
Santri's Multi-Track Diplomacy In Promoting The Islam Nusantara Identity To Global

Ana Maulana^{1*}

¹Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia
ana20001@mail.unpad.ac.id

Received: November 02, 2023

Revised: March 16, 2024

Accepted: March 31, 2024

Abstract

Before the 1961 Vienna Statute, only state actors were allowed to engage in diplomatic activities; however, non-state actors, including private citizens, were also included. This is, of course, based on several factors, starting from the flow of globalization to the state's role, which still needs to be resolved, especially in peace advocacy. One of the many non-state actors involved in modern diplomacy is the individual actor, namely santri. Santri, in this case, has great potential and opportunities to become an actor in the world of diplomacy, especially in spreading peace advocacy. This condition can be seen through the historical record of santri, which has produced many peace-oriented movements. The dissemination of advocacy values also needs to highlight the characteristics of the Islam Nusantara identity, which is tolerant, friendly, and inclusive. In this regard, this research aims to explain the role of Santri as a diplomatic actor, especially in multi-track diplomacy, to promote the Islamic values of Nusantara. The results of this research also prove that the role of santri in the realm of diplomacy is very broad and can be carried out through various multi-track diplomatic activities, ranging from inter-religious dialogue and santri exchange programs to the use of media platforms for da'wah media, which have become part of the form of novel diplomacy. In addition, to support this research, the author utilizes a qualitative research framework through descriptive analysis methods and historical methods to obtain secondary data based on internet-based research techniques.

Keywords: Islam Nusantara Identity, Multi-track Diplomacy, Pesantren, Santri.

1. Introduction

Santri (Islamic boarding school students) are frequently connected with black skull caps (kopiah), attached sarongs, and daily activities behind the Islamic boarding

school — all of which have become part of their identity. Many people believe that Islamic boarding school pupils are exclusively interested in religious activism. Indeed, numerous forms of santri in Indonesia have been evolving for a long time, especially with the advent of globalization. This circumstance changes the role and new face of the Indonesian santri movement, one of which is in the political realm — where santri have long contributed to the Indonesian political movement. This has been well recorded through the birth of groups oriented towards pesantren (Islamic boarding school) values which have a strategic position in the Indonesian political movement, such as the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah organizations (Fossati, 2019).

Religious groups are increasingly being considered through this strategic role, not just at the domestic level but also at the global level. Consequently, their role as the main actors in global political practice is starting to change. In other words, religious or faith-based groups have played an essential part in the international political arena, as proved by their role in the world's politics, which involves diplomatic missions (Munthe, 2017).

Multi-track diplomacy incorporates diplomacy done by representatives of religious groups, in this case, Islamic boarding school santri. Islamic boarding school santri performs a role in carrying out people-to-people diplomacy in this diplomatic environment. Of course, multi-track diplomacy actors can provide a wide range of contributions, from being a representative of a country or organization to promoting social and political advocacy beliefs and using the mass media stage as a platform for diplomacy (Petersen, 2015). Looking back, we can see that Islamic boarding school groups in Indonesia have an enormous opportunity to accomplish all of this. Many organizations concerned with the Islamic boarding school community have now raised their voices in various types of diplomacy. Given this possibility, it is not unexpected that Ma'ruf Amin, Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia, pushed santri to participate in the implementation of this multi-track diplomacy actively. Ma'ruf Amin pointed out in his statement that, at the very least, santri must be actively involved in bringing moderate Islamic ideals (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2022).

Of course, this statement from Indonesia's Vice President is nothing new when we look at the global dynamics of Islam, where radicalism and opposition to all forms of diversity are on the rise. An alternative is to incorporate moderate Islamic values based on the concept of rahmatan lil alamin as part of the Islam Nusantara identity (Schaefer, 2021). Apart from that, Islam Nusantara identity is characterized by the distinctive attributes and symbols of Muslims in Indonesia, typically resulting from a process of cultural assimilation and acculturation (Alnizar, 2018). The peci and sarong, for example, are closely related to the daily lives of santri in Indonesia.

However, with the uniqueness of the Islam Nusantara identity, a question arises: how can Islamic boarding school santri, as diplomatic actors, process the various forms of identity they have into a potential diplomatic identity for Indonesia at the global level? To answer this research question, this article aims to determine the role of santri as multi-track diplomacy actors in promoting the values of Islam Nusantara identity to the rest of the world.

To find the novelty of this research, researcher has conducted previous studies through several articles, such as Taufiq, Harisudin, and Maimun, 2022, Aini, 2019, and Amalia, 2019, in an article titled "Multi-track Diplomacy Fiqh of Nahdlatul Ulama in Countering Islamophobia in the Netherlands," talked about Nahdlatul Ulama's role in re-

sponding to the Islamophobia issue in the Netherlands through diplomacy of "Islam Nusantara," using *fiqh al-siyah* and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* analysis. Speaking of novelty, that article only mentioned the role of NU as an organization and did not highlight the role of santri in it as an individual actor. Then, through reading the article "Realisasi Multi Track Diplomacy Pada Peran "1000 Abrahamik Circles Project" dalam Menciptakan Perdamaian antar Umat Beragama" from Aini, 2019, the researcher found that the article only talked about NGOs as the main object of the research and also has yet to mention the role of individuals within the project of "1000 Abrahamik Circles." Moreover, that article has yet to mention the method that was utilized. Then the research from *ibid.*, entitled "Peran Pondok Pesantren Modern Gontor sebagai Instrumen Multitrack Diplomacy Pendidikan dalam Kerjasama Internasional," only discussed the fifth track part of multitrack diplomacy, namely regarding education only.

Based on the three previous studies above, researcher asses that there are two things that have not yet been discussed, namely: (1) the role of santri as actors in the world of diplomacy, especially multi-track diplomacy; (2) a more in-depth discussion regarding several dimensions of tracks that can be played by santri as diplomatic actors; and (3) the relationship between diplomacy carried out by santri and the identity of Islam Nusantara. Ultimately, this article will discuss Islam Nusantara identity and the role of santri within the framework of multitrack diplomacy theory. To find a holistic explanation, the researcher used a qualitative approach with descriptive and historical analysis methods.

2. Methods

The paper employed a qualitative research approach as its research approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allowed for qualitative examination and interpretation of data to gain the necessary understanding of the issue. This study also employed descriptive analysis and historical methods to obtain comprehensive data.

In this research, the descriptive-analytic method helped researcher obtain rich data sources regarding the object being researched, namely the involvement of santri in multi-track diplomacy, including data in the form of opinions or responses, which can be part of research data validation (Nassaji, 2015). In other words, this method also assisted researcher to utilize existing facts as part of data analysis (Lans and Van Der Voordt, 2002). Then, by using historical methods, researcher could freely interpret and sort data selectively (Lange, 2012; Thies, 2002). Apart from helping researcher obtain data, through historical methods, researcher could also derive the relevance and implications of what has happened to the topic in this research (Lune and Berg, 2017). For example, this research really needs historical methods to examine what activities santri have carried out as part of a multi-track diplomacy analysis.

As a result, the paper allowed for discussion and interpretation of the topic in the absence of any direct field observation. Secondary data, using internet-based research technique, such as digital books, journal articles, government reports and websites, as well as reliable news were collected and employed by the author in order to build the analysis on the topic.

The data analysis techniques that researcher used in this case refer to Yin's (2016) five stages, as follows:



Figure 1. Data Analysis Techniques.

At the compiling stage, researcher collected data based on the results of the collection technique used, namely, an internet-based research technique. The data sources used included journal articles, e-books, official documents, and the latest and most factual news. After arriving at the data-compiling stage, researcher then attempted to code the existing research needs. The coding carried out by the author was based on the scope of the discussion data required, including: Multi-track diplomacy, Study of Muslim Nusantara Identity, The role of Santri as a diplomatic actor.

After that, researcher tried to create a pattern tailored to their needs. Then the data was interpreted by the author so that they could draw conclusions (Yin, 2016). Additionally, the data played a role in providing a framework for the following arguments. Furthermore, the concept of multi-track diplomacy was applied as a tool by the writer in dissecting the problem at hand. The concept allowed the writer to determine the various perspectives on the topic as well as how the current dynamics can be interpreted.

3. Results and Discussion

This paper found that santri have a significant role in diplomacy. Apart from having extensive religious knowledge, santri also have a great potential for promoting the values of Islam Nusantara identity, rahmatan lil a'lamin, to the global community through the practice of diplomacy. In other words, non-state actors, in this case individuals and groups, have their own ways of participating in the world of diplomacy, which is often associated with high-political issues. The methods used are through multi-track diplomacy. There are several tracks that are relevant to the capacity of Santri as diplomatic actors, including diplomacy related to the exchange of ideas between religions and beliefs, cultural exchange, and the use of technology, which will later produce digital diplomacy. This finding also proves that this research has novelty and should be a reference for further research. For the details, the author will provide further elaboration below.

In order to carry out further analysis, the author will explain it in three parts. In the first part, the author will talk a lot about the potential of Santri to be able to contribute to diplomatic activities and also as peacebuilding activists. In this first discussion, the author also explains the theory of multi-track diplomacy and how this theory can be applied to Santri as diplomatic actors in it. Then, in the second part, the author will discuss in detail the concept of Nusantara Islam and its potential on the global stage as a basis for carrying out the peacebuilding process. Then, in the final section, the author will analyze how Santri can contribute to multi-track diplomacy and the relevance of their activities.

3.1. Developing Santri's Potential Role as Diplomats and Peace Builders

Diplomacy is something that cannot be separated from International Relations. Tracing its history, the practice of diplomacy existed long before the concept of the nation-state. At that time, the Greeks had implemented the concept of diplomacy by sending envoys to several other regions. Then the concept applied by the Greeks developed and became a practice carried out by a country to achieve its national interests. Thus, it is not surprising that diplomacy itself has a special place in the study of international relations, especially in the context of state-centric relations (Leira, 2016).

Even so, the practice of diplomacy is currently starting to transform, with the increasingly diverse actors involved in it — not only state actors playing their roles but also non-state actors, such as international organizations and MNCs — down to the individual level. This condition is also supported by globalization, which also influences the global political landscape (Kuznetsov, 2014). The emergence of these novel actors also impacted the shifting of issues in international relations. High politics issues have been challenged by low politics issues. Some of the issues that were inflicted after high politics are trade, investment, energy, human rights, tourism, and culture (Duchacek, 1984).

With the growing number of actors involved in diplomatic practice, a new term in diplomatic studies has emerged: multi track diplomacy. This multi-track diplomacy is a response to state actors' lack of role in resolving certain issues, one of which is (Mujiono and Alexandra, 2019). Beginning with this, a number of actors outside the state have begun to shift the role of government, or, in other words, the function of traditional diplomacy, resulting in a new approach. All of these new approaches, however, are supplements to or extensions of traditional diplomacy (Wehrenfennig, 2008).

If we add up, there are nine new tracks that are present to complement the capabilities of state actors in diplomatic practice, including actors and issues relating to business, media, and religion (Diamond and McDonald, 1996). In practice, this track diplomacy can be carried out by various actors, ranging from professionals and certain groups to individuals who can enter and carry out this diplomatic approach (Mujiono and Alexandra, 2019). Even though there are various channels, ongoing diplomatic activities still aim at the same goal, namely creating peace through soft power (Saputra, 2019).

Multi-track diplomacy itself has several kinds of approaches. Referring to Diamond and McDonald, 1996, there are nine approaches to the practice of multi-track diplomacy, with each approach/track differing in the context of actor diversity;

1. Track One Diplomacy. The government initiates this type of diplomacy. Only government bodies are able to attempt conflict resolution in this context. Governments have the ability to issue any policy related to their national interests, in addition to the recognition to end conflict through formal negotiations with rigid regulations within.
 2. Track Two Diplomacy. The second approach highlights the role of non-government actors who are able to be involved in conflict resolution. The way that this one differs from the previous track is the informal approach to bridging and collaborating to solve a problem together. Through this second track, people may find a solution easier. Apart from that, the second track will give citizens more space to participate, which inflicts solutions on the grass roots. Activities that can support this track two diplomacy are overwhelmingly diverse, such as holding a seminar or workshop to
-

engage people to expose them to the peace-making process and gathering people through workshops and community engagement to pitch in fresh ideas for conflict resolution.

3. Track Three Diplomacy. People will expect a lot of profits from business if they carry on on this path. However, businessmen are provided with privileges and space to participate in the peace-making process. The world requires prosperity to combat poverty through this circle of people. Almost any business on the Earth has a special body called "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) that serves society by, for example, opening and managing opportunities for job seekers. This body's existence will aid in bonding with society and result in deeper mutual understanding.
 4. Track Four Diplomacy. As mentioned before, individuals have access to connect with and engage with international politics. By activating multi-track diplomacy, those individuals have equal rights to participate as private citizens (actors). Speaking of the connection, private citizens have a wider connection. That connection is able to be found with some characteristics, namely citizen diplomacy (exchange programs), voluntary and development programs, private and professional advocacy or special interest groups, and democracy-building institutions.
 5. Track Five Diplomacy. Going with track five diplomacy would be a critical way to spread good and correct awareness about peace-making and conflict resolution. Since we know this, research and education will address this issue. It is, however, not only for think tanks, but also for research groups that exist in universities and colleges to support significant ideas.
 6. Track Six Diplomacy. Activism and social movements have laid the groundwork for this path, resulting in a variety of changes in society. Organizations and members of society such as Santri, laborers, youth, and others have played a role in developing the advocacy. By speaking out, they may have an impact on the government's policy on the peacemaking process. Activities take six approaches to support their ideas: Protest or demonstration, Education or spread of awareness, Advocacy, Organizing, Support and witnessing
 7. Track Seven Diplomacy. Addressing and advocating peace-making and conflict resolution can be done by religious communities as well. To succeed in the process, faith-based communities also create interfaith dialogue to build understanding and cooperation. These days, many activities that count as religious-based events, such as conferences and podcasts, serve as a bridge for interfaith dialogue.
 8. Track Eight Diplomacy. Every diplomatic agenda requires funds to be successful. Except for state actors' diplomacy, philanthropic communities exist to provide organizations with sponsorships and funding for pursuing diplomacy agendas. In addition to actively participating in funding, philanthropists additionally supply training for improving their skills.
 9. Track Nine Diplomacy. Communication and media, along with the influx of globalization, play critical roles in our society. Globalization has made it easier to use advanced technology to aid diplomacy. For years, diplomacy has used social media platforms to spread government interests. Social media is also an important platform for peace advocacy and resistance for some groups.
-

With the various approaches above, diplomatic practice, in terms of actors, is increasingly diverse. This condition is increasingly giving rise to new faces in the practice of diplomacy, and one of the roles that is also emerging is the role of religious communities, as mentioned on track seven diplomacy. Faith-based communities also show up when the issue of diplomacy involves diversification, including religious issues. International Relations just welcomed the issue regarding faith-based in 1980-ish and gained a lot of attention after 9/11. However, before 1980, religious issues in international politics were raised after the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 (Fitzgerald, 2011).

As previously stated, religion has been used as an alarming issue since the terrorist group struck the WTC. This incident also marked the beginning of terrorists' rise as actors in international relations. Following the 9/11 tragedy, Islamophobia rose sharply and has been a major agenda item for several countries' policies (Bell, Valenta, and Strabac, 2021). Apart from the horrible events of 9/11, the rise of Islamophobia was fueled by other accidents, such as the Madrid Train Bombings in 2004, the London Tube Bombings, and the emergence of ISIS, all of which contributed to the portrayal of the Muslim community as "evil" (Van Es, 2018). Islamophobia cases increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to one study, 45% of Google search engine results blame Islam as the spreader of the virus (Poole and Williamson, 2023).

Even though the religious issue in International Relations is identical with terrorism, religion may be an alternative tool to build peace and reconciliation to solve conflicts. In other words, religious values regarding peace advocacy are able to be a "bridge" to the gap (Rowe, 2012). Thus, the role of faith-based communities has a huge impact on these issues, and one of them is the role of Santri.

Santri is a term that refers to a person who is studying at an Islamic boarding school. Haidar Putra Dulay (2014), in his book entitled "Pendidikan Islam: dalam Sistem Pendidikan Nasional di Indonesia", divides the terminology of santri into two references. First, it refers to the term "santri mukim", which describes a group of pupils who board at an Islamic boarding school. Then the second term, namely "santri kalong", refers to the group of santri who do not live in Islamic boarding schools but still take part in Islamic boarding school learning (Daulay and Dalimunthe, 2021) Based on the explanation of the two nomenclatures above, it can be concluded that the terminology of santri itself has close relevance to Islamic boarding school institutions.

In global politics, santri can refer to individual or groups actors. In an individual context, the role of santri as international relations actors is limited to the role and contribution of someone who practices diplomacy. As for santri as group actors, it can refer to Islamic boarding school institutions or religious organizations. In this case, both of them have made several stories in the world of Indonesian diplomacy. For example, individuals who are attached to the Islamic boarding schools, such as people from Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and representatives from other Islamic boarding schools, have a good track record in carrying out the art of negotiation. Their contribution can be seen through their active involvement in resolving peace issues, both domestically and internationally. Several names of Muslim figures who have a sweet reputation as "great diplomats" include Muhammad Yusuf Kalla, Ali Alatas, K.H. Hasyim Muzadi, Syafi'i Ma'arif, Prof. Din Syamsudin, and the fourth President of the Republic of Indonesia, Gus Dur. These religious figures have the same principles when conducting diplomacy, namely by prioritizing the principle of persuasion — one of which is through dialogue

(Sholeh, 2020)

Apart from the involvement in the peacebuilding process, religious figures and institutions, in this case, Islamic boarding schools, also collaborate on a national and international level. We can find an example of the form of international cooperation carried out by Islamic boarding school institutions at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. It is noted that this Islamic boarding school has collaborated with various international institutions, ranging from institutions in the Middle East to several European and Asian countries. The success of the Gontor Islamic boarding school in establishing diplomacy has also resulted in several benefits, such as the existence of an assistance program in the form of supporting facilities for the boarding school, the birth of an exchange program, and several seminars on an international scale (Amalia, 2019).

Referring to the example above, we can draw a conclusion regarding the potential of Santri as diplomatic actors, especially in carrying out multi-track diplomatic practices. This potential is reflected in the role and contribution of santri and Islamic boarding schools in several approaches/tracks, such as:

1. Islamic boarding schools have great potential for carrying out second-track diplomacy. As an educational institution, Islamic boarding schools and their santri can build peace-making dialogue through several activities, such as interfaith dialogue and collaboration with interfaith institutions. This condition is also supported by demographic potential in the form of the large quantity of santri, which has reached more than 4 million throughout Indonesia as of 2022 (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2022).
 2. Santri can become diplomats through the fourth track of diplomacy, namely as private citizens who prioritize personal involvement. There are several potential things that santri can do in this fourth multi-track diplomacy, such as participating in exchange programs, volunteering activities, and other activities to support peace advocacy (Mujiono and Alexandra, 2019).
 3. Then, santri and Islamic boarding schools also have great potential for carrying out diplomatic activities on the fifth track, through education. This can be seen in the success of the Gontor Islamic Boarding School, which has established many foreign collaborations. Aside from international cooperation, Islamic boarding schools, as institutions, are able to instill Islamic values such as *rahmatan lil alamin* as part of their teaching. With these values, santri can implement them as a lifestyle.
 4. Furthermore, santri and Islamic boarding schools also have a very large space through multi-track diplomacy, in particular for the point of seven. The role of religion here is very prominent, especially in carrying out da'wah advocacy, both carried out by religious leaders and santri, to spread the values of peaceful Islamic advocacy.
 5. Lastly, santri also have a great opportunity to carry out multi-track diplomacy number nine, namely carrying out diplomacy using communication media as intermediaries. This opportunity is also supported by the current development of technology and information, which can be utilized well by santri as a medium to practice diplomacy digitally.
-

3.2. Islam Nusantara Identity: Indonesia's Islamic Value for Promoting Peace

Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population. Aside from that, Indonesia has distinct cultural characteristics. This cultural richness also contributes to the formation of a distinct Islamic identity. The application of religious teachings to culture as a form of expression gave rise to a new term, Islam Nusantara (Qomar, 2015).

This concept of Islam Nusantara is not new; Azyumardi Azra (2015) and Nor Huda (2013) popularized it in their books "Islam Nusantara Jaringan Global dan Lokal" and "Islam Nusantara: Sejarah Sosial Intelektual Islam di Indonesia" (ibid.). The NU organization then reintroduced the idea of Indonesian Islam at their 33rd congress in Jombang, East Java (Nursita, 2023).

In general, the Nusantara concept of Islam refers to religious and cultural hybridity, where the cultural aspect is simply a form of expression of Islamic religious teachings (Qomar, 2015). In other words, Islam Nusantara is the practice of Islamic teachings that are influenced by the reality and culture of a particular location, in this case Nusantara, particularly Indonesia. Local traditional values, Indonesian culture, and customs are associated with reality and culture here (Bizawie, 2015).

This concept of Islam Nusantara is also widely misperceived, with some making sharp criticism by linking the concept with localization, which can give rise to new rites and teachings. In fact, this conception of Islam Nusantara, only refers to the continuity of existing Islamic teachings with a touch of cultural assimilation. Of course, cultural assimilation here cannot be separated from the principles of sharia (Alnizar, 2018). In other words, the conception of Islam Nusantara here places more emphasis on the substantive aspect. As for cultures that do not comply with the teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad, they cannot be accepted. In essence, Islam really accommodates cultural differences and can adapt to certain cultural diversity (ibid.).

With its uniqueness in the form of a connection with Indonesian culture, Islam Nusantara has special characteristics and is different from the character of Islam in the Middle East. These characteristics can be seen through the approach brought by Islam Nusantara, which prioritizes aspects of friendliness, openness, inclusiveness, and solutions to national and state problems. These characteristics are, of course, built on the heterogeneity of Indonesian society and culture, which is also based on religious philosophy, such as rahmatan lil' alamin (Bizawie, 2015).

Furthermore, the character of Indonesian Islam can be embodied through spirit which can be actualized in several ways, including (Alma'arif et al., 2015):

1. A spirit of tolerance towards diversity. Indonesia strongly supports the richness of its culture and diverse demographics. Thus, the concept of Islam Nusantara encourages the spirit of tolerance for any kind of different — religions, languages, traditional customs, and many more. This spirit can also manage harmonization on a grass-roots level and overcome conflict in the name of religions in particular.
 2. Passion to appreciate traditions. Some people would say that Islam and the local customs cannot be united. However, that statement is incorrect, and Islam encourages the plurality of cultures. Nadirsyah Hosen stated that "Islam strongly appreciates the kind of local custom, and local custom can richen Islamic khazanah". In addition to preserving traditional customs, appreciating traditions is a part of our identity as a nation, and it cannot be separated from us (online, 2019).
-

3. 3. Enthusiasm opens up space for the interpretation of religious texts. Along with the advance of information and technology, the media can open more space for us to be informed. In the globalization era, we should be open to change, including in the aspect of understanding different thoughts on religious texts. In Islam, different and diverse interpretations of religious texts are undoubtedly common (Arifin, 2023). Thus, we should embrace the different perspectives that exist. The difference can also be a medium to build dialogue among Muslims.

With this strong characters, Islam Nusantara has great potential as a means of promoting peace values on the global stage, particularly as a soft power in dealing with the problem of stigmatization of the face of radical Islam as well as the issue of Islamophobia (Schaefer, 2021). Religious organizations, such as NU and Muhammadiyah, have also used a diplomatic approach to resolve various conflicts in the name of religion. NU and Muhammadiyah's struggles and diplomatic practices, which are based on the spirit of Islam Nusantara, also play a role in showing the world the rahmatan lil' alamin face of Islam in Indonesia (Luthfi, 2016).

On top of that, faith-based organizations can use internet platforms to do da'wah and peacebuilding advocacy. The emergence of digitalization can push more space for mediation and result in mutual understanding (Campbell, 2017). On the other hand, digitalization is able to gain more connections to spread Islamic religious values (Saleh et al., 2022). There are several platforms that support the way of da'wah digitally, such as social media, which is used by people every day (Zeb et al., 2022). Apart from that, digitalization is a huge opportunity for santri to express their Islam Nusantara values to the world.

3.3. The Usage of Nusantara Islamic Values Through Santri Multi-Track Diplomacy

In a webinar named "Internasional Rois Syuriah Pengurus Cabang Istimewa Nahdlatul Ulama (PCINU)", on September 15, 2020, the Vice President of Indonesia, Ma'ruf Amin, encouraged the role of Islamic boarding school in conducting diplomacy, especially in building peacebuilding. Ma'ruf Amin also emphasized that in this case, Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, has a responsibility to advocate Islamic teachings that are rahmatan lil' alamin. The Vice President also added that in conducting diplomacy, Islamic boarding school have at least three roles, namely:

1. Santri must contribute to spreading the image of Islam, which is rahmatan lil' alamin, by instilling an attitude of moderation in religion and being able to explain the characteristics of Islam, which are tawazun (balanced) and tasamuh (tolerant).
2. Santri must actively participate in world peace. In this case, there are so many activities that santri can do, and one of them is diplomacy.
3. Santri must also be able to unite the Indonesian nation to move forward together (Wakil Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2020).

Of course, what the Vice President said reminds us of the spirit of Islam Nusantara as a basis for carrying out diplomatic practices. In spreading the moderate Islamic values of the archipelago and its unique cultural characteristics, the Santri can do this using a multi-track diplomacy approach. There are several approaches that can be taken by Santri as diplomatic actors in this case, including:

3.3.1. The Role of Santri Through the Second and Seventh Tracks: Inter-religious Dialogue as a Space for Peace.

For the second and seventh tracks, the role of santri in diplomatic practice is very broad; one of the activities that can be carried out is building interfaith dialogue. This interfaith dialogue is not new and can be a means for conducting diplomacy, especially in handling cases of conflict and peace. In the realm of the exchange of ideas, this is also based on aspects that uphold the values of tolerance and common values, or equality of values. Of course, there are several outputs from the implementation of this inter-religious dialogue, including being able to resolve and reduce friction between belief groups, being a means of carrying out peacebuilding, and being a means of promoting freedom (Fahy and Haynes, 2018).

As part of the religious community, santri, of course, has the capability to carry out inter-religious dialogue. This is reflected in the success of the diplomacy of the Ngalah Islamic boarding school in Pasuruan, East Java, through inter-religious dialogue activities. Since the 2000s, this Islamic boarding school has carried out dialogue with non-Muslim communities. The santri here have also been taught the values of tolerance since kindergarten. Thus, it is not surprising that the santri are able to build positive dialogue with the non-Muslim community, both through regular dialogue and holding seminars. The dialogue activities that the Islamic boarding school carries out also cover the international level (Nafis, 2022). Through this inter-religious dialogue activity, the santri have contributed to several things, such as: (1) participating in advocating the values of Islamic moderation; (2) having participated in introducing the culture and characteristics of a diverse Indonesia; and (3) having participated in world peace. Naturally, these three aspects are in line with Vice President Ma'ruf Amin's hopes of building a more advanced nation and world.

3.3.2. The Role of Santri Through the Fourth and Fifth Tracks: Santri Exchange as an Exchange of Ideas on the Values of Islamic Moderation and Nusantara Culture

Santri is synonymous with Islamic boarding school institutions. Islamic boarding schools have become a home for santri to study religious knowledge. However, Islamic boarding schools also accommodate their santri to develop beyond aspects of their religiosity. One of the facilities provided by several Islamic boarding schools to support this is by opening a santri exchange program abroad. Even the Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is encouraging Islamic boarding schools to send their santri to take part in santri exchange programs. This form of encouragement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can also be seen in the existence of cooperation between the Indonesian government and the Philippines regarding similar programs (Alma'arif et al., 2015).

That exchange program can produce several benefits, both for santri personally and for those framing Islam and Indonesia abroad. Of course, for the santri themselves, they can develop themselves better through exposure to a more diverse culture, language, environment, and, of course, knowledge (Marciniak and Winnicki, 2019). Meanwhile, for Islam and Indonesia, this santri exchange program can be an opportunity to introduce the tolerant and multicultural face of Islam and Indonesia. That way, there will be a process of

exchange of culture and ideas so as to create openness and mutual understanding. Apart from that, the santri have contributed to carrying out this multi-track diplomacy, along with the exchange of ideas and culture (cultural exchange).

3.3.3. The Role of Santri Through Track Nine: Digitalization of Da'wah as a Means of Diplomacy

The development of technology and information is increasingly developing and has influenced various aspects of life, one of which has touched aspects of religious practice (O'Brien, 2020). One religious practice that has also adapted to this novelty is the practice of da'wah through the digitalization process. With this digitalization process, preaching methods have become more diverse and innovative. There are two types of da'wah methods, especially through media digitalization, namely print media and electronic media. As for print media itself, we can find the delivery of da'wah in magazines, newspapers, scientific articles, books, and even poetry. Meanwhile, electronic media can utilize various media, such as TV, radio, gadgets, films, and social media (Chowdhury, 2021). Of course, the digitalization of da'wah can make it easier for Muslims to promote Islamic values with a wider reach.

Apart from being a forum for promoting Islamic teachings, the digitalization of da'wah also facilitates diplomatic practices (Rusakova, Gribovod, and Vakhrusheva, 2021), especially in this case, promoting Indonesian Islamic values as part of Indonesia's soft power. In this context, of course, santri have great opportunities to utilize existing technology to contribute directly to the practice of multi-track diplomacy through online da'wah.

4. Conclusions

After the shifting of actors in international relations, there are so many actors that come up alongside several novel issues that are happening, including santri as part of faith-based communities. Santri are associated with religious activities in an Islamic dormitory and certain traditional cultures. That identity considers santri an exclusive group. However, santri also participates not only in religious activities but also in non-religious activities, such as diplomacy. Based on historical records, santri has been heavily involved in politics, both at the national and international level. In diplomacy, santri has a huge potential to solve conflict and be a negotiator in the peacemaking process. Thus, santri has space to carry out multi-track diplomacy. In order to do multi-track diplomacy, santri also brings Islam Nusantara values as a foundation to spread Islam as "rahmatan lil alamin". Through this distinction, santri can power multi-track diplomacy ranging from two, four, five, seven, and nine. Naturally, santri can be assisted by several programs, such as interfaith dialogue, santri exchanges, and da'wah on social media. Those approaches are able to contribute to spreading awareness of the Nusantara identity of Islam, which is built on tolerance and traditional values.

5. Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my gratitude to Allah to guide every step of this research. I also would like to say thank you to UNUSA for providing me with this great platform

to write my article journal. In addition to that, it is such an honor to be assisted by Dr. Dundin Zaenudin, M.A., as my supervisor while interning at BRIN. On top of that, my gratitude goes to my friend, Ridwan Robbi, who helped me correct data regarding the santri definition.

References

- Aini, Rezki Putri Nur (2019). "Realisasi Multi Track Diplomacy pada Peran "1000 Abrahamic Circles Project" dalam Menciptakan Perdamaian antar Umat Beragama". In: *Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 4.1, pp. 42–73.
- Alma'arif, Alma'arif et al. (2015). "Islam Nusantara: Studi Epistemologis Dan Kritis". In: *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 15.2, pp. 265–291.
- Alnizar, Fariz (2018). "PROYEK IDENTITAS ISLAM NUSANTARA: ANALISIS PERILAKU SEMANTIK". In: *Mozaic: Islam Nusantara* 4.1, pp. 81–94.
- Amalia, Novi (2019). "Peran Pondok Pesantren Modern Gontor Sebagai Instrumen Multi-track Diplomacy Pendidikan dalam Kerjasama Internasional". In: *Nation State: Journal of International Studies* 2.2, pp. 151–160.
- Arifin, A. Syamsul (May 2023). *Lukman Hakim Saifuddin Ungkap Alasan Tafsir pada Teks Keagamaan Bisa Berbeda*. URL: <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/lukman-hakim-saifuddin-ungkap-alasan-tafsir-pada-teks-keagamaan-bisa-berbeda-fGMGS>.
- Bell, David Andreas, Marko Valenta, and Zan Strabac (2021). "A comparative analysis of changes in anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim attitudes in Europe: 1990–2017". In: *Comparative Migration Studies* 9, pp. 1–24.
- Campbell, Heidi A (2017). "Religious communication and technology". In: *Annals of the International Communication Association* 41.3-4, pp. 228–234.
- Chowdhury, Md Shahnur Azad (2021). "The role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in preaching Islam at present context". In.
- Daulay, Saripuddin and Rasyid Anwar Dalimunthe (2021). "Modernisasi Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia (Komparasi Pengalaman Organisasi Muhammadiyah dan Nahdlatul Ulama)". In: *Fitrah: Journal of Islamic Education* 2.2, pp. 125–140.
- Diamond, Louise and John W McDonald (1996). "Multi-track diplomacy: A systems approach to peace". In: (*No Title*).
- Duchacek, Ivo D (1984). "The international dimension of subnational self-government". In: *Publius: the journal of federalism* 14.4, pp. 5–31.
- Fahy, John and Jeffrey Haynes (2018). *Introduction: Interfaith on the world stage*.
- Fitzgerald, Timothy (2011). "Religion and politics in international relations". In: *Religion and Politics in International Relations*, pp. 1–296.
- Fossati, Diego (2019). "The resurgence of ideology in Indonesia: Political Islam, Aliran and political behaviour". In: *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 38.2, pp. 119–148.
- Kuznetsov, Alexander (2014). *Theory and practice of paradiplomacy: Subnational governments in international affairs*. Routledge.
- Lange, Matthew (2012). "Comparative-historical methods". In.
- Lans, Wendelien and Theo Van Der Voordt (2002). "Descriptive research". In: *Ways to study and research urban, architectural and technical design*.
-

- Lune, H. and B.L. Berg (2017). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences, Global Edition*. Pearson Education Limited. ISBN: 9781292164397. URL: https://books.google.co.id/books?id=6E_gjwEACAAJ.
- Luthfi, Khabibi Muhammad (2016). "Islam Nusantara: Relasi islam dan budaya lokal". In: *SHAHIH: Journal of Islamicate Multidisciplinary* 1.1, pp. 1–12.
- Marciniak, Dominika and Michał Winnicki (2019). "International student exchange—motives, benefits and barriers of participation". In: *Zeszyty Naukowe. Organizacja i Zarządzanie/Politechnika Śląska*.
- Mujiono, Dadang Ilham and Frisca Alexandra (2019). *Multi Track Diplomacy: Teori dan Studi Kasus*.
- Munthe, Fredy (2017). "Religious movements in humanitarian issue: The emergence of Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) in Diplomacy Sphere". In: *Jurnal Hubungan Internasional* 5.2, pp. 172–180.
- Nafis, Muhammad Muntahibun (2022). "Pesantren and Interfaith Dialogue". In: *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 22.2, pp. 251–272.
- Nassaji, Hossein (2015). *Qualitative and descriptive research: Data type versus data analysis*.
- Nursita, Rizki Dian (2023). "Critical Discourse Analysis on Islam Nusantara in Indonesia's Foreign Policy". In: *Hasanuddin Journal of International Affairs* 3.1, pp. 44–54.
- online, nu (Sept. 2019). *Islam Menghargai Budaya, Karenanya Tidak Menolak Lokalitas*. URL: <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/islam-menghargai-budaya-karenanya-tidak-menolak-lokalitas-TR9AP>.
- Poole, Elizabeth and Milly Williamson (2023). "Disrupting or reconfiguring racist narratives about Muslims? The representation of British Muslims during the Covid crisis". In: *Journalism* 24.2, pp. 262–279.
- Qomar, Mujamil (2015). "Islam Nusantara: Sebuah Alternatif Model Pemikiran, Pemahaman, dan Pengamalan Islam". In: *el Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam* 17.2, pp. 198–217.
- Rowe, Paul S (2012). *Religion and global politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Rusakova, Olga Fredovna, Ekaterina Grigorievna Gribovod, and Evgenia Alexandrovna Vakhrusheva (2021). "Digitalization As a Growth Factor of Soft Power" in the Context of Globalization". In: *KnE Social Sciences*, pp. 777–784.
- Saleh, Sadrhiany Pertiwi et al. (2022). "Digital Da'wah Transformation: Cultural and Methodological Change of Islamic Communication in the Current Digital Age". In: *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis* 5.08, pp. 2022–2043.
- Saputra, Muhammad Rendra (2019). "Pelaksanaan Multi Track Diplomacy dalam Kerjasama Kanada ASEAN (1977-2018)". In: *Ejournal Ilmu Hubungan Internasional*, pp. 261–282.
- Schaefer, Saskia (2021). "Islam Nusantara: The Conceptual Vocabulary of Indonesian Diversity". In: *Islam Nusantara: Journal for the Study of Islamic History and Culture* 2.2, pp. 1–16.
- Sholeh, Badrus (2020). "Peran dan Kontribusi Tokoh Islam Indonesia dalam Proses Resolusi Konflik". In: *Madania: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 17.1, pp. 31–38.
-

- Taufiq, Muhammad, Muhammad Noor Harisudin, and Maimun Maimun (2022). "Multi-Track Diplomacy Fiqh of Nahdlatul Ulama in Countering Islamophobia in Netherlands". In: *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 22.2.
- Thies, Cameron G (2002). "A pragmatic guide to qualitative historical analysis in the study of international relations". In: *International studies perspectives* 3.4, pp. 351–372.
- Van Es, Margaretha A (2018). "Muslims denouncing violent extremism: competing essentialisms of Islam in Dutch public debate". In: *Journal of Muslims in Europe* 7.2, pp. 146–166.
- Wehrenfennig, Daniel (2008). "Multi-track diplomacy and human security". In: *Human Security Journal* 7, pp. 80–88.
- Zeb, Sadna et al. (2022). "Dawa In The Era Of Digitalization And The Approach Of Muslim Scholars". In: *Journal of Positive School Psychology* 6.7, pp. 2423–2429.
-