

# Indonesia's Message of Peace to the World: A Case Study of the Indonesian Christian Church's Yasmin Conflict

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**Abstract:** The Yasmin Christian Church conflict in Indonesia has been finalized after 15 years of conflict over establishing a house of worship in Bogor, Indonesia. In settlement of cases in the world's spotlight, violence after violence continues to haunt Indonesian society, famous for its plurality. There is only a final settlement after 15 years of conflict: the establishment of the Yasmin Indonesian Christian church in Bogor, Indonesia. The granting of Building Permits by the Bogor City Government as evidence of the end of the long conflict of the Indonesian Christian Church yasmin that has been going on for approximately 15 years, which the Bogor Government carried out, is one of the efforts to appreciate the diversity that exists in the city of Bogor. Granting Building Permit documents is not the final process, but the Bogor Government promises to continue to be treated sustainably to maintain diversity. This conflict resolution process is in the spotlight of the world. This conflict was initially a locally based issue but became a national issue and even became a spotlight in the international world. This event is a peaceful message from Bogor to the world that peace can be achieved by mutual respect and compliance with rules that have been mutually agreed upon by all parties. Indonesia's message of peaceful democracy and respect for human rights and religious freedom offered to the international community has arrived, thus attracting the world's attention.

**Keywords:** Conflict, Indonesian Christian Church Yasmin, Peace.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Freedom of religion has been declared internationally, and Indonesia has agreed to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The United Nations formed the Declaration on December 10, 1948. The right to freedom of religion is detailed in article 18 of the ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) in which paragraphs (1) and (2) state: (1) Everyone is entitled to freedom of thought, belief and religion. This right includes the freedom to profess one's religion or belief, as well as the freedom of either individually in declaring his religion or belief by worship, obedience, experience and teaching (2) No one may be subjected coercion that may diminish his freedom to adhere to or enter religion or belief of his own choice (Adnan, 2009). The United Nations is interested in protecting the right to freedom of religion and belief in the Countries of the Southeast Of Asia Nation (ASEAN). Because the majority of ASEAN countries have ratified the ICCPR and other covenants automatically subject to the rules and are legally binding (David Cohen, 2011). As a multicultural country, both in

terms of ethnicity, culture, race, and religion, Indonesia is constantly faced with two significant challenges, First, how the plurality of nation and cultural wealth can be a potential and asset for the growth and development of all the achievements and progress of the nation. But on the other hand, as a second challenge, diversity can be a trigger for the emergence of the disintegration of society, even national disintegration. One form of diversity in Indonesia is the issue of religion. Indonesia is not a secular state, not a religious state, but recognition of religion by the state only includes six religions, namely Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Catholicism, and Kong Hu Chu. When viewed in terms of guarantees of religious freedom in the constitution (Rusmulyadi, 2013).

Religious freedom is guaranteed by the constitution of the Commitment on religious freedom in Indonesia, contained in article 28 E paragraph (1) of the Basic Law (UUD) 1945, which reads: "Everyone is free to embrace religion and worship according to his religion...". Verse (2) states that everyone is entitled to freedom of belief. In addition, in article 28 I paragraph (1), it is also recognized that religion is a human right. Furthermore, article 29 of the 1945 Constitution reads: (1) The State is based on the Supreme Divinity, and (2) the State guarantees the independence of each population to embrace their respective religions and worship according to their religion and beliefs. The two paragraphs of article 29 of the 1945 Constitution want to affirm two things, namely: (1) The State shall provide the widest guarantee of protection and space for independent citizens to religiously and exercise their religion and beliefs; (2) States shall not make prohibitions and barriers for the population to practice their religion and beliefs (Ibid., 93)

The practice of freedom of religion and belief as part of constructing religious and state relations in Indonesia still leaves many problems. The threat of religious freedom also arises from the local government with its products in regulations and regulations. (The Wahid Institute ,2011: 1-3) The conflict between religious people is generally not purely caused by religious factors, but by political, economic or other factors associated with religion. While related to religious issues, in addition to the emergence of radical and intolerant religious attitudes in a small percentage of religious groups, it is also triggered by issues about the establishment of houses

of worship and religious broadcasting and accusations of blasphemy. Issue of the establishment of houses of worship is the factor that most influences the occurrence of disputes or intolerance. Among the cases of establishing a house of worship that now only has a final settlement after 15 years of conflict is the establishment of the Yasmin Indonesian Christian church in Bogor, Indonesia. In settlement of cases in the spotlight of the world, violence after violence continues to haunt Indonesian society, famous for its plurality. Various discrimination and violence spread from the east end to the west end. The rise in violence in the name of religion and belief shows the failure of the government to take decisive steps to anticipate it, one example is the conflict of the establishment of yasmin church house of worship that could not be resolved for 15 years. The inaction of the government and related parties is a violation by all of us against the guarantee of religious freedom contained in the philosophical foundation of this country, namely Pancasila. Interfaith communication needs to be built and become one of the urgent paradigms to be applied and pursued by all of us in dealing with the existing differences. Not only for us in Indonesia but also all humans in this world, not only by members of minority groups but also especially by the majority group.

## II. DISCUSSION

Various lines of diplomacy have been carried out from The Christian and Islamic parties both formally and informally mediated, one of which is the Human Rights Commission. Complaints and other approaches such as those made by Christians are non-governmental organizations at home and abroad that are concerned in diversity, such as the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation, Jakarta Legal Aid Institute, Wahid Intitute, Setara Institute, Leimena Institute, Human Right Working Group, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the Religious Freedom Forum. In addition, from State Institutions, Commissions and Religious Institutions of the House of Representatives, People's Consultative Assembly, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Religion, Office of the Vice President, National Commission Of Human Rights, Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia, Woman National Commission, Unity of the Church of Indonesia. If further investigated, this conflict was initially a locally based issue but became a national issue and even a spotlight in the international world.

In order to regulate the issue of the establishment of houses of worship, the Central Government has issued Joint Regulations of the Minister No. 9 and 8 of 2006 on Guidelines for the Implementation of Regional Head Duties in the Maintenance of Religious Harmony, Empowerment of Religious Harmony Forum and Establishment of Synagogues. This Regulation replaces the Joint Decree No. 1 of 1969 on the Implementation of the Task of the Government in Ensuring Order and Smooth Implementation of The Development and Worship of Religion by Its Adherents. This Regulation is expected to reduce and even prevent conflicts in

the establishment of houses of worship because this Regulation is claimed to have been approved by all Religious Assemblies, such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), the Indonesian Bishops' Conference (KWI), the Indonesian Church Association (PGI), the Indonesian Buddhist Representative (Walubi), and Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI).

However, the conflict of establishing houses of worship after the issuance of the 2006 Ministerial Joint Regulation still occurs, although the scale varies. Of the many conflicts in establishing houses of worship, the Yasmin-Bogor Indonesian Christian Church, a branch of the Indonesian Christian Church congregation on the bogor court, took the local government / Bogor Municipality to court for canceling the previously issued Building Permit. At first, the Indonesian Christian Church of Yasmin had obtained a Building Permit from the Mayor of Bogor in 2006. The approach of the Indonesian Christian Church of Yasmin towards the community has always been rejected by the Chairman of the Neighboring Pillar (RT) 08 Taman (garden) Yasmin. Even on January 15, 2006, residents of Taman Yasmin Bogor rejected the construction of Yasmin church in a meeting at the Curug Mekar Village Office. Groups that objected to the existence of the Yasmin Indonesian Christian Church around early February 2008 launched a demonstration in front of the Bogor City public Representative Council building. In its demands, hundreds of protesters requested that the building permit of the Indonesian Christian Church of Yasmin be revoked. Form Curug Mekar also made a letter requesting the cancellation of the church construction permit to the Bogor Government City Office. After a powerful rejection from the community, the Bogor Government froze the Building Permit in 2008.

The case went to the Supreme Court, and the Indonesian Christian church of Yasmin was won, even discussed in international institutions (including the United Nations). Many urged the central and local governments to restore the Building Permit and allow the Yasmin Indonesian Christian Church to worship there; but neither the Bogor City Government nor the central government – for various reasons – did not restore the Building Permit and did not allow the Indonesian Christian Church residents to worship at that location, so they worshiped in front of the Merdeka Palace in Jakarta. Seeing this development, the Head of the Synod of the Indonesian Christian Church sought other approaches and ways of solving. The conflict of the Indonesian Christian Church of Yasmin was finally pursued by the legal route. The Indonesian Christian Church of Yasmin filed a lawsuit with the Bandung State Administrative Court. In its ruling, the Bandung State Administrative Court won the Indonesian Christian Church of Taman Yasmin by declaring the cancellation of the freezing of the License to Establish the Indonesian Christian Church Of Yasmin By the Bogor Government. After the Bandung court ruling, the Bogor government appealed to the High Court of State Administration.

Another policy formulated by the District / City Government is legal channels. The District/City Government encourages legal action in court. In the case of the establishment of the Yasmin Indonesian Christian Church, the Bogor City Government was actually sued by the Indonesian Christian Church Yasmin for the revocation of the Building Permit. After a supreme court review, the legal dispute was resolved that won the Indonesian Christian Church Yasmin. However, the conflict was not successfully resolved and could only be resolved after 15 years of conflict because legal efforts were not the right solution to the conflict.

The United Nations also issued recommendations and conclusions for monitoring the UN Committee on ASEAN countries, a specific recommendation for Indonesia. The results of the recommendations of the UN UPR (Universal Periodic Review) session released on May 25, 2012 followed by 74 countries (27 member states of the UN Human Rights Council and 47 review countries) launched essential recommendations that the Indonesian government must follow up over concerns about the condition of freedom of religion and belief. Namely, explicitly alluding to freedom of religion and belief about the guarantee of the implementation of religious freedom. In this context, Indonesia is one of the few countries that is democratic and respects human rights, by ratifying UN human rights norms. However, many human rights violations, especially the right to freedom of religion and belief. In this context, the resolution of the house of worship conflicts needs to involve intensive cultural groups consisting of religious leaders, indigenous leaders, and community leaders. The initiative of religious leaders in seeking peace in various forms of activities, from the establishment of religious da'wah to the resolution of conflicts becomes very important. It is these religious leaders who usually have strategic influence in conflict resolution. Elite leaders will develop and where religious dippers will be brought, toward consensus and compromise leading to coolness and peace or toward the opposition, mutual distrust, conflict, and violence. Religion is duplicitous (ambivalent), can be cool can also be violent: it can be soft, it can also be problematic; It can be peaceful, it can be war.

The Bogor City Government in this polemic coordinated and consulted with the Presidential Chief of Staff, the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Based on the Bogor City Government records, there are about 30 official meetings and 100 informal meetings that have been held in search of the end of the settlement. Therefore, the Mayor of Bogor, Bima Arya, hopes that all parties should maintain and care for diversity in the city of Bogor. The Building Permit document granted by the Bogor City government to the Indonesian Christian Church yasmin turned into the Indonesian Christian Church of West Bogor.

This house of worship conflict now enters a new chapter after the Bogor City Government granted an area of 1,668 M2 to be built yasmin church building on August 8, 2021. The new location for the construction of Yasmin Church is only about 1 km from the old location. Previously on May 10, 2021 before the granting of Building Permits by the Bogor Government, the Religious Harmony Forum verified files for 90 congregations of the house of worship users and 60 supporters of the establishment of houses of worship from nearby residents in Bogor City following applicable regulations. From these results, hundreds of congregations finally agreed to relocate. Bogor City Government officially issued a Permit to Build An Indonesian Christian Church located in West Cilendek Village, West Bogor Subdistrict. Granting permission by the Bogor Government as evidence of the end of the long conflict of the establishment of Yasmin church houses of worship that has been going on for approximately 15 years, which the Bogor Government carried out is one of the efforts to appreciate the diversity that exists in the city of Bogor. Granting building permit documents is not the final process, but the Bogor Government promises to continue to be treated sustainably to maintain diversity. The success of Bima Arya as Mayor of Bogor this period was appreciated by the Minister of Home Affairs, Muhammad Tito Karnavian assessed the conflict of construction of the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI) Yasmin house of worship in Bogor City has been completed. The problem solved after 15 years of conflict is a good momentum for Christians, the settlement can not be separated from the contribution of the Mayor of Bogor and the ranks of the city government. The Minister of Home Affairs recognized it as proof of high commitment to solving problems in bogor city.

With short problem mapping and systematic and measurable handling strategies, through persuasive approaches, building good communication, door to door to religious figures and other community leaders, continuous mediation efforts to community groups. Bima Arya successfully worked with the Regional Leadership Coordination Forum, Majellis Ulama Indonesia, Religious Harmony Forum, which was finally able to find a solution to the issue of land grants for the establishment of places of worship from the Bogor Government to the Indonesian Christian Church in Yasmin Bogor. Researchers hope that with the goodwill of the Bogor City Government, in this case, the Mayor of Bogor Bima Arya who gave land grants to Yasmin Church as a relocation of the construction of a new house of worship will have a positive impact on religious harmony in the city of Bogor. Bogor people are expected to live side by side and live a life in diversity to realize positive peace. This event is a peaceful message from Bogor to the world that peace can be achieved by mutual respect and compliance with rules that have been mutually agreed upon by all parties. All parties must be able to maintain and care for diversity in the city of Bogor and must comply with the Supreme Court's decision and the options chosen for the

resolution of the conflict of the Indonesian Christian Church Yasmin from the Bogor city government, in order to create a positive peace of diversity in the city of Bogor so that the conflict of the establishment of Yasmin house of worship can be a lesson for the conflict of the establishment of houses of worship in Indonesia.

Indonesia's message of peaceful democracy and respect for human rights and religious freedom offered to the international community has arrived, thus attracting the world's attention. International actors do not see the actual conditions of human rights in Indonesia in an aggregate and separate, massive exposure to news in the media about the many cases of violations of these rights. However, it is more looking at the condition and attitude of the Indonesian government for violations that occur by still respecting democratic principles.

### III. CONCLUSION

Indonesia is constantly faced with two significant challenges first, how the plurality of the nation and cultural wealth can be a potential and asset for the growth and development of all the achievements and progress of the nation. Nevertheless, on the other hand, as a second challenge, diversity can trigger the emergence of the disintegration of society, even national disintegration. One form of diversity in Indonesia is the issue of religion. The establishment of houses of worship is the factor that most influences the occurrence of disputes or intolerance. Among the cases of establishing a house of worship that now has only the final settlement after 15 years of conflict is the establishment of the Yasmin Indonesian Christian church in Bogor, Indonesia. This house of worship conflict now enters a new chapter after the Bogor City Government granted an area of 1,668 M2 to be built yasmin church building on August 8, 2021. Granting permission by the Bogor Government as evidence of the end of the long conflict of the establishment of Yasmin church houses of worship that has been going on for approximately 15 years, which the Bogor Government carried out is one of the efforts to appreciate the diversity that exists in the city of Bogor. This event is a peaceful message from Bogor to the world that peace can be achieved by mutual respect and

compliance with rules that have been mutually agreed upon by all parties.

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