



Bogor Message and Wasatiyyat Islam: Reviving Islamic Diplomacy and Constituting the Transnationalism of Islam

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Abstract

Bogor Message is constituting the transnationalism of Islam and reviving the importance of diplomacy based on religious consultation and multilateralism, that concluded by prominent Islamic scholars (*ulama*) along state actors through High-Level Constitution of World Muslim Scholars in 2018. Likewise, Bogor Message is considered a form of *ijma' ulama* (consensus among Islamic scholars) which will be useful for Muslim *ummah* (Islamic society) as a common ground depicting universal norm in regulating the attitude toward international relations (IR). Wasatiyyat Islam summed up in the Bogor Message, is the embodiment of Islamic tradition in the multi-track diplomacy where interactions between state and non-state actors in diplomacy resulted in an understanding to solve *ummah* fundamental problems in Islamicate world through the normative religious approach. The Bogor Message is rendezvous point and unified the differences of Wasatiyyat Islam conception aimed to unite *ummah* in the framework of transnational Islam and reform the intra and inter-faith matters, based on Al-Qur'an and Sunnah. This research article examines the principle of Wasatiyyat Islam inside Bogor Message and its functionality as soft power by using diplomacy theories. The purpose is to discover the progress of Wasatiyyat Islam thought dissemination through specific related events and forums. The shifted focus of *ummah* in other countries due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic hampered the progress of Wasatiyyat Islam dissemination until 2021 and remained exclusive for certain bastions of 'moderate Islam' countries. Though, the potencies for developing and globalizing Wasatiyyat Islam could gain momentum in the post-COVID-19 world.

Keywords: Bogor Message, Diplomacy, Reform, Transnational Islam, Ummah Unity, Wasatiyyat Islam

1. Introduction

1.1 Islamicate World and Ummah as Universal Image

In the postnormal times, there is the scenario for Muslims amidst disunity to realize that *shariah* (Islamic law) is no longer an antique frightening concept as a reformed Islam succeeded in reformulating the fundamental rules to be applicable in the difficult times and strongly related with the humanity, inclusivity, and justice whereas people of all beliefs earned benefits by comprehending Islamic values and ways of delivering the Islamic ethics in daily life (Sardar, Serra & Joran, 2019: 220-221). The scenario seems utopian and too good to be true, but frankly speaking, most Muslims would favor it as if the dream comes true as they strive to apply the *shariah* in all aspects of life, intertwined with the domestic law wherever Muslims reside. The effort to reform Islam remains one of the priority agendas as countless researchers, Islamic figures, Islamic civil society organizations, think tanks, universities, even countries put on quite shows to make it true.

Muslim *ummah* (Islamic society) is struggling from multi-dimension challenges upon their faith and social reality where Islam is depicted in negativity or religion in crisis for political purposes. The struggle to fix the image and reality of *ummah* is continuously attempted from individual level to state level. Sayyid (2015) argues Islam is a collective identity where all Muslims attach themselves and are attached by others, even though an Islamism often repudiates the diplomatic in favor of the military not only depicting *ummah* as a universal image, yet becomes the single preferred way by which a global Muslim presence can be actualized in the context of a hostile international environment.

Hypothetically, one of principles that needs to be emphasized within *ummah* is middle-pathism which is represented inside the Bogor Message, despite the lack of practice or still uncommon for the *ummah*. The presence of Bogor Message as the fundamental normative direction has constituted Wasatiyyat Islam discourse in the Islamic world. Second hypothesis is during the rise of Wasatiyyat Islam will be able giving a direction and focus for *ummah* as it must be held applicable following the condition of current global issues. The objectives of the study are Bogor Message possesses great chances to develop common ground and represent the transnational Islam which comprises cosmopolitanism and fulfilling *shariah* obligation toward *ummah* unity.

The top problem in *ummah* until recent is unity, in example even fellow Muslims cannot agreed in one global Hijri calendar to standardize ritual and festive schedules, particularly surfaced in deciding Ramadhan month. People needs to utilize the soft power embedded in Bogor Message to moderate the societal development and take the middle-path to realize unity and reform. Therefore, if Bogor Message is continuously promoted by everyone, it could create a gradual reform and acculturate consensus as common custom in resolving problem as Prophet Muhammad ﷺ done in his 23-years *dawah* in Arabian peninsula which impact resonates through continents and centuries.

1.2 Reaching Consensus in Wasatiyyat Islam: Indonesian Soft-power in Motion

In the last 5 years, there are 3 different International Fora in Indonesia that significantly contributes to portraying the progress of Wasatiyyat Islam to achieve the interest of peace and *ummah* unity, are High-Level Consultation – World Muslim Scholars (HLC-WMS) and the 7th World Peace Forum in 2018 and World Sufi Forum (WSF) in 2019. During the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 and 2021, the effort to develop and conduct a sequel forum was hampered due to immigration restriction and strict health regulations as the global focus shifted to economic recovery. Eventually, the direct meeting shifted to an online forum and conference to keep the dissemination of Wasatiyyat Islam consistently attempted. Although, the range is limited to certain target and area in online events. In the case of HLC-WMS can be categorized as formal diplomacy due to events that organized by the government and attended by mixed actors, state actors such as President, Vice President, Ministers, and Ambassadors whilst the non-state actors consisted of Islamic figures, Islamic scholars, Islamic civil society organization, government-recognized Islamic organization, inter-governmental organization and so on.

Indonesian government as the pioneer of the consultation has an intention to expand the soft power to multi-track diplomacy (MTD) by supporting the effort to gather Islamic figures both state and non-state actors across the globe aimed to reject the association of Islam to terrorism and extremism and build the peace order for the world. Yousefvand (2012: 312) states following UN Charter, Article 33, consultation is not considered as a method for solving disputes, yet in most treaties, it is regarded as a method and first step of solving disputes through a low-key negotiation that is conducted before the main negotiations. *Shura* (consultation) in the Islamic concept is almost sharing the same meaning in Abraham Lincoln's perspective on democracy (Praja, 2003: 34). The HLC-WMS forum resulted in Bogor Message as the foundation of Wasatiyyat Islam notion and subsequently reflected in Jakarta Message as the result of the 7th World Peace Forum (WPF) in the same year.

HLC – WMS gave birth to Bogor Message as the crystalization of Wasatiyyat Islam was initiated by Special Envoy for Interfaith Dialogue and Civilization Affairs of President of Republic of Indonesia Din Syamsuddin with the support by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Indonesia (Kemlu) and held in Bogor, West Java, Indonesia from 1-3 May 2018. Prominent figures in the Muslim world were coming to the event and gathered to share their thoughts on Wasatiyyat Islam. The participants of the meeting are prominent Islamic figures in the world such as Grand Sheikh Al-Azhar Ahmad Ath-Thayyib, Advisor to the Secretary-General of United Nations Abdullah Al-Matouq, Assistant Secretary-General of Muslim World League Abdul Rahman Al-Zaid, Secretary-General of the World Assembly for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought Ayatullah M. Ali Tashkiri, Secretary-General of Daar Al-Ifta of Lebanon Sheikh Amin El-Kurdi, Chairman of the Fiqh Council of North America Muzammil Al-Siddiqi, President of Australian Federation of Islamic Councils Rateb Jneid, President of Islamic Association of China Sheikh Hassan Yang Faming, Vice President of Community Religiosa Islamica Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe Pallavicini and Imam of Leeds Mecca Mosque Qari Muhammad Asim and Abdullah M Bin Himeid. Additionally, Ambassador of United Kingdom Moazzam Malik and Vice President of Iran Masoumeh Ebtekar likewise engaged in the event. The combination of state actors and non-state actors in the forum is an essential factor in presenting Bogor Message as a diplomacy product based on consensus and strengthening multilateralism.

The importance of consensus in principle which is derived from a council of consultation is having similar things with the multilateralism in international politics. Because the issues related to Islam will involve Muslims which

spread in the different geography and demography. That is why several issues are best handled in multilateralism that has grown for the last three decades (Rana, 2011: 26). Multilateralism is an alternative to bring together international actors to support cooperation, incorporating principles of non-discrimination, diffuse reciprocity, and generalized institutional structures as these principles underlie relations between states or groups of states and non-state actors in specific issue areas (Griffiths, O'Callaghan, & Roach, 2008: 207-209).

According to Fox and Sandler (2013: 35-36), one of the most essential aspects in international relations (IR) is legitimacy as a powerful asset to foreign-policy makers and an element of the international system's stability which religion is likewise providing an excellent source for legitimacy. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ reiterated that he left two things, so *ummah* will not get lost forever as long as they hold onto it, the two things are Al-Qur'an and Sunnah. Muslims has to stick with the guidance of Al-Qur'an and Sunnah on every matter in their life, which those two things gave the legitimacy for *the ummah* to conduct certain behaviours and attitudes following the directions. Regardless, all the religious thought bids a commencement to diplomacy based on faith principles (Sharp, 2009: 244).

Since globalization occurred and influenced the international community, diplomacy is not rigidly attached to state actors only, as the country grows capable of exercising their soft power, it is inevitably the diplomacy is being conducted by non-state actors. Gradually, Muslim *ummah* who gets a demographical bonus, make it possible for certain countries like Indonesia as the most populous Muslim country in the world, to generate notion from the local wisdom and values, subsequently utilize it in the foreign policy. Even though in IR, politics, and religion are separated the separation is non-existent in Islam (Adiong, 2015: 6-7; Fox & Sandler, 2013: 90).

HLC – WMS became possible for Islam and politics as a contingent in formulating Bogor Message as well as exercising the diplomacy between mixed actors. Ramadhan and Syauqillah (2018: 148-158) argue that Bogor Message is a consensus among Islamic scholars (*ijma' ulama*) to revive the Islamic way in resolving the problem through diplomacy and also exemplified the MTD. The notion of MTD is pioneered by John W. McDonald in 1989 by expanding the two tracks diplomacy to five tracks until it comprises nine tracks such below (McDonald, 2012),

- a. Government, or Peacemaking through Diplomacy;
- b. Non-governmental/Professional, or Peacemaking through Conflict Resolution;
- c. Business, or Peacemaking through Commerce;
- d. Private Citizen, or Peacemaking through Personal Involvement;
- e. Research, Training, and Education, or Peacemaking through Learning;
- f. Activism, or Peacemaking through Advocacy;
- g. Religion, or Peacemaking through Faith in action;
- h. Funding, or Peacemaking through Providing Resources;
- i. Communications and Media, or Peacemaking through Information.

For conflict resolution, this system requires all tracks or several functional tracks to sustainably work together to build a peace process that will last. Hence, in a peaceful time, MTD is still useful to manage peace and avoid disputes or overcome the particular problem to find a resolution. As Wasatiyyat Islam becomes the main approach of Indonesian diplomacy, certain events are likewise directed to support the notion by inviting another state or non-state actors whose similarities and interests toward Islamicate world to unite in a similar agenda. To succeed in HLC-WMS, Indonesia utilized government, non-government, private citizen, education, and religious tracks to conduct the diplomacy. Hoesterey (2020) argues that Indonesia's governmental and Islamic civil society organizations are seeking to rebrand the image of the country through combined efforts of bilateral, multilateral, and Track II diplomacy. To rebrand the country's image, public-private partnerships work best because the country brand is a composite of multiple actions which most likely beyond governmental control (Rana, 2011: 89). A country with capability will be able to expand its soft power through MTD, but not necessarily all countries able to do so, because to use religion as legitimacy in diplomacy must be depended on the will of the nation and how the state manages it well.

Sharp (2009: 243) gives an example of the IR of the Middle East often describes the problems posed by religion for diplomacy in their sharpest forms. Previously, the image of Islam strongly attached with the Middle East in non-Muslim's perspective 'Middle East is full of warring states and chaotic situation because of fragmentation or sectarianism in religion'. Meanwhile, diplomacy in Islam functioned the employment of peaceful means, use of negotiation to end the war, resume peace, and realize common interest, particularly persuading people to the divine instructions without force and defending Islam from creed threats (Yousefvand, 2012: 312-313). If it truly works,

the Middle East soon becomes a stable region and war-torn countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya or other Muslim countries could revive as soon as possible.

This paper aims to develop the previous study from Ramadhan and Syauqillah (2018) related to Bogor Message as it expanded under the framework of diplomacy theories and approach of Islam toward the reform agenda of Wasatiyyat Islam. Diplomacy perceived as a way to resolve the conflict is best exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ during his life. The Apostle of Allah ﷺ managed to amend the peace between two fighting tribes Aws and Khazraj resulting in the Pledges of Al-Aqaba and bridging the differences through Medina Constitution (Qureshi & Ajmal, 2019: 17-18). On another occasion, Prophet ﷺ sent invitation letters in a best respectable manner through trustworthy ambassadors of *ummah* towards kings and rulers in the geopolitical range that time. Thus, the response of letters were not immediate wars as some replied with gifts and appreciation. Lesson can be taken is soft power in conflict resolution be utmost important in manage the social relations and reduce the dispute potencies. Hence, the purpose of the study to observe the progress of Wasatiyyat Islam dissemination prior it turns to a global discourse and forecast the possibility in the future.

1.3 Bogor Message and The Rejuvenated Spirit of Reform and Unity In Islam

1.3.1 A Brief of Bogor Message

Bogor Message is the result of consultation among fellow Islamic scholars who came and represented their Muslim community from plentiful countries. The High-Level Consultation World Muslim Scholar (HLC-WMS) conducted 3 days meeting from 1 – 3 May 2018 in Bogor, Indonesia, where prominent Islamic scholars gathered and discussed urgent issues within *ummah* which resulted in Bogor Message as the fundamental of Wasatiyyat Islam. Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar and Imam of Mecca's Masjidil Haram were two of the attendants as the event was supported by the Indonesian government and attended by other state actors. Wasatiyyat Islam is constructed within seven principles of Bogor Message to depict a fundamental ethic line or norms among fellow Muslims directed by *ulama*'s consensus-based on Al-Qur'an and Sunnah as follow (Ramadhan & Syauqillah, 2018: 149-153).

a. *Tawassut* – توسط

Is meant to be justly balanced, be in the middle and step on the straight path which emphasized on middle-pathism. This principle is derived from *ayat* (verse) in Al-Qur'an chapter Al-Baqarah: 143 decreed, "And thus we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you...", the underlined term is originated from *أمة وسطا* words which have the meaning as the community of the middle way or can be interpreted as the order to make a justice within society. Other *ayats* are stating the actual application of *tawassut* itself related with chapter Luqman: 19 & 32 verses that use term *واقصد* (be moderate) and *مقتصد* (moderate in faith), also in Al-Maidah: 66 with the similar term *أمة مقتصدة* (moderate community), An-Nahl: 9 with the term *قصد السبيل* (direction of the way) and At-Tawbah: 42 with the words *سفرا قاصدا* (moderate trip) likewise in Ali Imran: 110 that uses term *خير أمة* (the best people). Nashir (2016: 147) argues that *tawassut* is related to *ummatan wasathan* who represented modernist-reformist Islam to develop the balance between "purification" and "reform". Az-Zuhaili (2005) emphasizes the moderate attitude in religion is calm, balanced, and consistently taking the middle path for all religious matters without being extreme to one side. The Apostle of Allah ﷺ has given the example of balance management in life and hereafter. Because Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the best role for humankind and universe in all ways to live the life based on Islamic teaching and being in the middle or moderate;

b. *I'tidal* – اعتدل

Is meant to behave appropriately proportionate and fair in taking responsibility. The principle is taken from *shalah* (prayer) movement – before the *sujud* (prostration) and after the *ruku'* (bow) – placed in the middle to depict the straight way in virtue as chapter Al-Maidah: 8 decreed, "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness...", the underlined word is *اعدلوا* which a command for the believers and is another form of *i'tidal* word. Syamsuddin (Syifa, 2019) said the attitude of *i'tidal* is standing on justice, not siding with a certain side, similar to *shalah*, *i'tidal* is standing firm, not bent. Then Allah's Apostle ﷺ always behaves to educate companions and justly treat the person who unknowledgeable, this is an appropriate action and comprehensibly gave the example of moderation, both in dutiful ritual and daily life must be balanced;

c. *Tasamuh* – تسامح

Is to tolerate, recognize and pay respect to diversity in most aspects of life. Al-Qur'an is not explicitly or explaining about *tasamuh*, yet it can be related in another term like Al-Balad: 17 on the word *رحمة* (mercy), An-Nur: 22 with

the word العفو (forgiveness), Az-Zukhruf: 89 in the word سوف (relieved), Al-Furqan: 63 with the word سلم (peace), An-Nahl: 90 with the word الإحسان (goodness), and Al-Kafirun and Al-Ikhlās. Islam's tolerance is more authentic and original due to the long history referred to in the chapter Al-Kafirun revelation, far before the West promulgates the concept in the world. Principally, Islamic tolerance constituted in the Medina Charter and exhibited in the Rasulallah ﷺ attitude throughout his life;

d. *Shura* – شورى

It relies on consultation and settling problems through deliberation and thorough consideration to reach a consensus. The principle is derived from chapter Ash-Shuraa: 38 that decreed, “And those who have responded to their Lord and established prayer and whose affair is (determined by) consultation among themselves...”, the underlined word is having similar meaning as شورى “to start something, show and widen”. It is likewise revealed in other verse Ali ‘Imran: 159 with the word وشاورهم (consult them) in certain cases such as state management or even greater matter for society's sake. Abdul Hamid Al-Ansari said that *shura* is negotiation or exchanging opinions about a certain matter or even asking advice from many parties to be considered and take the best option for common interest (Abdullah, 2014). This principle is also applied in unusual events such as war. It was reported in many *hadith* about the Battle of Badar and the Battle of Khandaq how Rasulallah ﷺ and his companions always discuss and consult to whom know better wisely (Iqbal, 2000). Consultation is a world-known tradition in the decision-making process and is ultimately useful in the current global condition. Islam is providing legitimacy based the divine sources through consultation to reach consensus;

e. *Islah* – إصلاح

Is involved in reformative and constructive efforts for the common good. This principle is derived from several verses in Al-Qur'an like Al-Baqarah: 220 which stated, “To this world and the Hereafter. And they ask you about orphans. Say, improvement for them is best. And if you mix your affairs with theirs – they are your brothers. And Allah knows the corrupter from the amender...”, the word that used is known as إصلاح in the *ayat* context is setting right the affairs. In the others, *ayat* also said like Al-Baqarah: 228 with the word أصلحوا (reconciliation), Al-A'raf: 142 with the word وأصلح (do right), Al-Anfal: 1 with the word وأصلحوا (and set right), Al-Hujurat: 9-10 with the word فأصلحوا (make settlement/peace) and many more. Reform is encouraged in those verses for the greater good. Reform in Islam is aimed to return the Islamic faith in a pure form, its texts, principles, methodologies, understandings, and inferences to a constructive way for *ummah* (Dar Al-Ifta Al-Missriyyah, 2019). *Islah* is encouraged to be applied to make and build peace between conflicting or even warring societies;

f. *Qudwah* – قدوة

Is pioneering honorable initiatives and taking lead for the creature's prosperity. The principle is implicitly cited in Al-Qur'an from similar term أسوة which means example or model. The most cited verse for this term is chapter Al-Ahzab: 21 that decreed, “There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day (who) remembers Allah often”, the underlined word is أسوة حسنة refers to Rasulallah ﷺ who gives the best example to be followed by Muslim *ummah* in every attitude he made. Rasulallah ﷺ was pioneering his Arabian tribe and even more many ethnics, to lead them into prosperity and well-being. Well-being is not limited to humans but also the environment and the other creations. Al-Ba'labaki (2003; as cited in Jasmi, 2016) defines *qudwah* to give an example, represent a model, and good role in life. The state of nature in *qudwah* principle is giving a role model to others to be followed or even duplicate as similar as possible to Rasulallah ﷺ;

g. *Muwatanah* – موطنية

Is recognizing the nation-state and respecting citizenship for every people from different nationalities. This principle is likewise not explicitly or cited in Al-Qur'an but derived from *Surah* Al-Hujurat: 13 that said, “O mankind, indeed We created you from male and female and you peoples and tribes that you may know one another...”, the underlined words شعوبا وقبائل are meant “to show the varieties of tribes and differences of nations for someone in a certain territory”. Yet it will not limit them to know each other, especially for Muslims who are brothers and sisters for each other. Al-Qaradawi (2017) defines motherland or fatherland in the same meaning as الوطن and nationality as similar as الموطنية that have to be respected, even among fellow Muslims. He added in the story of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, when the Medina Charter is constituted, there are 5 essential points as the result of consensus, are Muslim *ummah*, creed relations, intertribal relations, national affiliation, and geography unification of Medina. This action was meant to give the identity to the citizen of Medina and make an order through a social contract between interested parties who were included in the charter. Currently, the concept of citizenship or nationality has been adopted by most people in the world, yet still has resistance due to disagreement in the nation-state concept for Muslims. Although, Islam as a transnational religion encourages its followers to

embrace the nationality of a person and commit with the piety both social and religion by recognizing the diversity under the influence of love and mercy.

To a certain extent, Bogor Message works as the basic principles for the implementation of Wasatiyyat Islam encompassing necessities in agreeable jurisprudence and could be developed wider by the preacher to fulfill the needs of *dawah* in the different levels of the target. Bogor Message pursues moderation in *ummah* to achieve better prosperity and harmony under the current international order. Syamsuddin (Ramadhan, 2018) emphasized the Bogor Message supposed to reactivate the Wasatiyyat Islam paradigm and make it as a culture in both individual and communal to prove *ummah* commitment of Wasatiyyat Islam in all aspects as well as encouraging state and non-state actors to promulgate Wasatiyyat Islam as fulcrum or axis. He added the concept was supposed to be gradually snowballed to the whole world as an effort to revitalize the perspective on Islam. The call for moderation is constantly promoted within Muslim *ummah* shared by Western thinkers.

1.4 Reform and Unity Agenda within Foreign Policy Frameworks

The discourse of moderation in Islam is intensively disseminated by Islamic scholars for the last decades to conduct reformation in Islam and consolidate *ummah* from vulnerable unity. Particularly, it regained the momentum after the 9/11 (Eleventh September) attacks in the USA that pushed Western militarist policies emboldened the extremists, and promoted their voices (Kamali, 2015: 13). Subsequently, the Muslim *ummah* has been marginalized by unfounded hostility and encouraged to push back the pressure by answering the call to reform. Hence, Muslim or even non-Muslim countries are suggested to create a multilateral agreement condemning anti-Muslim acts (Adiong, 2013: 5). Despite, the efforts to reform Islam have a long history since the era of Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani, recent trends of Islamic reform have emerged from preceding trends promulgating over a century through the up and down process (Sardar, Serra & Jordan, 2019: 102).

For a while, the image of Islam also has been stained by the violent extremists who declared themselves as Muslim but did not act according to Islamic teachings. Wasatiyyat (written also *wasatiyyah* or *wasathiyah*) Islam has tremendously evolved in multiple dimensions and approaches because of world development and geopolitical changes which referred to moderation indicates fairness and the state of balance (Bakir & Othman, 2017: 13-14). The term is rolling in the academic and religious discourse as a possible answer to all *ummah*'s challenges but never been greatly discussed until 2018 when the HLC-WMS resulted in Bogor Message. The crystallization of Wasatiyyat Islam finally came true and *ummah* has a common ground.

Wasatiyyat (in Arabic synonyms: *tawassut*, *i'tidal*, *tawazun*, *iqtisad*) is commonly aligned with justice as it means opting for middle position between extremities and as an attribute of the global *ummah* were balancing the odds for the sake of wisdom and good judgment offers a feasible prospect and opportunity (Kamali, 2015: 9-13). The approach of Wasatiyyat stressed the moderation in understanding Islam that intend to reform the condition of *ummah*. The moderate position and character of *tengahan* (middle) was not without principle, but conducting the values actualization process vastly and flexible following *bi al-hikmah* (with wisdom) preaching principle to represent Islam reciprocal with society development level (Nashir, 2016: 149). This understanding could lead Muslim *ummah* relatively under stable conditions and remained calm in resolving the problem by applying middle-path approach. The legacy of war from the medieval era should have not been inherited in this modern era and every Muslims must consider refraining from any violence, verbal strike and opening fire to each other because it will not resolute the conflict.

Therefore, Muslim *ummah* is strongly encouraged to return all the problems to the diplomatic table, consult with sincerity, find the consensus for conflict resolution and refrain from bloodshed or war in order to rewrite the history for the sake of future. Reasonably, the soft power strategies of Indonesia depict a broader trend throughout the Muslim world in which governments of Muslim-majority nations have deployed discourse of 'moderate Islam' that is not simply defined by Western nations' geopolitical invocation of "moderate Islam" as several miraculous potions by which to bring Muslim worldwide into the mold of liberal secular governance (Hoesterey, 2020: 1-2). The understanding of moderation from Western nations cannot be implemented in the Muslim countries, thus there is necessity to invent the new way which derived from local wisdom and faith they embraced that actually answered in Bogor Message.

Bogor Message brings the continuation of reform spirit from the predecessors into a brand new meaningful consensus. Egypt during Ottoman periods in 19th century has prominent thinkers such as Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida who reinvent the *ijtihad* concept and put reform agenda as priority. The progress of reform stumbled upon global events in the early of 20th century since the World War I, the

Caliphate questions after 1924, Great Depression, World War II and subsequent Cold War. During that time, the effort appears unnoticeably in grass-root level but significantly counted and harvested the fruit in the post-Cold War era. Prior to the end of Cold War, Syed Naquib Al-Attas is renowned scholar for his agenda in Islamisation of knowledge that contribute to the reform agenda in *ummah*. Subsequently, the rejuvenation of the discourse sparked again after the 9/11 attacks and the raising concern of terrorism in Muslim countries. Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi during his term proposed the Islam Hadhari (literally translated Islamic civilization) and Indonesia-based Islamic Civil Society Organization Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah proposed Islam Berkemajuan (could be translated as Progressive Islam) in 2010. Meanwhile, Türkiye during President Recep T. Erdoğan's administration for the last 2 decades has a deep-concern for the Islamic reform and unity agenda, both domestic simultaneously with the rise of Islam conservatives and international through the "Enterprising and Humanitarian" foreign policy which can be seen from the conference diplomacy style that often conducted where Palestine and Islamophobia issues are among the utmost. Example given, Turkish International Conference for Lunar Month and Unified Hijri Calender which organized by Türkiye's Diyanet in May 2016 and continued in September 2021. Instead of being specific by words in reform and unity agenda, the attempts and intentions of Turkish government seem obvious and crucial to eradicate the differences among Muslim that could be reforming the *ummah* attitude gradually.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo has similar concern toward unity and reform agenda in Islam, despite his "Global Maritime Fulcrum" foreign policy and criticism laid towards him for taking distance with Islamism. During his term, several international and national events have been conducted in congruence with the same spirit. Wasatiyyat Islam is being promulgated back and forth, top-down and bottom-up, it is not exclusively in state matters, yet Islamic scholars in the grass-root, academician in universities, political elites in rhetorics and even diplomats in their overseas posts. Numbers of seminars, conferences, and foras organized in conjunction with the Wasatiyyat Islam. President Widodo even have Special Envoy for Interfaith Dialogue and Civilization Affairs. Scholars like Azyumardi Azra, Din Syamsuddin, and Syafiq Mughni etc. are among promoters of the thought as well as Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Ulama Council). Should the attempt is consistently promulgated and persistently promoted, it surely rises on the surface of the top Islamic global agenda.

In the early of 2020, Al-Azhar University in Egypt conducted a global scale international conference entitled "Al-Azhar International Conference on Renewal of Islamic Thought". The reason behind all those efforts are rooted in the spirit of reform and unity among *ummah*. Whether in Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt, and Türkiye or other countries, the efforts in Islamic affairs are made to raise the concern on certain issues which need to be fixed. That is why reform in Muslim *ummah* necessary to break the silence and out of current vulnerable peace. Muslim *ummah* is actually longing for unification that only happened once in a year during Hajj pilgrimage. The unity must be perpetuated and Bogor Message has put a first step as a significant common ground for *ummah* in actual reform and *ummah* unity.

2. Method

According to Mas'ood (1990: 2-3), research in social sciences required full consciousness of applied methodology that able to describe the utilized procedure, explain and forecast the phenomena, eradicate the obstacles of research, and value the information in daily decision-making. Qualitative research is utilized as the design aimed to detail the case studies by collecting information with analytical narratives that can summarize the outcomes of the leading project (Goodwin, 2010: 89). Creswell (2014: 205) stated that qualitative research design relies on text and image data like interviews and observations while having unique steps in data analysis and drawing on diverse designs. Research can be concluded from the outcomes as objective as possible by conducting a correct methodology. It is an important issue to ensure the research is conducted objectively, regardless of the research object is an ongoing phenomenon in the framework of international politics and globalized international relations. The current research is using an interpretative method to determine an objective result to develop the research and theories of diplomacy based on religious approach as well as bringing religion into international relations. According to Bhattacharjee (2012: 35), interpretive methods apply an inductive approach that begins with data and tries to build a theory about the phenomena of interest from the observed object or data. The research begins soon after the Bogor Message concluded in 2018 until 2021 through observation of the diplomatic events related to several discourses such as Islamic thoughts, transformation, moderation, and renovation or specifically used the term of Wasatiyyat Islam. The research taken place in Türkiye, observing Muslim-majority countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Egypt as these countries labeled "bastions of Islamic moderation" through literature or library studies. After the data collected, it will be analyzed in the framework of diplomacy theories to find the influence of Wasatiyyat Islam crystallized in Bogor Message. This research aims to develop the Wasatiyyat Islam with related studies in the other sub-categories for example Wasatiyyat Islam discourse in the Islamic and IR

studies and forecast the possibility of progress in the future. The qualitative methods with interpretation are in effect attempts to legitimate interpretive methods rely on the good sense of the researcher for deciding on issues of evidence (Barkin, 2008: 213-218). After the collection of data, this research will conduct data analysis of the text by using grounded theory to interpret recorded data about social phenomena to build theories inductively about the phenomenon itself (Bhattacharjee, 2012: 113). The study will be written inductively to develop the explanation which utilized certain theories, predicting the near future, and determining the conclusion based on the research discoveries.

3. Result and Discussion

Throughout his life, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is consistently being just, response the persecution with serenity, treated Muslim and non-Muslims justly, reconciled the conflicting tribes, united people, and succeeded both in war and diplomacy (Iqbal, 2000: 13-46). He possessed all the virtues and wisdom that human needs to follow underlying the Islamic teaching. In this term, Bogor Message draws the principal lines as a simple instruction to be followed and practiced in individual, communal, collective, state until transnational level. Bogor Message is in favor with the teaching of Al-Qur'an and summarized Allah's Apostle ﷺ did in IR context.

The example given, the Allah's Apostle ﷺ during the negotiation who always endorses the principle of tolerance, persuasion, and patience which enabled him to solve the most extremely complicated and fragile negotiation, despite disadvantage position for some agreements (Dar & Sayed, 2017: 5616). From the Islamic view, Bogor Message contains the Islamic ethics such as *tawassut* (just), *i'tidal* (fair), and *tasamuh* (tolerance) which can be applied in diplomacy as well. *Shura* (consultation) and *islah* (reconciliation) are strongly encouraged to overcome the *ummah* challenges and resolve the dispute. Therefore, *muwatanah* (pay respect to citizenship) is compatible with the nation-state and every Muslims have to give the best *qudwah* (role model) to the environment, implying the example from Prophet Muhammad ﷺ constituting Islamic teaching which blessing for all creation and laid the foundation of transnationalism.

Islam is considered as a world religion and practiced in diverse cultures in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Europe, and America whereas globalization is to believed appeared during the golden age of Islamic globalization in the 12th century in which interconnectedness in all aspects of social life built worldwide (Prajā, 2003: 32-33). That is why domestic issues related to Islam, constantly escalate to a global scale because of the sense of belonging of Muslim *ummah*. Due to globalization, recent domestic phenomena and issues which juxtapose with religion are turning progressively global which cannot be bound by the state borders, it can be qualified as transnational (Fox & Sandler, 2013: 83). The transnationalism in Islam is sturdily attached with historical roots where the caliphate and Islamic imperium took a role as the protector of religion and *ummah* wherever they might be. Only after the Ottoman Caliphate dissolved in 1924 left *ummah* disarray and must adapt with new nation-state model which sometimes limits the nature of Islam in transnationalism. The call to unite is always campaigned and becoming a transnational issue, some perceive it with insurgency, others accept it as people consensus. Both formed political entities which moved beyond political borders and contribute to shaping current international politics.

Keohane and Nye (1970) argue the phenomena of a political entity that transcends the political borders of a state and crosses nations suited the transnational model of international politics. Bogor Message which constituted Wasatiyyat Islam in the general figure of Muslim *ummah* who wants to unite, yet considering the political integration into the nation-state model and conducts the IR in most possible peaceful means. Through Bogor Message, Islam remains transnational while making peace with the horrible past and being productive for the nation and *ummah* on an individual or even global scale. Thus, it laid the foundation to look after right guidance in performing IR and 'how to behave' or dominant attitudes of Qur'anic and Prophetic teachings that need to be applied.

The Bogor Message functioned as the basis to legitimate certain behaviour and attitude in conducting diplomacy. Instead of becoming mandatory, the seven principles are depicted as message which contains the persuasive approach on how should a Muslim or even a state behaved. Bogor Message is the culmination of the Wasatiyyat Islam itself and a set of inclusive norms that need to be followed. The Bogor Message did not force anyone to embrace Islam or promote Islam as religion, but tend to make a peaceful order through persuasion and gradual reform process exercising the soft power of the capable actors in IR, both state and non-state.

The HLC-WMS is actually in accordance with the application of MTD that utilized several tracks to conclude the meeting. The mixture of participation and contribution by state and non-state actors as well as academicians, religious organizational leaders, mass medias, and personal are representing the multi-tracks utilization. State

actors are officially recognized individual such as President, Vice President, Secretary-General of inter-governmental organizations and Ambassador of foreign countries. Meanwhile, the non-governmental represented by Indonesian Islamic civil society organizations who raise the concern and involve in the peace process for Afghanistan in conjunction with the event. Private citizens are also encouraged to follow the activity, since it rarely to meet Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar and Imam of Leeds Mecca Mosque out of their posts. Prior to the event, a lot of Indonesian universities made contribution to conclude the Wasatiyyat Islam proposal that resulted in Bogor Message' seven principles. Education track is counted in the diplomacy even, thus subsequently encouraged Al-Azhar University to organize global scale conference in the following years. Mass Medias like Republika and Anadolu Agency were actively reporting the event to promulgate the result of the consultation. Last but not least, the religion track is utilized where Muslim *ummah* in multi-levels are engaged in the event. Therefore, Bogor Message as the result of the event not only crystallized the Wasatiyyat Islam thought that already rolled out several years before and the exercise of Indonesian soft power as the manifestation of its foreign policy through HLC-WMS diplomatic event, but also confirming the transnational relations in one of its principles, *muwatanah*.

Nye (2005: 137) states that many transnational issues like climate change, the spread of infectious diseases, international crime, and terrorism cannot be resolved by military force alone, thus soft power is specifically necessary for dealing with the issues which occur from the bottom chessboard, transnational relations. Many Muslims are affected by the transnational issues as well and strived to overcome the challenges with certain contributions through each profession and role that can be played. For almost 2 years COVID-19 outbreak, the Muslim *ummah* is most resilient and can be patient while still giving charity, conducting philanthropy, and fulfilling alms. According to World Giving Index (Charity Aid Foundation [CAF], 2021), Indonesia as the most populous Muslim country in the world is on top as the most generous country in the world. That is a tiny example of Wasatiyyat Islam can be run during the pandemic time because of the religious approach has encouraged Indonesian people to share the burden and so other Muslim countries.

The Indonesian government and other governments (e.g. Morocco, Egypt, Malaysia, and other pleaded bastions of 'moderate Islam') have become conversant with the deployment of religious diplomacy as part of broader national branding efforts (Hoesterey, 2020: 4). Those countries utilized the religious approach to conducting diplomacy toward fellow Muslim countries. In this case, Indonesia managed to put aside the disagreement and came out with the result, Bogor Message as a common understanding for Muslims across the globe, since the consensus agreed among prominent Islamic scholars representing their communities or even countries. Therefore, it is not individual Muslim's will alone, but the state encourages it as well by becoming facilitator and promoter for the thought in multiple occasions.

Nevertheless, the progress of Wasatiyyat Islam dissemination seemed to slow down amidst the pandemic. Only, Al-Azhar International Conference on Renewal of Islamic Thought which was held in January 2020 can be counted as a prolongation of Wasatiyyat Islam, bearing the same concerned-issues to be discussed in front of hundreds of Islamic scholars and relied on the long-history academic network of Al-Azhar University. Hence, the discourse of Wasatiyyat Islam remained on the surface and being with the Islamic elites, have not entered the general or even grass-root discourse in other countries, besides the bastions of 'moderate Islam' countries. Despite the understanding of 'moderate Islam' is not in singular terms of what Islam is, yet as competing visions and projects about what Islam could, and should, be (Hoesterey, 2020: 8), Bogor Message represented the consensus of the majority Islamic scholars on Wasatiyyat Islam. Thus, Bogor Message gives *ummah* legitimacy for resolving domestic and global matters based on the seven principles implementation.

The COVID-19 recovery is more favorable currently and hampered the promulgation of the understanding as to the Wasatiyyat Islam theme, rarely found in daily preach, weekly sermon, or festive speech. Except, in countries such as Indonesia, Egypt, and Malaysia whom concerned with the development of Wasatiyyat Islam. It might appear new concern from officials that the transnationalism message in Wasatiyyat Islam could trigger a new unification movement which is harmful to the current nationalism. If only, the efforts are manageable and consistently conducted, likewise being inclusive for other countries, including Muslim-minority countries. Bogor Message is the actualization of Islamic understanding that considered the current development and acting as a rendezvous point of past differences in compiling Wasatiyyat Islam thoughts. By practicing Bogor Message and accepting Wasatiyyat Islam, *ummah* can be resilient in the face of global challenges (Ramadhan & Syauqillah, 2018: 158-161), though it never meant to create a new denomination in Islam. Bearing in mind, the COVID-19 gradually accepted as endemic as human adapt to live with it and Muslim *ummah* must look forward to the post-COVID-19 era because in every crisis, there always be an opportunity to spread the Wasatiyyat Islam which based

on Bogor Message. The same applied to *ummah* unity in the future which can begin from answering the call of Bogor Message and applying Wasatiyyat Islam as a common ground in any matter to perform the reform within Muslim *ummah*. Hence, transnational Islam can co-exist with nationalism in one certain nation-state as long as the sincere will comes from the Muslim *ummah* itself. The principle of *muwatonah* in Bogor Message constituted the transnational Islam and one step closer to unity without deconstructing the current order, yet making more peaceful order within framework 'unity in diversity'.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, the transnational Islam becomes one of important cores in the present of constituted Wasatiyyat Islam inside Bogor Message. Wasatiyyat Islam is not meant to create another denomination in Islam, but rather a reformed perspective to understand Islam in the best practical way. Islam is just sufficient and perfect, yet *wasatiyyat* or middle-pathism is a normative religious approach to see Islam in a right manner. Previously, Wasatiyyat Islam was diverse conceptions based on limited perspective due to lack of consensus. The aftermath of HLC-WMS, Bogor Message should be embraced as the first step to the further reform and unity that grounded with *ijma' ulama* as the effort to dissemination must be realized into motion. Thus, more tracks in MTD approach have to be utilized to succeed the Wasatiyyat Islam becomes Muslim top global agenda. Currently, the utilization of MTD for promulgating Bogor Message remains in Track 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 9 as it could be expanded through Track 6 and 8, even further Track 3 by involving Business to help the promotion. Bogor Message as the crystallization of Wasatiyyat Islam notion is a product of consensus-driven diplomacy and likewise derived from *shariah* understanding because it is indeed an *ijma' ulama* and a form of *ijtihad* in diplomacy to be subscribed by Muslim *ummah*. Therefore, the promulgation and promotion of Wasatiyyat Islam must be consistently conducted to ensure it reached all levels, from commoners to top elites, from a state to regional, and from an individual to global. The postnormal time such as the COVID-19 outbreak is a challenge and also opportunity at the same time, and *ummah* must embrace all the challenges by progressively practicing Bogor Message in daily life. In the near future, if currently Wasatiyyat Islam consistently promote in any conditions, it will reform not only *ummah*, but the global order as well by presenting Muslim *ummah* as one of the decisive global actor. To conclude that Bogor Message has put the common ground for Muslim *ummah* to be more inclusive and give active contribution to global peace, likewise bring the agenda of reform and unity within. Through MTD theoretical framework, the process to resulting Bogor Message is indeed proven as part of diplomacy and the *muwatonah* element of seven principles is constituting the transnationalism of Islam where Muslims around the world can still unite despite their diversities, particularly different nationalities. Similar to other social phenomenon, the events yesterday and today will determine the future and what have been done in Bogor Message will be counted as one step forward to perpetual peace.

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