recommendations for conflict reconciliation efforts in some Islamic countries. ICIS III has resulted the Jakarta Message, which has included the creation of the term Ulama sans frontières or Ulama cross borders. Ulama sans frontières expected to carry on a peacekeeping mission with the ability to overcome or to cope with some conflict in different regions of the world especially in the Muslim world.\textsuperscript{17}

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also collaborated with Muhammadiyah as well to create the World Peace forum in Jakarta in 2006 and 2008. The first World Peace Forum was held in August 2006 in Jakarta. This World Peace Forum, which was resulted from
III. Intermestic (International and Domestic) Aspects as the Influencing Factors to Implement Interfaith Dialogue in Indonesian Diplomacy

It is obvious that in the foreign policy making process, every state should take into account certain factors from international and domestic circumstances. Thus, diplomacy as the implementation of foreign policy and the forefront to obtain national interest should also consider factors from international and domestic circumstances. However, according to Kegley and Wittkopf (2001) and Scott M. Thomas (2005) in contemporary circumstances, religious issues are one of the intermestic policy issues. Intermestic symbolize the merger of domestic and international politics. It means that if the policy relates with the religious issues, hence, the state should consider the international and domestic factors, rather than bringing the policy based on a single factor. Therefore, there is a need for leaders to coordinate their domestic and foreign policies.

According to Umar Hadi, several intermestic factors have influenced the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to adopt interfaith dialogue in diplomacy, such as terrorism as a threat for world peace and security, the “Islamic terrorism” label, and the US unilateralism. Regarding domestic factors, there are legal infrastructure constraint and the lack of the institutional capacity to counter terrorism, the crises of perception of “the West versus Islam,” the requirement for balancing the need to security with democratization and human rights protections, and the need to promote Indonesian image as the world’s largest Muslim populations country.

However, I have added two more factors in the international factors, which has influenced the implementation of interfaith dialogue in Indonesian diplomacy. These two factors are globalization and the global resurgence of religion and the rise of multi-track diplomacy. These two factors have been included because not every country in the recent time can ignore the globalization phenomenon and its impact to the social, political, and cultural life of its people. Furthermore, in an era of globalization, the global resurgence of religion, which was considered as an important fact that influences certain state policy, occurs. Globalization is also considered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs as one of the factors that influenced Indonesian diplomacy.

In the age of globalization, religion has become an important issue of global politics. Peter Berger, a prominent sociologist of religion, claims, “far from being in decline in the
modern world, religion is actually experiencing resurgence.” Therefore, “the assumption we live in a secularized world is false... the today’s world is a furiously religious as it ever was.” According to Berger, the process of modernization did not weaken the role of religion, on the contrary, it has strengthened it around the world, and now religion is more significant than before. Many scholars argue that globalization has influenced the global resurgence of religion. On the other hand, other scholars use another term such as a “revival of religion.”

A discussion about globalization and the global resurgence of religion was profound in the Scott M Thomas’s book, The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations; the Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century. In this regard, the global resurgence of religion as the concept in this research can be defined as:

the growing saliency and persuasiveness of religion, i.e. the increasing importance of religious beliefs, practices, and discourses in personal and public life, and the growing role of religious or religiously-related individuals, non-state groups, political parties, and communities, and organizations in domestic politics, and this is occurring in ways that have significant implications for international politics.  

I also consider the rise of multi-track diplomacy as advancement in diplomacy in this global era. The multi-track diplomacy is an adaptation of diplomacy to contemporary international politics as consequence of globalization. Furthermore, according to Umar Hadi, the multi-track diplomacy has also been considered as an influential factor to the practice of Indonesian diplomacy in recent times. Multi-track diplomacy refers to a conceptual framework to reflect the variety of activities that contribute to international peacemaking and peace building. This concept is an expansion of the “Track One, Track Two” paradigm that has defined the field during the last decade. Historically, the concept of two tracks arose from the realization by diplomats, social scientists, conflict resolution professionals, and others that formal, official, government-to-government interactions between instructed representatives of sovereign nations were not necessarily the most effective methods for securing international cooperation or resolving difference or conflict.

Several factors have contributed to the emergence of multi-track diplomacy. The first factor is the changing nature of international conflicts. Most conflicts in developing countries are now within states rather than between them, and the state has become only one actor among several involved in violence. It is part of a growing recognition that diplomacy now has to cope with circumstances where there is greater complexity in the causes of
conflict, in the forms of conflict, and in the actors involved in it. The stakeholder for dealing with these kinds of conflicts does not only depend on officials, or government personnel, but also active citizens, and NGOs. Second is global interdependence. This is the recognition that the effects of states, individuals, and communities now reach across national boundaries. A third is the political and legal constraints in the United Nations. The permanent-five members - the United States, The United Kingdom, Russia, France, and China - have a veto power on matters of peace and security in the Security Council. Those privileges usually become a hindrance to a fair and just resolution. The second problem is the domestic jurisdiction clause - Article 2 (7) - hinders UN action in international conflicts. This clause says that states may not interfere in the domestic affairs of other states, and so this legal provision can hinder effective action on peace and security since most conflicts today are within states rather than between them. This problem has led to the debate over national sovereignty and humanitarian intervention.

Therefore, multi-track diplomacy consists of nine tracks in a conceptual and practical framework for understanding this complex system of peacemaking activities. They are listed as follows:\(^\text{29}\)

1. Government or Peacemaking through Diplomacy

2. Non government / Professional, or peacemaking through Conflict Resolution

3. Business or Peacemaking through Commerce

4. Private Citizens, or Peacemaking through personal Involvement

5. Research, Training, and Education, or Peacemaking through Learning

6. Activism or Peacemaking through Advocacy

7. Religion or Peacemaking through Faith in Action

8. Funding or Peacemaking through Providing Resources

9. Communication and the Media, or Peacemaking through Information

In multi-track diplomacy system, one of the tracks that connected with religion is track seven: *peacemaking through faith in action*. This track is the heart of the system, where the religious community is the important part.
IV. A Critical Analysis

Regarding its concrete contribution to the society, particularly to the religious communities there are some reservations about interfaith dialogue in Indonesian diplomacy. Many felt that interfaith dialogue programs and activities employed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were still on the 'normative level.' This means that interfaith dialogue only runs on the level of ideas and has not yet gone down to the practical level. Some programs such as regional interfaith dialogue, bilateral interfaith dialogue are perceived as merely conferences, which produce many recommendations, however the implementation has not yet been clear, or still questioned. Hence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to prove that the policy implement what the recommendation has said.

I also criticize regarding the absence of women’s involvement in interfaith dialogue programs which conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Some programs such as regional interfaith dialogue and bilateral interfaith dialogue seem to lack participation of women. Almost all the members of delegations were men. Hence, this fact should addresses by the increasing women participation. The other critique is that interfaith dialogue which done by the Ministry of Foreign affairs only focuses on the (Islamic) moderate group and therefore marginalizes the Islamic radical or the ‘hardliner’ voices. According to this critique, the Islamic radical or the hardliner opinion should have the same opportunity to be heard as an input in decision-making process. This opinion also comes from consideration that the Islamic radical usually jeopardize the positive image of Islam in Indonesia because its accusation of being linked to terrorism. Therefore, their existence cannot be ignored.

The inclusion of interfaith dialogue program in Indonesian public diplomacy emphasizes the important role of religious communities in diplomacy. In the previous time the impact of non-governmental organization, individual on international affairs not as influential as the impacts of the states, inter governmental organizations or multi national cooperation. In the context of Indonesia, the role of Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Walubi (Buddhist association in Indonesia), KWl (Bishop Conference of Indonesia), PGI (Communion of Churches in Indonesia) in interfaith dialogue activities perform that the role of (religious) non-governmental organization and religious leader (individual) has increased their role-play in international relations.

Furthermore, the implementation of diplomatic way to respond to terrorism has considered supporting soft power rather than hard power. Soft power is a concept, which was
promoted by Joseph Nye, Jr. Initially, Nye first used the term in his 1990 book, Bound to lead: the Changing Nature of American Power, and further developed the concept in later volume: Soft Power: the Means to Success in World Politics. Nyc argues that “soft power more than influence, since influence can also rest on the hard power of (military or diplomatic) threats or (economic) payment.” According to Nye, soft power is defined as “based on intangible or indirect influences such as culture, values, and ideology”. The concept of ‘soft power’, hence, refers to the capability of a political body, often but not necessarily a state, to influence what other entities do through direct or indirect, often cultural or ideological, influence and encouragement.” Furthermore, while soft power is not synonymous with cultural power, it is the case that exporting cultural goods that hold attraction for other countries can communicate values and influence those societies.  

Religion could be a form of soft power. We can see this in the wake of September 11 tragedy and the War of Terror, when religious values become basis of competition and struggle for supremacy. Both ‘extremist’ and moderate Islamic ideas and movements have competed in the following September 11 attack for the support of ordinary Muslim by offering soft-power vision. In this case, the Indonesian government attempted to support and promotes moderate Muslims as a use of counter-terrorist soft power. In this regard, what gives any country a soft power advantage is measured by several dimensions: first, when ideas and culture fit with current global norms; second, when a nation has better access to various communication channels that can influence how issues are captured in global news media; and third, when country’s credibility is enhanced by domestic and international behavior.  

Regarding the first dimension, the ideas of dialogue, particularly interfaith dialogue in Indonesia is in line with the global norms, which promote the mode of dialogue as a respond to counterterrorism actions. However, in the second dimension, the Indonesian government through Ministry of Foreign Affairs attempts to reach a better access to numerous communication channel by creating Global Intermedia Dialogue in order to influence global news media in framing issues, particularly relate to religious issues. In accordance to the third dimension, Indonesia credibility is obviously enhanced by domestic and international behavior. In this respect, the practice of interfaith dialogue in Indonesian public diplomacy has improved Indonesian credibility because it is perceived as a positive initiative policy.
V. Conclusion

One of the ramifications of the September 11 attacks was the raising agenda to counterterrorism action. The September 11 attacks were significantly responsible for raising academic, public, and governmental awareness of the importance of religion and religious actor in counterterrorism action. Therefore, as this issue was emerged as the most critical problem in recent time, many states have been attempting to focused on the cooperation among them and collaboration between the state and non-state actors.

In Indonesian context, some bombings tragedy became devastating evidence that the issues of terrorism were not imaginary scenario in Indonesia. The recent bombing in J.W. Marriot Hotel and the Ritz Carlton Hotel in July 2009 become concrete evidence that the threat of terrorism in Indonesia still exists. This fact has declined the image of Indonesia as the world’s largest Muslim populated country with peaceful and tolerant Islamic adherent. This is a consequence from accusation that the responsible actors for such attacks were indicated from the Islamic radical group, which also has relations with the transnational terrorist organizations. Hence, the Indonesian government attempts to endeavor numerous effort, including in diplomatic mode.

Regarding to the diplomatic form to counterterrorism action, the Indonesian government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs include interfaith dialogue in recent diplomacy agenda. This policy also including in the bigger frame of Indonesian diplomacy, which named the total diplomacy. Total diplomacy attempts to engage all the component of society in decision-making process to succeed its national goals. Since 2002, in the subsequent of the Directorate of Public Diplomacy establishment, interfaith dialogue activities were included in public diplomacy agenda as one agenda to counterterrorism action. The main deliberation was to promote the moderate group, which also the overwhelming majority in Indonesia. With the inclusion of interfaith dialogue activities in diplomacy, thus, the Indonesian government, entering a new phases in Indonesian diplomatic history.

Interfaith dialogue program and activities in diplomacy is a new initiative policy in Indonesian diplomacy. It is worth mentioning that there are still some limits to interfaith dialogue program in Indonesian diplomacy. First, interfaith dialogue is a long-term process. It should not be regarded as a panacea, which can cure every problem in one time. Thus, it cannot expect to yield immediate results. An accurate diagnosis of the root of problem is necessary in order to work towards comprehensive amelioration. However, interfaith
dialogue is still a very important component because of its capacity to unite people, enable communication, and build understanding. Therefore, what should be done is to enduring the process because the result will harvest in the future.

Second, because interfaith dialogue in diplomacy is often presented as merely lip service or just normative conversation, therefore, everyone is challenged to make it more practical. For these challenges, we need to remember that if interfaith dialogue is to be effective, then government needs to set more realistic targets and indicators as the measure of the success. The most important element above all is the involvement of people at the grassroots level of society to create and support interfaith dialogue, as it is more effective to practice the dialogue in a bottom up structure rather than top down one. Related to this point, the involvement of women and youth in Indonesian public diplomacy is crucial. This is because women and young people play a very important role to play in the country's future.

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Endnotes

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25) Interview with Umar Hadi, July 31, 2008

26) The phrase “Track Two” was coined in 1982 by Joseph Montville of the Foreign Service Institute in the United States to describe methods of diplomacy that were outside the formal governmental system. It refers to nongovernmental, informal, and unofficial contacts and

27) Louis Diamond and John Mc. Donald, *ibid.*, 1


32) Jeffrey Haynes, *op.cit.*, 40,

33) Nancy Snow and Philip M Taylor *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York, USA: Routledge, 2009), 4