

Building Resilience in Preventing Violent Extremism through  
Moderate Religious Education in Indonesia - **CONVEY Indonesia**

# Policy Paper

Issue 4 | Vol. 1 | 2020

This Policy Paper was made as a part of CONVEY Indonesia Projects carried out by PPIM UIN Jakarta and UNDP Indonesia.

CONVEY Indonesia was aimed to build peace in Indonesia and to prevent violent extremism and radicalism through a series of research, survey, policy advocacy, and public interaction based on the potential of religious education. CONVEY Indonesia projects take up issues of tolerance, diversity, and non-violence among the younger generation.

## Strengthening Religious Moderation in the Mosque Environment

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2020

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## This policy paper contains four main issues:

### **First, concerning limited religious literacy.**

Religious literacy compiled by the office of the mosque (Takmir) was generally aimed to increase faith, piety, and “ukhuwah islamiyah” (Muslim Brotherhood) among worshipers and Muslims in general. National themes such as NKRI, Pancasila and diversity, tolerance, mutual respect, and non-violence act, only become loose themes according to the creativity of the preachers. The lack of materials presented by preachers on nationality and interfaith relations does not indicate that the mosque has a radical tendency. In fact, all of the mosque officials who were interviewed rejected the ideas of radicalism and supported the discourse of nationality, diversity, and interfaith tolerance. Besides, the mosque library is also rarely found, although it is a literacy-sharing medium.

### **Second, concerning the religious views of the mosque’s officials, preacher, imams.**

Most of the mosques invite religious preachers from outside the mosques itself. The method of recruiting also tends to be the same, in which the mosque’s advisory board will discuss the prospective preacher for approval. The advisory board would then see the track record of the prospective preacher in terms of the tendency of radicalism, limit the topic of lectures, and prohibit using the mosque for political interests. This effort is to obtain the desired preacher and also to avoid preachers with a radical tendency. Certainly, some mosques don’t apply strict selection, such as the Great Mosque of Bintaro Jaya and the Mosque in the South Tangerang area. According to the head of the mosque’s management, there is no need to limit the topic of the lecture, as long as it does not contain provocation.

### **Third, concerning the Islamic religious scholars (Ulema) and their religious views.**

The Center for the Study of Islamic Democracy and Peace (PusPIDeP) Yogyakarta did research on the religious views of some Islamic scholars in Indonesia in 2019. The research was conducted in three categories of cities. Out of 450 scholars from various cities, around 16% rejected the concept of the nation-state. Although in nominal terms it does not show a large number, the government has to be watchful nonetheless.

***Fourth, concerning the Friday bulletin.***

Friday bulletins that are currently in circulation fall into two categories, namely the bulletins with radical contents, and without radical contents. Bulletins contain radical contents circulating on the local and national scale. Based on the research, the radical bulletin that circulated on the national scale was the “Kaffah” Bulletin.

To answer the questions and challenges above, the alternative policies that need to be supported are:

1. To increase the capabilities of the mosque’s personnel (takmir, imam, etc.)
2. To improve the management of the mosque and to moderate the religious preaching (bulletin, preachers)
3. To increase the collaboration with a community organization in education and regeneration of ulema/religious preachers
4. To expand the network of mosque staff and Ulema

# FOREWORD

Strengthening religious moderation in Indonesia becomes very important in the context of sustainable human resource development. Religious moderation is interpreted as a fair-minded perspective, attitude, and behavior. A moderate person always Shows fairness and balance of performing the daily religious practice without being extreme. The universal norms within society must be based on the belief that followers of every religion, regardless of ethnicity, culture, creed, and political choices, must be willing to listen to each other. Also, everyone must learn from one another about the ability to manage and overcome differences in religious understanding and beliefs among them.

In the Mid-term National Development Plan (RPJMN) 2020-2024, strengthening religious moderation is a National Priority Program. The purpose of religious moderation is to bring back the essence of religion as human dignity to return the text to its context and to maintain multicultural Indonesia. There are 5 Priority Actions (KP) to actualize this program, which are: 1) strengthening moderate religious perspective, attitude, and practice; 2) strengthening interfaith harmony and concordance; 3) strengthening the relationship between religion and culture; 4) Improving the quality of religious services; 5) Developing economic and religious resources

Mosque, as the center of religious activities, has the role in line with these four KPs. The Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) had committed to maximizing the potential of mosques as the center of religious activities and as a medium to seed a peaceful religious understanding. This policy paper is an effort to actualize the idea of strengthening religious moderation into a more concrete program.

National Priority (PN)	Priority Programs (PP)	Priority Actions (KP)
Mental Revolution and Cultural Development.	Strengthening religious moderation as the foundation of perspective, attitude, and religious practice as a way to affirm tolerance, concordance, and social harmony	KP1 : Strengthening neutral perspective, attitude, and religious practice KP2 : Strengthening interfaith harmony and concordance KP3 : strengthening the relationship between religion and culture KP4 : improving the quality of religious service KP5 : developing economy and religious resources

**Figure 1.** National Priority in RPJMN 2020-2024

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# I. INTRODUCTION

The mosque has a vital role in realizing the ideals of Islam to be *Rahmatan lil-'alamin* (the peace for the universe). Even the mosque can be said to be the center in disseminating ideas of tolerance, peace, and non-violence. It cannot be denied that intolerant narratives and nuances of violence are not infrequently voiced in mosques, whether through lectures, sermons, or print media such as bulletins. With these notions, it is essential to know how the current position and role of mosques in improving religious literacy.

As the policymakers, the government, especially the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag), and the Directorate General of Islamic Community Guidance (Ditjen Bimas Islam) should regulate every matter concerning Islam, including mosque management. In fact, there are still several segments in regulation that could be infiltrated by extremism. The existing policies are limited to strengthen and expand the Islamic values in a general way without touching the moderate aspect yet.

Compiling this policy paper is an effort to formulate strategies and policies to strengthen religious moderation, as the priority in the 2020-2024 Mid-Term National Development Plan (RPJMN). Through literary studies, discussion, and a national survey, a real problem regarding the mosque's management could be described. This policy paper contains several policy strategies as well as alternative programs that will encourage religious moderation in mosque environments.

## II. PROBLEM CONTEXT

Mosque, as a place of worship, is used for *da'wah* (preaching Islamic teachings). Unfortunately, the research found that several mosques have indicated radicalism. Some components that play a role in the growth of radical understanding are the mosque officials preachers, Islamic scholars who produce and circulate the Friday bulletins. The infrastructure of the mosque (such as a library) that should be able to increase religious moderation was not given much attention. Besides, the government, especially Kemenag and Ditjen Bimas Islam has not yet maximized the role of the mosque and its components as a medium of moderate Islamic preaching. These are the questions regarding the mosque.

### Research Findings

#### Limited Religious Literacy.

Based on research by The Center for The Study of Religion and Culture (CSRC) UIN Jakarta and Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) UIN Jakarta (2019), **the religious literacy** compiled by the mosque's Takmir was generally aimed to increase faith, piety, and "ukhuwah islamiyah" (Muslim brotherhood) among worshipers and Muslims in general. National themes such as NKRI, Pancasila and diversity, tolerance, mutual respect, and non-violence act, only become loose themes depending on the creativity of the preachers. The lack of material presented by preachers on nationality and interfaith relations does not mean that the mosque in question has a radical tendency. In fact, all of the mosque officials who were interviewed rejected the ideas of radicalism and supported the discourse of nationality, diversity, and interfaith tolerance (see Convey Report Vol.2 No. 5, page 17). Besides, **the mosque library**, a means of literacy, is also rarely found (see Convey Report Vol.2 No. 5, page 18).

With the description of religious literacy above, the involvement of the youths in mosque activities is the hope of all takmirs (mosque personnel). This hope seems difficult to realize because the youths tend to have a low interest in the mosque activities. Aside from the fact that mosque literacy programs are not attractive to young people, typical problems such as funding and facilities become obstacles. As an example, in Jakarta, based on research, there were only two of five mosques have a youth organization, namely Masjid Raya Bintaro Jaya, and Masjid Agung Sunda Kelapa. On the contrary, other mosques do not even have a creative program, or youth organization or groups. On the other hand, a mosque in Manado did not have a youth organization. However, it has a youth movement with *da'wah* (religious preaching) orientation similar to the mosque's youth organization (see Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 5, Page 37-41).

### The religious views of the mosque's takmirs, preachers, and imams

CSRC UIN Jakarta (2019) researched 100 mosques in seven cities. Generally, the mosques invite religious preachers from outside the mosques itself. The method of recruiting also tends to be the same, in which the mosque's advisory board will discuss the prospective preacher for approval. The advisory board would then see the track record of the prospective preacher in terms of the tendency of radicalism, and to the extent of limiting the topic of lectures and prohibit the politicization of the mosque. This effort is carried to get the desired preacher and also to avoid preachers with a radical tendency. Certainly, some mosques don't apply strict selection, such as the Great Mosque of Bintaro Jaya and the Mosque in the South Tangerang area. According to the head of the mosque's management, there is no need to limit the topic of the lecture, as long as it does not contain provocation (See Convey Report Vol. 2 No.5, page 19-22).

The research also examines the religious views of the Takmirs, preachers, and imams qualitatively. The takmirs, preachers and imams were asked the opinion about controversial religious issues such as inter-faith relationship, Shia and Ahmadiyah, the existence of Salafist, liberal Islam, and Islam Nusantara as well as the state issues. The **inter-faith** relationship issues were simplified to merely "For me is my religion, and for you is your religion." Even more extreme, in Palembang, there was a case in which a preacher offended another religious group, and it was heard outside. A Christian then reported the case, and the local Takmir followed up the case. However, many mosques in the area where Muslims are the minority still uphold the tolerance value and interfaith harmonies, such as in Ambon and Manado (See Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 5, page 23-25).

Concerning the **Shia and Ahmadiyah** issue, the research showed that all mosques' managers viewed that the Ahmadiyah was a deviant sect of Islam. However, the view concerning Shia is different. Some mosques regard the Shia as a part of Islam, as stated by Imron Rosyidi, Takmir of Nurul Ikhwan PLN Mosque in Palembang. Meanwhile, many of them also reject Shia, and considered that Shia is a deviant sect, as stated by Ustaz H. M. Irwan AW, Takmir of Al-Jihad Mosque, Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara province (See Convey Report Vol.2 No.5, Page 26-28).

The next issue in the debate is the existence of **the Salafist, liberal Islam, and Islam Nusantara**. The existence of the Salafists in the mosques researched is not noticeable. Most of the mosques in the research are inclining to NU and Muhammadiyah preferences (also PERSIS and PUI). Still, the Salafist was once wanted to gain control of The Grand Mosque of Bintaro Jaya, but the local takmir rejected them. Regarding liberal Islam, most of the takmirs tended to reject the existence of liberal Islam, because they considered it is relying too much on reasoning. However, some takmirs accept liberal Islam, but limited to academic discussion, as stated by Didin Baharudin, the preacher of the Mosque of Pattimura University, Ambon. The idea of Islam Nusantara is also inciting the pros and cons. Most of the takmirs disagree with *Islam Nusantara*, because it divides Islam. However, some takmirs also support the idea of Islam Nusantara, because it assimilates with local culture, and does not spoil the Islamic Identity. Sartono Ahmad, a preacher in Ambon, presented this opinion (See Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 5, page 29-33).

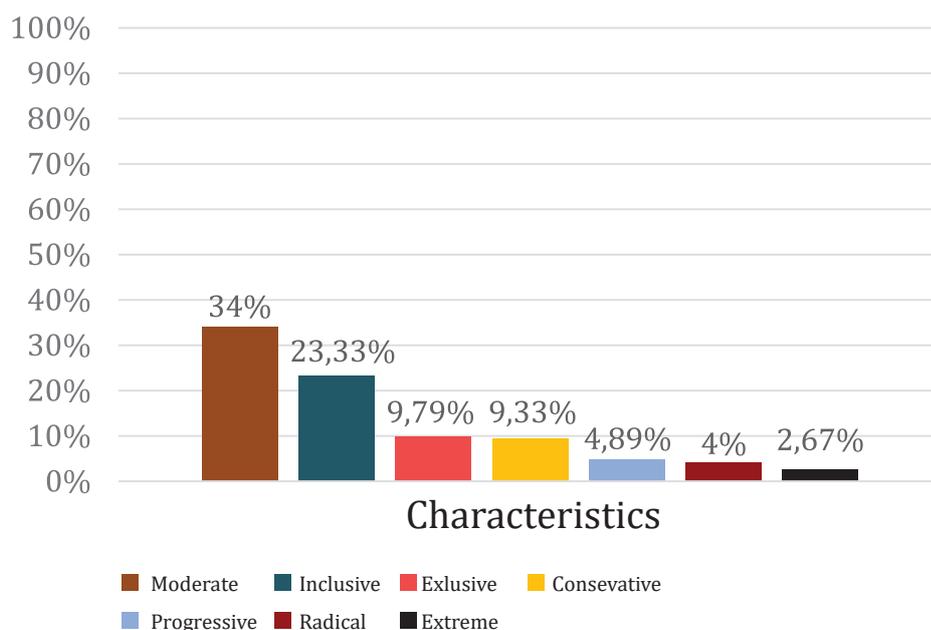
The issues of national and state life are also the concern of CSRS UIN Jakarta's research (2019). Most of the takmirs that had been interviewed agreed that Pancasila as the state's ideology and the Unitary State of The Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) as the state's form are final, although there is some disagreement. Pancasila is considered unable to depict the values of Islamic laws. Ustaz Abizal M. Yatim, the preacher of Babut Taqwa Utama Polda Aceh Mosque, in Banda Aceh, argued on this issue. According to Deden Muhammad Ramdhan, the Imam of the Sunda Kelapa Mosque in Jakarta, the inadequacy of Pancasila could be seen through its implementation. The

discussion about statehood could be separated from **Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI)** with its concept of *Khilafah*. Some takmirs are not worried about the presence of HTI, because it does not necessarily change the NKRI. The opinion was presented by Yunus Yahawarin, takmir of Darun Naim mosque, Ambon. However, some takmirs firmly oppose HTI because it poses a latent danger to the unity of the NKRI. Ustaz Ngadikin Iskandar, takmir of the mosque of Ulul Albab campus, Sam Ratulangi University, Manado, presented this view (See Convey Report Vol. 2 No.5, page. 34-36).

### The Islamic Religious Scholars (Ulema) and Their Religious Views.

The Centre of Islamic, Democracy, and Peace Studies (PusPIDeP) Yogyakarta researched the Islamic religious scholars in Indonesia in 2019. The research was conducted in three categories of cities, which are the Metropolitan Islamic City (Surakarta, Bandung, Jakarta, Medan, Makassar), Mainstream Islamic Cities (Banda Aceh, Palangka Raya, Banjarmasin, Surabaya, Padang), and the Muslim-minority cities (Pontianak, Denpasar, Kupang, Ambon, Manado). Out of 450 scholars from various cities, around 16% rejected the concept of the nation-state. Although it does not show a large number, the government has to be watchful nonetheless (see Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 3, page 10-16).

### Characteristics of Ulama in Indonesia



**Figure 2.** Categorization of the Characteristics of Ulama

Most of the Islamic religious scholars that rejected the nation-state concept were located in Surakarta and Banjarmasin (30%), Padang (26,70%), Banda Aceh, and Bandung (23,30%). Based on characteristics (see **figure 2**), Islamic religious scholars in Indonesia could be categorized as 34% moderate, 23,33% inclusive, 9,33% exclusive, 9,79% progressive, 4% radical, and 2,67% extreme. **The characteristics** can be seen in Table 1 (see Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 3, page 10-16).

Furthermore, most of the Islamic religious scholars with moderate characteristics were located in Kupang (53,30%), Surakarta (50%), and Palangka Raya (46,70%). The Islamic religious scholars with inclusive characteristics are mostly in Jakarta (41,40%), Pontianak (36,70%), and Surabaya (35,50%). The conservatives were mostly in Banda Aceh (23,30%), Pontianak (16,70%), and Banjarmasin (13,30%). The Islamic religious scholars with exclusive characteristics were in Padang

(20%), Bandung (16,20%), and Jakarta (13,80%). Most of the progressive Islamic religious scholars were located in Jakarta, Manado, and Ambon (13,80%). The Islamic religious scholars with radical characteristics were mostly in Banda Aceh and Banjarmasin (10%). Most of the Islamic religious scholars with extreme characteristics were in Surakarta (13,30%) (see Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 3, page 10-16).

Table 1. *Characteristics of Ulema*

Characteristics	Sub-character	Dimension			
		Anti-Violence	Pro System	Tolerance	Pro civil society
Acceptance	Progressive	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Inclusive	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Moderate	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Conservative	✓	✓	✓	-
Rejection	Exclusive	✓	✓	-	-
	Radical	✓	-	-	-
	Extreme	-	-	-	-
Unidentified	Unidentified				

### Friday Bulletins.

Based on PPIM UIN Jakarta's survey in 2018, **the Friday bulletin** in current circulation fall into two categories, namely the bulletins **with radical contents, and without radical contents** (for further detail on the criteria of radical and non-radical, see Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 7 page 20-22). Bulletins that contain radical contents circulate on the local and national scale. Based on research, the radical bulletin that circulated on the national scale is the "Kaffah" Bulletin.

The "Kaffah" Bulletin is published by Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). From 70 editions retrieved, the bulletin generally shows radical contents. The circulation of Kaffah Bulletin was found in 5 cities surveyed (Pandeglang [23], Bogor [13], Bandung [13], Sukoharjo [13], and Gresik [8]). Meanwhile, the radical bulletins other than "Kaffah" were found mostly in Bogor Regency, but it was not found in Gresik. There are seven editions of Kaffah Bulletin with radical contents.

The "Kaffah" bulletin targeted mosques in a residential area and big mosques, and it also targeted the mosques in the educational and government environment. This condition requires special attention from policymakers, as the "Kaffah" Bulletin had even circulated in mosques of government buildings. Radical bulletins other than "Kaffah," which were circulated on a local scale, mostly target mosques in local settlements, and also *jamik* mosques in the region, and schools.

Bulletins with radical contents, especially the "Kaffah," often discuss statehood and extreme religious views. Based on the research, 31,43% of the contents discuss rebuilding the state and society through certain Islamic fundamentals. As an example, this is quoted from an edition of Kaffah: "That is why it is ironic to claim oneself as an inheritor of *Ahlu sunnah* if they have a contradictory attitude to the great Imams, by rejecting *Khilafah*. In addition, deterring the Muslims from carrying out total obedience to Allah SWT and His *Rasul* by upholding *sharia* and *Khilafah*. This is a grave sin." (Kaffah [013], 2017:3).

From four cities in which bulletins other than "Kaffah" are circulating, most of the radical bulletins were found in Bogor regency. The targeted objects are mosques in the local villages, *big* mosques, residential areas, and schools (see Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 7, page 30-32). Meanwhile,

bulletins other than “Kaffah”, both radical and non-radical, were dominated by religious themes ( $\pm 80\%$ ), and lack of statehood, gender, and tolerance themes (see Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 7, page 9-10, 33-35).

The “Kaffah” bulletin targeted mosques in a residential area and *big* mosques, and it also targeted the mosques in the educational and government environment. The “Kaffah” bulletin discussed religious themes (72,86%) and statehood theme (90%) (see Convey Report Vol. 2 No. 7, page 36-40). The contents were dominated by the desire to rebuild the country through certain Islamic principles (31,43%) (see Convey Report Vol.2 No.7, page 8-9).

The **receptions of bulletins** among congregations are various. Generally, they accepted the presence of bulletins, although interestingly, some mosque officials considered that “Kaffah” bulletin (and the other radical bulletins) are good and beneficial for their congregations. This notion is proved by the number of reception (agree and strongly agree) toward the bulletin in terms of contents, authors, and publishers (see Convey Report Vol.2 No. 7, page 40-47).

## Policy Analysis

### Mosque.

In accordance with the Decree of General Directorate of Bimas Islam No. DI.II/802 of the year 2014 concerning The Standard of the Development of Mosque’s Management, firmly stated that the goal of the development is “.. to achieve a prosperous mosque and an Islamic community that is moderate, harmonious, and tolerant, both in Central, provincial, Cities/Regencies level, as well as districts and village levels. Moreover, the same document also explains the standards for every mosque, including the management of supporting facilities such as the library, sermons and lectures, and the mosque youth organization. However, the practice on the field is far from ideal. This means that tighter supervision from the government is necessary. Besides, there are no regulations that have the power or authority to remove mosque managers if they are considered not to perform their duties properly.

### Islamic religious scholars/Ulema.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs has issued a call for the provision of religious speeches in houses of worship throughout Indonesia in 2017. Moreover, in 2018 the Secretary-general of the Ministry of Religious Affairs issued a list of 200 preachers/*mubaligh* who were considered an expert in religion. These steps were made in order to maintain a sense of unity, increase national productivity, maintain harmony among religious communities, and preserve the sanctity of houses of worship. The government wants to provide information to the public regarding Islamic preachers who fulfill the three criteria set by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The criteria are to possess adequate religious knowledge, to have a good reputation and experience, and to have a high national commitment. However, this call has led to controversy and counter-productivity. The state does not have a system for certification of Islamic religious scholars. Besides, the provision of Islamic preaching is only a call, not a binding regulation. There are no criteria, indicators, and procedures to select and verify the Islamic preachers.

### Friday Bulletins.

In the Strategic Plan (Renstra) of Ditjen Bimas Islam 2015-2019 concerning Friday bulletins, there are only printed media mentioned, and not specifically cover the Friday bulletins that are

circulating in mosques. One of the policies of Ditjen Bimas Islam stated that “Strengthening, and expanding the broadcast of Islamic religious messages in various printed media, internet, social media, and the other special sites.” This is an attempt to strengthen and expand the effort to instill religious understanding, appreciation, practice, to develop Islamic values in the society, and to create a harmonious atmosphere within the community.

In terms of budgeting, “The quality of the management of Islamic Religious Affairs” must be improved in the way of “Reducing the followers of deviant and radical sects.” This type of program got the second biggest share, ranging from 800 million to 1 billion rupiahs every year (2015-2019). The allocation of the funds to increase the quality and quantity of production and circulation of Friday bulletins in mosques is not mentioned in the budgeting plan.

The government has a strong commitment to spread moderate, inclusive, and tolerant religious views, considering the regulation and steps carried out by the government. However, the research found that there were still many intolerant and even radical religious preaching practices in the mosque environment. These practices were carried out through primary stakeholders and instruments of the mosque, such as the ulema, preachers, *takmir*s, imams, and bulletins. Therefore, a strategic step by the government through the Ministry of Religious Affairs is necessary to review the policies and its implementation on the field.

### **III. OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH**

The objective of compiling this policy paper is to transform the existing 2020-2024 RJPMMN document into focused strategies and operational policies and to be the leverage factor for strengthening religious moderation in Indonesia. The policies are intended to be a breakthrough effort to increase the opportunity of 2020-2024 RJPMMN implementation. This policy paper also contains the implementation of the programs/activities that were not listed in the 2020-2024 RJPMMN document but expected to be significant leverage, both directly and indirectly, to strengthen religious moderation. Therefore, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, especially the *Bimas* Islam, is expected to pass down these alternative policies in the Strategic Plan (RENSTRA) of the 2020-2024 period.

To accelerate and strengthen religious moderation, the 2020 compilation of policy paper also specifically formulate strategic, concrete, and sustainable steps that stimulate the improvements on views, attitude, opinion, and intention of tolerance and moderate acts in the religious community. Consequently, this country can achieve a peace-loving society that upholds the values of humanities and carries out Pancasila with devotion.

To formulate the strategies and operational policies, the methodology used is the SWOT and TOWS analyses, and it also involves the expert analysis with Likert 1 to 4 scale. Besides, this policy paper is also supported by a desk study and focus group discussion (FGD) to gain inputs from relevant stakeholders.

### III. ALTERNATIVE POLICIES

Based on the study on religious moderation in the mosque environment, several aspects related to efforts to improve mosque management could be listed. The First is that the management of the mosque must comply with regulations. The second is to emphasize the sources of religious literacy in the mosque environment, which must have moderate religious views. Prior to the formulation of policy, a brainstorming session was conducted, which will be presented in the SWOT matrix as follows:

**Table 1. SWOT analysis**

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Internal factors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is a special institution concerning mosque (Mosque Council of Indonesia).</li> <li>2. The mosque's management is aware of the danger of radicalism.</li> <li>3. There is an effort to reject radicalism through the selection of religious literacy sources.</li> <li>4. Initial data of the circulation of Friday Bulletins, both radical and non-radical is existing</li> <li>5. The government has allocated a considerably big budget to deter radicalism.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Currently, no policy regulates the removal of the mosque's official.</li> <li>2. Lack of religious literacy in mosque environment.</li> <li>3. Lack of affirmation or sanction for violations of mosque's official.</li> <li>4. Many mosque managers could not identify the radicals.</li> <li>5. No policy explicitly regulates the Friday bulletins.</li> <li>6. Lack of supervision of the contents of bulletins.</li> </ol>
	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<b>External factors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The mosque as the center for the development of religious moderation</li> <li>2. The youth as an agent to promote moderate religious life</li> <li>3. Moderate ulemas are the key to the development of peace in Indonesia</li> <li>4. Friday Bulletin as a moderate communication &amp; da'wah media</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The radicals are growing and difficult to identify.</li> <li>2. The youth is not interested in religious literacy in the mosque, especially the library.</li> <li>3. Bulletins with radical contents, especially "Kaffah" are increasingly popular.</li> </ol>

Based on the SWOT analysis above, some strategic matters to formulate alternative policies to improve religious moderation could be considered. Further analysis is presented in the TOWS matrix as follows:

**Table 2. TOWS analysis**

	<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Strengths</i>
<i>Opportunities</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To urge the government to reaffirm the regulations concerning mosque management to the lowest level.</li> <li>2. To urge the government to impose sanctions on violations by the mosque management by removing its authority.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To urge the government and elements of society to participate in overseeing the management of mosques.</li> <li>2. To optimize the funding on the improvements in the quality and quantity of mosque management.</li> </ol>
<i>Threats</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increasing public awareness of the dangers of radicalism and intolerance</li> <li>2. Improving the religious literacy in mosque environment</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Optimizing the role of mosque officials in preventing radical religious preachers</li> <li>2. Conducting a study on a national scale regarding the effect of media on radicalism and intolerance, especially the Friday bulletins</li> <li>3. Urging <i>Bimas</i> Islam to include religious moderation in the contents of <i>Bimas</i> Islam's Bulletin</li> </ol>

The mission to strengthen religious moderation is not only directed at the mosque environment, but this mission is also directed to strengthen awareness among policymakers and to develop knowledge about religious moderation. Therefore, this act will gradually strengthen religious moderation.

In order to achieve the goal, there are several operational policies which have not been contained in the RPJMN and the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, but this is still considered important and will be a leverage factor to achieve religious moderation. Based on the SWOT & TOWS analysis, and the identification of problems, developing operational strategies and policies is necessary to improve the quality of Islamic religious preachers. The strategies and policies are:

**To Improve national and moderate religious knowledge for Takmirs, Imams, and Preachers of the mosques**

Although the Ministry of Religious Affairs has issued a call for the provision of religious speeches in houses of worship throughout Indonesia, in reality, these steps are not effective in decreasing the number of preachers who often make hate speech and intolerant (even radical) speeches. Therefore, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, particularly the Islamic Community Guidance (*Bimas* Islam), should conduct a serious study in developing strategies to strengthen the national and religious moderation knowledge of mosque officials, imams, and preachers.

**To improve moderate religious preaching**

In the Decree of the General Directorate of Islamic Community Guidance Number DJ.II / 802 of 2014, the principle of moderate religiosity is included, but the government still needs to pay more attention to the management of mosques regarding the preaching of religion. Some programs are necessary as a form of counter-narrative for intolerant and radical groups, like a massive Friday bulletin syndication, website development, social media, and other mosque media.

**To improve the collaboration with the non-government organizations in the education and regeneration of Ulema/ Preacher**

Religion-based social organizations, such as NU, Muhammadiyah, NW, etc., have proven to have a substantial share in the social and religious development in Indonesia. This reason indicates that they need to be included in the education and training of ulema/preachers and the regeneration of prospective ulema/preachers.

**To expand the network of mosque officials, imams, preachers, and ulemas**

In this case, The mosque is not the object or a building, but the structure and the stakeholders responsible for the mosque management and the ulema. The network expansion is needed to ward off transnational radical groups. This network expansion can be done by exchanging ulema or religious leaders between countries who will be guided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs or The Coordinating Ministry of Political, Legal, and Security Affairs.

## IV. ALTERNATIVE POLICIES ANALYSIS

Some of the proposed alternative policies have been described in chapter IV. These proposals were then discussed in a focus group discussion with the corresponding Ministries and agencies. The focus group discussion was intended to gather commentaries, advice, and ideas from relevant ministries and agencies to complement this policy paper.

This policy paper proposes three policies to solve the problems in the mosque environment. The first is to increase the development of the capacity of mosque managers. The second is to improve the management of mosques and moderate religious preaching. The third is to increase cooperation with the non-government organizations in the education and regeneration of ulema/preachers. Furthermore, each policy proposal will be analyzed one by one.

### **To increase the Development of the Capacity of the Mosque Managers**

Although the Ministry of Religious Affairs has issued a call for the provision of religious speeches in houses of worship throughout Indonesia, in reality, these steps are not effective in decreasing the number of lecturers who often make hate speech and intolerant (even radical) speeches. Therefore, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, particularly the Islamic Community Guidance (Bimas Islam), should conduct a serious study in developing strategies to strengthen the national and religious knowledge of mosque officials, imams, and mosque preachers to develop the religious moderation perspectives. Cecep Khairul Anwar, Assistant Deputy of the Empowerment and Interfaith Harmony of The Coordinating Minister of Human Development and Culture (KemenkoPMK), stated that this is important to do so. The Director of Information of Bimas Islam Kemenag, A. Juraidi, added that at least the nationalism understanding must be one of the qualifications of being an imam.

### **To improve national and moderate religious knowledge for Takmirs, Imams, and preachers**

The principle of moderate religiosity is included in the Decree of the General Directorate of Islamic Community Guidance Number DJ.II / 802 of 2014, but the Government still needs to pay more attention to the management of mosques regarding the preaching of religion. Some programs are necessary, as a form of counter-narrative for intolerant and radical groups like a massive Friday bulletin syndication, website development, social media, and other mosque media. According to Abdurrahman Mas'ud, the head of the Research and Development Dept. of The Ministry of Religious Affairs, the reinforcement of the materials of religious preaching in the mosque based on religious moderation should be done in many programs such as books, Friday

bulletins, and the other types of media. In addition, Waryani Fajar, the Head of Sub-Division of Religious Institutions of The Centre of Interfaith Harmony (PKUB), admitted that PKUB still focuses on the building of the mosque (the permission to build the house of worship), not into contents yet.

### **To improve the collaboration with the Non-government Organizations in Education and Regeneration of Ulema/preachers**

Religion-based social organizations, such as NU, Muhammadiyah, NW, etc., have proven to have a substantial share in the social and religious development in Indonesia. Therefore, they need to be included in the education and training of ulema/preachers and the regeneration of prospective ulema/preachers. According to Husni, the Executive of Sub-Directorate of Mosque Affairs of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the appointment of moderate preachers is also an important matter to ward off extreme ideas in the mosque environment.

### **To expand the networks of takmirs, imams, mosque's preachers, and ulemas**

The mosque, in this case, is not the object or the building, but the structure and the actors playing in it, including the mosque management and the ulema. The network expansion is needed to ward off transnational radical groups. This network expansion can be done by exchanging ulema or religious leaders between countries. This exchange process will be guided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs or The Coordinating Ministry of Political, Legal, and Security Affairs. Imam Addaruqutni, the General Secretary of the Mosque Council of Indonesia, and Sarmidi Husna, the Secretary of PBNU, agreed on this suggestion.

## V. CONCLUSION

Indonesia has to deal with many challenges to preserve its quality of democracy, twenty years after the reformation. One of the challenges that always disrupt our democracy is religion-based violent conflict (both intra-faith or interfaith), which might reduce the quality of our democracy. National problems such as intolerance, extremism, and radicalism should be the main concerns of the government. This effort is made to preserve the ecology of harmonious state and religious life.

The mosque is the primary spot to foster religious understanding other than educational institutions. The key variables in the mosque are the management, religious preachers, ulema, and the media of literacy, such as the library and bulletins. All of those are expected to develop the mental, moral, and values in the society, and they are also expected to improve the quality of life from various aspects, including religion and national development. The social aspects of society have to be maintained so that the values of Pancasila can be preserved as the philosophy of the nation.

The Priority Program 3: Strengthening religious moderation in the Mid-term National Development Plan (RPJMN) has a vital role in national development. RPJMN is a primary reference for every Ministry and State Agency to formulate the Strategic Plan (Renstra) that will further empower the sustainable development of Indonesia. Having this foundation and awareness, the strengthening of religious moderation would support and accelerate the progress of the national development targets in 2020-2024 RPJMN.

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