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Redaksi menerima tulisan ilmiah tentang isu-isu kewarganegaraan, administrasi kependudukan dan penghapusan diskriminasi ras dan etnis serta tulisan-tulisan lain tentang hukum, demokrasi dan HAM

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Interfaith Dialogue and Conflict Transformation in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Conflicts involving inter-religious groups, both those from the same tradition and those from different traditions, frequently occur in Indonesia. This is evident in various studies conducted by institutions addressing this issue, such as Human Rights Watch, the Setara Institute, and the Wahid Institute. Meanwhile, inter-religious dialogue is frequently held in various forums and venues, involving numerous actors. This indicates that the dialogue has not been able to foster a transformation of the existing conflict. Through a literature review, this paper finds that the dialogue demonstrates a lack of commitment from religious leaders, remains highly elitist, and only seeks common ground without discussing and understanding existing differences.

Keywords: conflict, dialogue, transformation, diversity.

ABSTRAK

Konflik yang melibatkan antar kelompok umat beragama, baik mereka yang berasal dari satu tradisi muupun antar tradisi, sering terjadi di Indonesia. Ini bisa dilihat dari berbagai kajian yang dilakukan oleh berbagai lembaga yang menekuni isu ini seperti the Human Rights Watch, Setara Institute dan the Wahid Institute. Sementara, di saat yang sama, dialog antar agama kerap dilakukan di berbagai forum dan tempat dan melibatkan banyak aktor. Ini menunjukkan bahwa dialog yang dilakukan belum mampu mendorong ke arah transformasi konflik. Dengan melakukan studi pustaka, dan meluhat kasus konflik umat Islam dan Kristen dan

Konflik yang melibatkan kelompok Ahmadiyah, tulisan ini menemukan bahwa dialog yang dilakukan menunjukkan kurangnya komitmen para pemimpin agama, masih sangat elitis, dan hanya mencari persamaan tanpa membicarakan dan memahami perbedaaan yang ada.

Kata kunci: keberagam, konflik, dialog, transformasi.

Introduction

Indonesia is well known as the fourth largest country by population in the world after India, China and the United States of America. In this country, many people with different cultural backgrounds live together, therefore this country is called as a multi-ethnic society (Suryadinata, Arifin and Ananta 2003: 6). Indonesia is also called as a multi-religious society because there are many religions confessed by the citizens living in this area (Suryadinata, Arifin and Ananta 2003: 103). Two top religions are Islam and Christianity which are confessed by 88.22 % and 8.92 % of its total population respectively based on the census in 2000.

This plurality will be beneficial if those people with different cultural and religious backgrounds live in tolerance and peaceful co-existence. Tolerance refers to the attitude among people to recognize the others as partners and their existence is not considered as a threat for the others (Chetkow-Yanoov 1999: 20). Meanwhile, co-existence requires the admission of all groups to respect each others and it needs the ability of people to "engage in dialogue about painful or controversial issues" (Chetkow-Yanoov 1999: 29).

However, this plurality will also lead to suffering situation when people fail to manage it. Violence and bloody conflict among those different people might be the consequences of this mismanagement. Indonesia may be the example of this suffering situation. To exemplify, based on the Setara Institute's report (2010), there were 185 cases related to religious violence in 2007. A year later, this number almost doubled, reaching 367 reported cases. In 2009, the number of cases reported, while reduced, remained very high at 291. Four years later, the number of cases had decreased but was still a concern with 222 cases of intolerance reported (Halili & Bonar Tigor Naipospos 2014, p. 16). In 2010, the Wahid Institute noted that there were 135 cases of violence related to religious issues in 13 observation areas, and in a follow-up report four years later, the number had increased to 185 cases (The Wahid Institute 2014). This sounds ironic when the conflict involved

religious issues keep occurring while at the same time interfaith dialogues are massively arranged by the government and non-government institutions. It seems that those dialogues fail to transform the religious conflict among the followers.

This essay deals with the problem of interfaith dialogue in Indonesia which is formulated in the question "to what extent interfaith dialogue in Indonesia contribute to transform/manage the conflict among the conflicting parties?". Interfaith here does not only refer to different (formal) religion, but also different belief within religion. Based on this, I will evaluate the interfaith dialogue used by the government to handle the religious violence between Muslims and Christians and Ahmadiyah group in Indonesia. This essay is divided in three parts. First part of this essay deals with interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Christians and the next part discusses dialogue with Ahmadiyah group. The third part of this essay will evaluate those interfaith dialogues.

Religion and Conflict Transformation

In socio-cultural and political life, religion is allegedly composed of dual roles: one is to promote peaceful interaction between different communities, but at the same time, the fact cannot be ignored that many conflicts and violence have been sparked due to religion. Normatively speaking, peace has been a core tenet of religion, as it teaches its followers about love, compassion, forgiveness, and upholding human rights. However, we cannot deny the fact that in practice, the nuances of violence in the form of wars, bloodshed conflict and intolerance have, by and less, its contribution too (Gopin 1997: 2). This is not to say that religion itself is the source of conflict, but religion has been oftenly used as a legitimate justification in many conflicts and violences occurred throughout the world.

Due to this, it is always a question whether it is possible to bring religion into conflict transformation. On this, Gopin (1972) states that it is essential to distinguish between the texts and their practitioners or followers. Religious authoritative texts may contain teaching that could lead to peaceful or violent behavior among their followers, so it is important to study further which texts lead to particular behavior and under which circumstances. Also, why do people who are from the same followers respond differently when it comes to conflict? This indicates that there is anything simple answer when it comes to religion and conflict. Despite this, many scholars working on the issues of religion and conflict transformation mention that the aspect of spirituality, including religion, has played a significant role in conflict resolution practice (Abu-Nimer 2003; Appleby 2000; Gopin 2000; Johnston 2003).

Indeed, bringing religion into the conflict resolution process contains danger when it comes to debating over values since they are mostly non-negotiable. People may not be easily moved or swayed dir ti their conviction over religious values, and they may hold it as the final line not to cross. However, conflict itself is always multilayered; there is no single factor that causes conflict. Due to this, the mediators or third parties need to walk on the conflict resolution path cautiously and meticulously when it involves religious issues. Different religions, different values, but this is not something to be an obstacle. The one that needs to be pursued is a dialogue that leads to mutual understanding between the different conflicting practices. Just like within a democratic system, people may disagree with each other, but this does not necessarily need to end with violence (Goldberg & Blancke 2011: 381).

This dialogue remains the key important point in bringing religion into conflict resolution. As Hanskung says, "There will be no peace between the civilizations without a peace between the religions! And there will be no peace between the religions without a dialogue between the religions." (Kung 1998: 92). This suggests that dialogue is the most vital aspect or even the only way to bring peace among religions. This also encourages commitment among religious leaders to present religion as a peaceful nd powerful tool to manage a diverse society.

The dialogue also needs to cover the grass-roots level (Ramadan 2005: 96; Reychler 2001: 453). The dialogue also needs to cover the grass-roots level (Ramadan 2005: 96; Reychler 2001: 453). Focusing only on the elites or the leaders without considering the followers in the grassroots will not be effective in transforming the conflict. This is because those leaders who go from conference to conference usually are "totally disconnected from their religious community" (Ramadan 2005: 96).

Also, this kind of dialogue goes beyond the ceremonial aspect, but moves beyond that level when it can transform the conflict into a more peaceful and harmonious relationship between the different followers or people. This means that dialogue does not on;y address differences instead of pursuing only commonalities, but also getting a mutual understanding about these differences so that they can respect each other. To come with these differences does not necessarily mean to conform to them, but to recognize them in order to build trust and respect among the parties. Due to this, the failure to recognize the differences will lead to the failure of dialogue (Ramadan 2005: 97).

Interfaith Dialogue between Muslims and Christians

Interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia has been being a serious issue to deal with for the government. This is because the conflict between Muslims and Christians has lasted for centuries since Dutch colonized Indonesia from 1596 to 1942 (Husein 2003: 31). During this period, the connection between two religious members was far from peaceful co-existence. Discrimination, stereotype and marginalization colored their contact in this period (Husein 2003: 32-38). Since Indonesian independence in 1945, the relationship was still in tension rather than harmony due to their opposite position on the philosophical basis of the Indonesian state, religious preaching and government policies (Husein 2003: 42).

Under the New Order regime (1965-1998), the conflict between the two religious members seems not going to decline. In the late of 1965, the tension between Muslims and Christians raised up because of massive conversion among Indonesian people to Christianity (Mujiburrahman 2006: 28; Husein 2003: 88). However, this massive conversion did not lead to violent conflict until the case of Meulaboh, Aceh in 1967 (Mujiburrahman 2006: 29). In Meulaboh, a Church was burnt down by Muslims living in that area because it was built in an area in which most people were Muslims (Husein 2003: 95; Mujiburrahman 2006: 29). Not so long after the Meulaboh case, the Muslims attacked Christian Churches, schools and burned some Bibles in Makassar (Husein 2003: 95). According to Muslims report, the case was triggered by statement made by H.K Mangunbahan, a Christian religious teacher in Makassar who said that the Prophet was a stupid person due to his illiteracy and polygamous marriage (Mujiburrahman 2006: 38).

In response to this case, the Government initiated an interreligious consultation forum (Musyawarah Antar agama) in Jakarta on November 1967 (Husein 2003: 96). Around 20 Muslim, Protestant and Catholic leaders participated in this forum which was chaired by the Ministry of Religion at the time, K.H.M Dachlan (Husein 2003: 96). In this forum, the Government hoped that both groups would sign an agreement made by the government (Mujiburrahman 2006: 41). On the draft, both Muslims and Christians had agreed to establish an interreligious consultation board (Mujiburrahman 2006: 41). However, Christians disagreed with a crucial point which was "the religious propagation should not be directed towards people who already had a religion" (Mujiburrahman 2006: 41). This issue was being very point among Muslim people (Mujiburrahman 2006: 41).

The consultation led to deadlock because both Muslims and Christians did not reach compromise on this issue. While Muslims stated that if religious preaching was not limited to those outside religious communities than it would lead to Christianization (Shihab 1995: 306). This would be a threat for Muslims community (Shihab 1995: 307). At the same time, Christians argued that Indonesian people has the constitutional right to convince their belief without any pressure from others (Shihab 1995: 306). This situation then led to public debate among Muslim and Christian leaders which sharpened the conflict between both members (Mujiburrahman 2006: 47).

In September 1968, it was reported that a Protestant Church in North Sumatra and a storage room in East Kalimantan were burned (Mujiburrahman 2006: 56). Several months later, on April 1969, a Church in Slipi was attacked and burned by Muslims due to the fact that, according to the Muslims, the Church building did not have any permission from the Governor of Jakarta (Mujiburrahman 2006: 57-58). Besides, there were already five churches built in Slipi for 350 Christians among 35, 650 Muslims in that area (Mujiburrahman 2006: 58). Due to the crucial issue among religious members, the Government then issued the joint decree between the Department of Ministry Affair and Religion Affair to control the activities of both religious members (Mujiburrahman 2006: 58; Husein 2003: 97).

The decree which dated on 13 September 1969 dealt with religious propagation and the establishment of new places to worship (Mujiburrahman 2006: 58). Related to religious propagation, "it should not lead to interreligious conflict; should not carried out through intimidation, deception, force or threat; and should not break the law, nor endanger security and public order" (Mujiburrahman 2006: 58). Related to new place to worship, it should have permission from the Governed of the authorized officials with the consideration of "the view of the Head of the Department of Religion in that region; the city plan; the situation and condition of the region" (Mujiburrahman 2006: 59). This decree seems to accommodate the Christians view on religious propagation which was not limited to "those outside the recognized religion" and Muslims' proposal on the point that to build new places for worship, the religious leader should get permission of from the local government (Mujiburrahman 2006: 59).

During this period, interfaith dialogue seems to be the concern of the Government. Due to this, the new Minister of Religion, Mukti Ali (1971-1978) developed the project of the harmony of religious life (Mujiburahman 2006: 270). The project was part of the Government policies to create "a religious society"

instead of "a political society" (Husein 2003: 97). As pointed out by Mujiburrahman, three main programs were arranged: "meetings of religious leaders, a program of social research and camps bringing together students of different religious backgrounds" (2006: 270). Furthermore Mujiburrahman noted that 23 dialogues of religious leaders were held in 21 cities all over the country from 1972 to 1977 (2006: 270). Participating in these dialogues were Government officials, religious leaders of Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and even of Javanese mysticism and local beliefs (Mujiburrahman 2006: 270).

However, in spite of reaching the goals, the results of these dialogues were far from the ideal aims as were outlined by the Minister of Religion Affair, which were tolerance and more openly attitude among religious members (Mujiburrahman 2006: 272). Moreover, Mukti Ali was also criticized because of his concept of religious tolerance that was "Only touched the political and psychological sphere of those religious communities" (Munhanif 1996: 108). Despite this criticism, the result of the dialogue programs conducted by Mukti Ali was much better than consultation program in 1967 (Mujiburrahman 2006: 272). Also, this minimal achievement might be related to the Government's expectation that "inter-religious dialogue would enhance socio-political stability for the sake of development" (Mujiburrahman 2006: 272). In spite of generating mutual understanding and cooperation among the religious members, the emphasis was "much more on peaceful co-existence" (Mujiburrahman 2006: 272).

This peaceful co-existence as was projected by the government through interfaith dialogue then was interrupted by the murder case which made the relationship between Muslims and Christians worse. On 29 June 1974, Eric Constable, an Australian Minister of the Anglican Church was killed during his stay in a guest house of the Anglican Church in Jakarta (Mujiburrahman 2006: 69). This murder led to debate among public whether it was because of robbery or a signal to stop the General Assembly of World Council of Churches which was planned to be held on 23 July to 8 August 1975 in Jakarta (Mujiburrahman 2006: 69). Due to this, T. B Simatupang then discussed this problem with Muslims leaders, both from traditionalist and modernist group to find out the solution (Mujiburrahman 2006: 70). The discussion was very friendly and led to the result which was cancellation of the Word Council of Churches in Jakarta (Mujiburrahman 2006: 70).

Although the Government has already regulated the religious group activities on propagation and building a new place to worship through the decree in 1969,

the problem related to those issues were continually occurred. This decree seems not effective to calm down the tension among two religious members. In 1975, there was a conflict between Muslims and Christians in Jakarta because of the Christians' action to use a house as a Church (Mujiburrahman 2006: 60).

To handle the conflictual situation among religious members, the successor of Mukti Ali, the Minister of Religious Affair Alamsyah Ratu Perwiranegara (1978-1982), a retired army general, continued the dialogue program by prioritizing the framework of "maintaining the socio-political stability for development" (Mujiburrahman 2006: 273). Alamsyah then proposed the program of a triad of religious harmony. The program focused on three levels of harmony: intra-religious harmony (harmony among different sects and groups within the same religion), inter-religious harmony and the harmony between religious groups and the Government (Mujiburrahman 2006: 273). Furthermore, after several meetings with the religious leaders and the Government, Alamsyah successfully created the Forum for Inter-religious Consultation in 1980 (Wadah Musyawarah Antar Umat Bergama) "in which the organisations of five recognised religions were represented" (Mujiburrahman 2006: 273)

During his period, this new Minister issued two decrees (Husein 2003: 99). The first decree regulated the religious propagation (Husein 2003: 99). Different from the previous decree (1969), the Government through this decree prohibited the propagation of religion which is directed to religious communities (Husein 2003: 99). This decree also prohibited the religious propagation through pamphlets, bulletins, magazines, and books (Husein 2003: 99). Another decree controlled the foreign aid to religious institutions (Husein 2003: 99). According to this decree, as noticed by Husein, the foreign aid should be coordinated with the Ministry of Religious Affair (2003: 99). In response to these two decrees, Muslim leaders were very welcome while Christian leaders strongly opposed to the decrees (Mujiburrahman 2006: 273)

Although the government has taken many efforts to transform the conflict between Muslims and Christians, violence conflict between them kept occurring. In 1996, some Churches were attacked in Situbondo, East Jawa because, according to Muslims, only 3 out of 24 Churches have legal permission from the Government (Mujiburrahman 2006: 39). The issue of legal permission then led to the question from the Christians whether Muslims who already built the Mosques also have permission from the Government (Mujiburrahman 2006: 39). Furthermore,

Christian leaders argued that the decree was discriminative against them (Mujiburrahman 2006: 39). After Situbondo case, 15 Churches in Tasikmalaya, West Java, were also burned (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 2). Then in 1997, more than 40 cases related to Christians building which were destroyed and burned occurred in many areas (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 2-7).

After the end of the New Order in 1998, the physical collision between Muslims and Christians continually happened. During 2002, 4 cases related to Churches, Schools and other building attacks occurred in Sulawesi, Maluku and West Java, while from 2004-2005, almost 10 cases related to the same issues happened in West Java (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 7-8). These violence cases between Muslims and Christians which seems to be not going to decline proved that the interfaith dialogue arranged by the Government failed to manage or transform the conflict among both religious members.

Dialogue with Ahmadiyah Group

To outline the dialogue between the government and Ahmadiyah group, it is important to briefly reveal the history of Ahmadiyah in Indonesia in order to depict its relationship with other Muslims communities. Ahmadiyah is an Islamic movement founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1889 in Punjab, a small village in India (Ahmadiyah Muslim Community 2008: 1). Ahmadiyah was firstly introduced in Indonesia in 1925 by the traders, mostly, from Padang, West Sumatra (Zulkarnain 2005: 219). Ahmadiyah teachings and practices which believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is the awaited one (the Messiah) of the world community (Ahmadiyah Muslims community 2008: 1), were strongly protested by Muslims in Sumatra (Zulkarnain 2005: 219).

Although this movement was protested by local Muslims, its first official branch was established there (Zulkarnain 2005: 219). Few years later, Ahmadiyah people start to preach its belief to some area in Indonesia. In 1932, "Jemaat Ahmadiyah" (Ahmadiyah group) was formed in Jakarta (Lubis 1994, cited in Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia 2007: 11). Regarding to the increase number of its followers, Jemaat Ahmadiyah then was formed in Bandung, West Java in 1933 (Lubis 1994, cited in Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia 2007: 11). In this area, Jemaat Ahmadiyah involved in a debate with Muslims in Persatuan Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islam Unity) (Zukarnain 2005: 227). In the next following years, Ahmadiyah movement was spread out in many regions in Indonesia. Lubis, cited by Jemaat Ahmadiyah

Indonesia, argued that there are approximately 181 branches of Jama'ah Ahmadiyah in Indonesia (2007: 11).

There are two groups of Jemaat Ahmadiyah which exist in Indonesia. The first group is Ahmadiyah Qadian who believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is a Prophet and the second, Ahmadiyah Lahore who believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is an Islamic reformist (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 2). The first group centered their activities in Parung, Bogor, West Java and the latter in Yogyakarta (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 2). Ahmadiyah received a legal permission from the government as a social organization in 1953 and as a mass organization in 2003 (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 2).

However, despite of the legal permission from the government, the existence of Ahmadiyah in Indonesia still leads to controversy. In 1980, Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesia Muslim leaders Council) announced the *fatwa* (religious advice) that Ahmadiyah was heresy (Zulkarnain 2005: 291). This *fatwa* then was followed by the official letter from the Department of Religious Affair that prohibited Ahmadiyah teachings and practices (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 2). Although this prohibition did not stop Jemaat Ahmadiyah to do their activities, it led to latent conflict with other Muslim groups.

This latent conflict then was being manifest in 2000s when some Muslim groups attacked Jemaat Ahmadiyah. On September 2002, hundreds of Ahmadiyah people in East Lombok have to leave their areas because they were attacked by Muslim groups in that region (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 1). A month later, two Ahmadiyah's mosques in Kuningan, West Java, were also attacked by Muslims. The attack toward Ahmadiyah people escalated on July 2005. While doing annual meeting in Parung, Bogor, they were attacked by a group namely Gerakan Umat Islam (Islamic Group Movement) (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 1). In spite of dealing with these violence conflicts, Majelis Ulama Indonesia restates the *fatwa* of the heresy of Ahmadiyah (Pusat Data dan Analisa Tempo 2005: 1).

In response to this situation, the government through the Ministry of Religious Affair initiated dialogue with Jemaat Ahmadiyah. According to Atho Mudzhar, the Head of Education, Training and Research of the Department of Religious Affair, the dialogue was conducted seven times from 7 September 2007 to 14 January 2008 (2008: 2). Through these dialogues, the government offered difficult choices for Ahmadiyah group which were dispersing Ahmadiyah group by the government, dispersing this group through the court prosecution, excluding Ahmadiyah people

from Islam and recognize them as non-Muslim people and consider them as one of Islamic group among Indonesian Muslims (Mudzhar 2008: 2). In this dialogue, the government seems to represent the position of Muslims who oppose the Ahmadiyah's beliefs.

Choosing the last choice, then Ahmadiyah was urged to prove that its teaching and practices are not against Islamic principles by practicing 12 points of statement (Mudzhar 2008: 2). Almost a half of these points deal with the Islamic teachings and practices (Mudzhar 2008: 3). In these points, they have to clarify the position of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad whether he is a Prophet or just an Islamic reformist (Mudzhar 2008: 3). The others deal with the relationship between Jemaat Ahmadiyah and other Muslim groups and administrative issues such as marriage and divorce which should be administered through religious administration affair (Mudzhar 2008: 3).

Although Ahmadiyah has explained their positions among Muslim groups in Indonesia, there was still protest from some of Muslim groups. These groups enforce Ahmadiyah people to declare publicly their mistake regarding their belief of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet and to take back the books, pamphlets, brochures which propagate the Ahmadiyah teachings and beliefs because those teachings and beliefs were heresy and against majority of Muslims' belief (Mudzhar 2008: 5). These reactions may emerge since the opponents of Ahmadiyah group were not involved in the dialogue processes initiated by the government. In spite of respecting Ahmadiyah people, the government then issued the joint decree between Ministry of Religious Affair, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Judicial Law to break up the Ahmadiyah organization in Indonesia (The Wahid Institute 2008: 1). This decree leads to public debate instead of resolving the Ahmadiyah case (The Wahid Institute 2008: 1).

Interfaith Dialogue Analysis

Interreligious dialogues arranged by the Government to deal with conflict between Muslims and Christians seem only to respond the conflict when it occurred. As can be seen from the historical records above, when the conflict was considered as national issue, the Government then initiated dialogue between the conflicting parties to resolve it. However, in spite of searching for solution, the Government tends to surpass the conflict in the name of social and political stability (Mujiburrahman 2006: 39). This government tendency clearly can be seen through the case of Meulaboh and Makassar. The government prefers to stop Muslims voice

rather than discussing the problems seriously. According to Arskal Salim, this approach is called as security approach or pragmatic approach (1998: 4).

In terms of religious consultation forum, although the government invited the leaders of conflicting parties to deal with the problem, the government has set the formula to dispute conflict. In spite of dialogue, what was happened in this consultation was monologue because the solution had already prepared by the government and the conflicting parties even did not contribute to the result of the consultation forum. Similar to this situation was the government policy to issue the decree in 1969. The government tends to use legalistic approach by providing formal regulation to manage the conflict. Arskal Salim argued that the legalistic approach is used because the government believes that transforming conflict can be achieved through regulations (1998: 4).

Turning to the conflicting parties, the issue of Christianization, foreign aid, building a new place to worship among Muslims and religious freedom, religious preaching toward all people in Christians' perspective seems never be well-discussed among them. This situation even sharply marked their opposite position. All of the violence cases occurred between them were mostly triggered by those issues (Mujiburrahman 2006: 251). Furthermore, Mujiburrahman argued that since the dialogues were initiated by the government, the members of conflicting parties continued to suspect whether the government had hidden purposes on them or not (2006: 272). This is because the government failed to stand in neutral position (Mujiburrahman 2006: 251).

In the case of Ahmadiyah, there was no dialogue between the conflicting parties arranged by the government. Several dialogues initiated by the government with Ahmadiyah groups resulted in 12 points seems to be the only choice for Ahmadiyah to calm down the conflict. Moreover, the 12 points of statements were part of the government policy to control Ahmadiyah activities. In these "dialogues", the government also failed to communicate the results of dialogues with other Muslim groups. As a consequence, in spite of transforming the conflict, the result of "these dialogues" was not well accepted by the opponents of Ahmadiyah group (Mudzhar 2008: 5).

Those interfaith dialogues as initiated by the government seem to be failed to transform the conflict. In fact, dialogue is the important tool to manage the conflict, particularly among the communities who experienced hostility among their members or are threatened by violence (Schirch 2004: 49). In this notion, dialogue processes seek to "increase communication and build relationships

between people with different experiences and views (Schirch 2004: 49). To do this, dialogue may take a long time to help the groups "take action" to deal with the issues. Seeking result in such short time will leave the problems unresolved. As can be seen from the interfaith dialogues in Indonesia, the government tends to achieve the result as soon as possible, rather that arranging the dialogue in a sustainable process.

The failure of the interfaith dialogues is also affected by the lack of commitment and positive intention from the conflicting parties. The example of interfaith dialogues between Muslims and Christians may exemplify this feature. In those dialogues both Muslims and Christians preferred to achieve their own goals rather than to pursue the commitment to build peaceful relationship among them. Ideally, in a dialogue, the participants are encouraged to throw away their prejudices and stereotypes among the others (A'la 2002: 28; Azra 2007: 5; Pratt 2005: 171). If the participants still keep the prejudices, the aim of dialogue will not be optimally achieved. The dialogue between the government, Muslims and Christians in the case above have shown that some prejudices among Muslims and Christians in the process of dialogue only led to deadlock.

To transform the conflict, the dialogue also needs to address differences among the conflicting parties. These differences instead of similarities would be important to understand the others. To come with these differences do not necessarily mean to conform them, but to recognize them in order to build trust and respect among the parties (Ramadan 2005: 97). In the dialogue with Ahmadiyah, the government seems to insist Ahmadiyah group to conform their beliefs to other Muslim groups. Similar to the government attitude was the reaction of the Ahmadiyah's opponents who urge them to practice Islam as they do. On this, Ramadan argued that the failure to recognize the differences will lead to the failure of dialogue (2005: 97).

The dialogue also needs to cover the grass-roots level (Ramadan 2005: 96; Reychler 2001: 453). Focusing only to the elites or the leaders without considering the followers in the grass roots will not be effective to transform the conflict. This is because those leaders who go from conference to conference usually are "totally disconnected from their religious community" (Ramadan 2005: 96). This notion is also argued by Azyumardi Azra who pointed out that the failure of interfaith dialogue in Indonesia is because there is no well established coordination between the leaders and their members in the bottom level (2007: 5). Furthermore, he argued that the dialogues on the middle and bottom levels should be addressed

because the religious leaderships in these levels are so strategic to manage religious issues among the grass-root communities.

To conclude, managing conflict through dialogue process is not a simple and easy process. Indonesian experience on interfaith dialogue reveals that transforming conflict needs many efforts and may take long time. This is because transforming conflict does not only mean to stop it in temporary time but move it from the confrontation to negotiation to dynamic and peaceful relationship (Lederach 1997: 75). This action than should be followed by creating a proactive process that is "capable of regenerating" to form "a spiral of peace" rather than "a spiral of violence and destruction" (Lederach 1997: 75). So, placing interfaith dialogue in this framework seems to be the most reasonable choice to transform the conflict and build peaceful situation among different religious groups.

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