



THE ROLE OF THE YOUNG MUSLIM GENERATION IN INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY: A CASE STUDY OF THE GERAKAN PEMUDA ANSOR IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

International diplomacy plays a very important role in shaping the image of moderate Islam on the global stage, and GP Ansor, as a Muslim youth organization in Indonesia, has played an active role in this effort. Through various diplomatic strategies, such as narrative diplomacy using social media and digital platforms, GP Ansor has succeeded in conveying the message of peaceful, tolerant, and inclusive Islam to international audiences. The organization is also active in international forums such as peace conferences and interfaith dialogues, trying to change the negative perception of Islam that is often associated with extremism and conflict. However, major challenges arise from GP Ansor's limited access to formal diplomacy dominated by countries and international institutions, as well as global perceptions that often simplify the face of Islam. In addition, differences in ideology and global political interests also complicate international cooperation based on Islamic moderation. Limited human and financial resources are also significant obstacles to achieving consistent and professional international diplomacy.

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Introduction

The development of global dynamics places the younger generation as strategic actors in forming a new narrative of international relations. In the context of international Islam, Muslim youth have a significant role in promoting the values of peace, justice, and dialogue between civilizations. Globalization and the development of information technology have also opened up wider participation space for Muslim youth in the international diplomacy arena, including on issues such as human rights, climate change, sustainable development, and countering extremism (Azra, 2017).

The younger generation can utilize social media as a campaign tool, form cross-

country coalitions through digital platforms, and voice the interests of their communities in global forums without having to be physically there. Digital technology also allows them to produce and disseminate alternative narratives about Islam, which emphasize the values of peace, tolerance, and humanity, in response to negative stereotypes that still often circulate at the international level (M. Anshor, 2020). Thus, young Muslims now have greater means and opportunities to influence world policy and public opinion through adaptive and innovative diplomatic approaches.

Youth not only act as message conveyors, but also as strategy designers who prioritize collaboration, cross-cultural empathy, and concrete solutions to global challenges (Wahyuni, 2021). This role is strengthened by their involvement in networks of non-governmental organizations, multilateral institutions, and active participation in the formulation of global agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By integrating Islamic values within the framework of modern diplomacy, Muslim youth are able to enrich the global narrative with a humanistic moral and spiritual perspective (Hasyim, 2015).

In the context of increasingly complex global dynamics, the involvement of non-state actors in international diplomacy is becoming increasingly significant. One of the youth organizations that shows an active role in this area is the Ansor Youth Movement, which is not only known as a socio-religious organization in Indonesia, but also began to appear as an agent of cultural and religious diplomacy in various international forums (Wahid, 2018). The urgency of this research lies in the need to understand how the strategies, narratives, and international networks built by the Ansor Youth are able to contribute to Indonesia's image as a country with a moderate Muslim population.

Furthermore, this study is important to explore how religious-based youth organizations can become a bridge in building cross-cultural and religious dialogue at the global level. With the increasing challenges of intolerance and extremism, the presence of Pemuda Ansor on the international diplomatic stage becomes relevant as a representation of peaceful, open and inclusive Islam. Therefore, an in-depth study of the role and influence of Pemuda Ansor in international diplomacy not only enriches the literature on international relations, but also provides strategic insight for the formulation of Indonesian foreign policy based on civil society

Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. Data were collected through participant observation during the conference activities, in-depth interviews with 15 delegates from various countries, and analysis of official documents such as speech scripts, plenary session results, and final conference statements. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner so that researchers could explore more deeply the participants' views on the role of Muslim youth in global diplomacy. Data

analysis techniques were carried out thematically to identify patterns of youth contributions and initiatives in the realm of international diplomacy. Data validity is maintained through triangulation of sources, methods, and theories.

Funding and Discussion

The Ansor Youth Movement (GP) as a representation of the young generation of Indonesian Muslims plays a strategic role in international diplomacy, especially in upholding the values of moderate Islam, tolerance and peace. The organization is actively involved in various global forums, such as interfaith meetings, cross-cultural dialogues, and peace conferences organized by international institutions and global civil society organizations.

Through a cultural and religious approach, GP Ansor has succeeded in building a positive image of Indonesian Islam that is friendly and inclusive. This involvement not only has an impact on strengthening Indonesia's public diplomacy, but also positions the young generation of Muslims as agents of change in responding to global issues such as extremism, Islamophobia, and sectarian conflict. The strategies used include narrative diplomacy, conveying peaceful messages through social media, and strengthening cooperation with global communities that share a similar vision (Anshor, 2020).

In addition, GP Ansor's activeness in establishing partnerships with international actors shows the transformation of the role of Muslim youth from merely policy recipients to active actors in shaping global opinions and policies. This study confirms that the role of the young Muslim generation, especially through GP Ansor, cannot be underestimated in the context of contemporary diplomacy that increasingly demands an inclusive, collaborative, and universal humanitarian value-based approach.

1. GP Ansor International Diplomacy Strategy

GP Ansor implements various international diplomacy strategies that are oriented towards promoting moderate and tolerant Islamic values as part of Indonesia's distinctive Islamic image. One of its main strategies is cultural and religious diplomacy, in which GP Ansor collaborates with interfaith organizations, international institutions, and global civil society communities to voice peace, anti-radicalism, and interfaith dialogue.

This strategy is reinforced by active participation in international forums, such as world peace conferences, UN youth forums, and interfaith dialogues, where GP Ansor cadres often appear as speakers or delegates. Direct involvement in these forums provides space for GP Ansor to convey a moderate and contextual narrative of Nusantara Islam, while introducing the peaceful and inclusive religious practices of Indonesian Muslim society (Zahra, 2022).

In every participation, GP Ansor cadres not only voice humanist Islamic values, but also actively build constructive dialogue with delegates from various religious, cultural, and national backgrounds. This shows that GP Ansor is not just a passive participant, but

is able to play a role as a norm entrepreneur (initiator and disseminator of new norms) in the global discourse on peace and tolerance.

In addition, this involvement also strengthens Indonesia's position as a model of a democratic Muslim country in the eyes of the world, with GP Ansor as one of the civil society actors contributing to this image. The experience of interacting in international forums has enriched the insights of GP Ansor cadres in understanding global dynamics, so that they are able to formulate a diplomatic approach that is adaptive, context-based, and relevant to the challenges of the times (Suryadinata, 2016).

GP Ansor also uses narrative diplomacy through social media and international digital platforms, by delivering foreign language content that highlights the values of Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin and harmonious religious practices in Indonesia. This strategy is very important in the digital era, where global perceptions of Islam are often shaped by unbalanced or even biased media narratives (Wahid, 2018). By utilizing social media and digital platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and official websites translated into various languages.

GP Ansor seeks to build a counter-narrative to the extreme and exclusive stereotypes of Islam. Through the production of content such as tolerance campaign videos, interfaith testimonies, cross-cultural podcasts, and opinion publications in international media, GP Ansor spreads the message of peace more widely and effectively. This approach not only reaches a global audience, but also allows for interactive two-way communication with the world community, especially the younger generation.

In addition, the use of foreign languages, especially English and Arabic, shows GP Ansor's seriousness in penetrating geographical and linguistic boundaries, so that the narrative diplomacy built has a wider reach and resonance. This strategy reflects a deep understanding of the importance of soft power in shaping global public opinion and strengthening Indonesia's position as a center of moderate Islam in the international world (Mufid, 2019).

In addition, the organization develops strategic networks with global actors such as international religious institutions, foreign embassies, and global think tanks to expand its influence and strengthen diplomatic networks. This approach reflects a combination of formal and informal diplomacy based on cultural roots and local socio-religious experiences, but packaged in a universal language that can be accepted by the international community.

Collaboration with global actors allows GP Ansor to expand its scope in the realm of international diplomacy, not only as a representative of civil society organizations, but also as a strategic partner in global issues such as peace, youth empowerment, and countering extremism. Through relations with embassies, GP Ansor gains access to official diplomatic forums and the opportunity to build direct communication with governments of other

countries (Natsir, 2022).

Meanwhile, partnerships with international religious institutions pave the way for the exchange of ideas, joint publications, and research collaborations that strengthen GP Ansor's position as a credible actor in interfaith and intercultural discourse. This hybrid approach between formal and informal diplomacy also allows GP Ansor to bridge the gap between state structures and the dynamics of global civil society, especially in conveying contextual, tolerant, and progressive Islamic values (Hasan 2018). By packaging these messages in an inclusive narrative rooted in local Indonesian socio-religious experiences, GP Ansor not only conveys messages but also builds trust (trust-building) which is an important foundation in international relations based on values and collaboration.

One concrete form of GP Ansor's international diplomacy strategy is the cooperation established with Darul Ifta Egypt, an authoritative institution in fatwa and Islam that has great influence in the Islamic world. This collaboration focuses on strengthening the narrative of moderate Islam and the development of joint strategies in facing global challenges in the form of radicalism and religious-based extremism (Wahid, 2001).

This collaboration not only shows international recognition of GP Ansor's commitment to promoting peaceful Islam, but also strengthens Indonesia's position as a center for moderate Islamic discourse. In official meetings between the two institutions, a number of strategic steps were discussed, such as the exchange of religious thoughts, cadre training, the preparation of moderate preaching guidelines, and the development of digital Islamic content that is friendly to the younger generation and the global community.

This collaboration also serves as an important symbol that Muslim countries can unite against the misuse of religion for political gain and violence. GP Ansor's success in establishing relations with prestigious Islamic institutions such as Darul Ifta reflects the organization's diplomatic capabilities, while also emphasizing that civil society can be an important actor in building a more peaceful and tolerant global order.

The urgency of collaboration between GP Ansor and Darul Ifta Egypt lies in the urgent need to build a global consensus in facing the threat of radicalism that is increasingly cross-border, organized, and makes massive use of digital technology. Radicalism is no longer a local or regional issue, but has become a global phenomenon that threatens social, political and international security stability.

In this context, cooperation between moderate religious institutions such as GP Ansor and Darul Ifta is very important to form a common front capable of producing and disseminating counter-narratives to the ideology of violence in the name of religion (Nurrohman, 2019). By combining their respective intellectual strengths and cultural influences, this collaboration not only strengthens the reach of moderate Islamic messages to various parts of the world but also increases the legitimacy of the message because it is

supported by credible religious authorities from two strategic regions of the Islamic world: Southeast Asia and the Middle East (Pramono, 2021).

This cooperation is a concrete example of diplomacy between Muslim civil societies based on values, science, and moral responsibility to protect humanity from the dangers of misleading ideologies. Therefore, the collaboration between GP Ansor and Darul Ifta is not only symbolic, but is a strategic necessity in creating a peaceful and tolerant global civilization. With these strategies, GP Ansor has succeeded in positioning itself as a representative of the young Muslim generation who actively promote global peace and fight extremism through peaceful, inclusive and humanitarian value-based methods.

2. GP Ansor's International Diplomacy Challenges

In carrying out its international diplomatic role, the Ansor Youth Movement faces various challenges that are not easy. One of the main challenges is the lack of access to formal diplomatic platforms, which are generally dominated by state actors or institutions with strong political and economic influence. As a civil society organization, GP Ansor often has to work extra hard to gain recognition and equal space in international forums.

This condition makes GP Ansor need to rely on informal diplomacy approaches and personal networks as an alternative to breaking through the limits of exclusivity in the formal diplomacy arena. In many cases, the success of these organizations in appearing on the international stage is more determined by their closeness to key figures, strategic collaboration with world religious institutions, and participation in global thematic agendas such as peace and tolerance (Subroto, 2020).

However, without official status like that of a state or international organization, GP Ansor's voice is often positioned as a complement, not a determinant of global policy direction. This is a challenge in itself in optimizing their diplomatic influence. Furthermore, these limitations also impact access to funding, policy networks, and opportunities to become partners in multilateral projects. (Mufid, 2019)

Therefore, GP Ansor is required to not only build a strong narrative, but also develop institutional capacity that is able to answer the needs of the international world for credible, consistent, and professional local partners. A creative and adaptive approach is key to maximizing the non-traditional diplomatic spaces that are still open to civil society actors such as GP Ansor.

Another challenge lies in the global perception that still tends to simplify the face of Islam, so that the narrative of moderate Islam carried by GP Ansor sometimes does not get enough space amidst the dominance of discourse on extreme or conflictive Islam. The global perception that simplifies the face of Islam is often driven by international media that focuses more on events of conflict, violence, and extremism that occur in several Muslim countries, rather than on examples of the success of Muslim societies that live peacefully and moderately (Zulkarnain, 2020).

This exacerbates negative stereotypes about Islam as a whole, making it difficult for organizations like GP Ansor to introduce a peaceful and inclusive narrative of Islam. GP Ansor, which seeks to promote Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin, often faces challenges in penetrating this grand narrative, as there is insufficient space to discuss pluralism, tolerance, and diversity in Muslim society more broadly.

Mainstream media and global discourse that are more focused on security and radicalization issues make the understanding of Islam more limited to a portrait of violence and instability. Therefore, GP Ansor must work hard to utilize alternative platforms such as social media, podcasts, and more open international forums, in order to spread moderate messages about Islam that can reach a global audience (Alatas, 2006). On the other hand, they also need to collaborate with international institutions that have a similar vision to expand the space for a more positive and peaceful Islamic narrative. This effort requires patience and consistency, considering that changing global perceptions of Islam cannot be achieved in a short time.

In addition, GP Ansor also has to deal with various ideologies and global political interests, which is not always in line with the spirit of moderation, so that cross-country cooperation is often full of difficulties. In the context of international diplomacy, GP Ansor must be able to navigate the complexity of relations between countries which are often influenced by political and ideological interests that are not always in line with the principles of moderation that it upholds.

Some countries or international actors may have political agendas that prioritize state stability or certain geostrategic interests, which sometimes conflict with efforts to introduce a moderate Islamic narrative. For example, countries involved in geopolitical conflicts or those with tensions with other Muslim countries often view religious diplomacy or interfaith cooperation from a more pragmatic perspective, and sometimes ignore the aspects of moderation and tolerance that are the main focus of GP Ansor (Rahmat, 2021).

Extreme or conservative ideologies that are more oriented towards a particular religious identity can also affect the dynamics of diplomacy between countries, making cooperation with countries or institutions that have different views on religion and politics more difficult. On the other hand, GP Ansor needs to demonstrate its capacity to establish productive relationships with various parties, without sacrificing the values of moderation and pluralism that are the foundation of this organization.

To this end, GP Ansor must develop a careful and flexible diplomatic approach, which allows them to adapt to various global political dynamics without losing their way in fighting for peaceful and inclusive Islam. This diplomacy must be based on the greater universal principles of humanity, such as peace, justice, and respect for human rights.

Universal principles of humanity have a very high urgency in international diplomacy

because they serve as a foundation for building relations between countries based on shared values, such as peace, justice, human rights, and tolerance. In an increasingly connected world, global challenges such as climate change, armed conflict, migration and economic inequality know no borders or ideologies, thus requiring a more inclusive, humanity-based multilateral approach (Munir, 2022).

International diplomacy that prioritizes universal humanitarian principles can create space for more constructive dialogue between countries with different backgrounds. This principle also helps reduce tensions and conflicts between countries, because it reminds international actors of their shared responsibility to uphold moral values that are higher than mere narrow political or economic interests.

In the context of moderate Islam promoted by GP Ansor, the application of universal principles of humanity is very important in articulating the position of Islam that is peaceful and prioritizes social justice. By utilizing these principles in international diplomacy, GP Ansor can introduce Islamic values that prioritize human rights, brotherhood, and diversity without getting caught up in sectarian polemics or ideological conflicts.

In addition, this humanitarian principle also serves as a bridge to establish cooperation between countries, international institutions, and civil society organizations in solving common challenges, such as radicalization, injustice, and human rights violations. Therefore, strengthening universal humanitarian principles in international diplomacy is very important to create a more peaceful, just, and sustainable world order (Fadli, 2020).

On the other hand, limited human and financial resources are obstacles in reaching global audiences consistently and professionally, especially in producing high-quality multilingual content and developing a long-term diplomatic agenda. These challenges require GP Ansor to continue to improve institutional capacity, expand strategic networks, and strengthen cross-sector cooperation in order to maintain the sustainability of their role in inclusive and transformative international diplomacy.

To overcome human and financial resource limitations, GP Ansor must formulate a long-term strategy that involves collaboration with various parties, including international institutions, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations. One potential solution is to build strategic partnerships that can provide financial and technical support, as well as increase the managerial and operational capacity of the organization. This includes forming alliances with international educational and media institutions that have greater resources and extensive networks. Thus, GP Ansor can leverage existing resources to strengthen their global visibility and produce high-quality content in multiple languages that suits international audiences.

Institutional capacity development is also key to ensuring the sustainability of GP

Ansor's role in international diplomacy. This can be done by strengthening internal training, leadership development programs, and effective evaluation mechanisms to ensure that GP Ansor cadres have the diplomatic skills needed to face global challenges.

Strengthening strategic networks also plays an important role in creating discussion forums, formulating joint policies, and active participation in international platforms. By expanding cross-sector collaboration, GP Ansor can reach a larger and more diverse global audience, while consolidating their role as a key actor in interfaith diplomacy, peace, and socio-economic development (Zulkarnain, 2020).

Ultimately, by continuing to adapt to the development of an increasingly connected world, and committing to the principles of inclusivity and transformativeness, GP Ansor can use this challenge as an opportunity to strengthen their position in the international diplomatic arena. Strengthening the organization's capacity, both in terms of human resources, networks, and finances, will ensure that GP Ansor can play a greater role in building global peace and promoting moderate Islam that is in line with universal humanitarian values (Pramono, 2021).

This finding confirms that the young generation of Muslims is not only an object in international diplomacy, but has become an active subject capable of formulating a common agenda. Through the conference, Muslim youth demonstrated their capacity to unite their voices, build solidarity, and articulate Islamic values in globally relevant language.

This initiative shows a new direction for Islamic diplomacy based on inclusivity, equality and openness. This also reflects a paradigm shift in Islamic diplomacy from a reactive to a proactive approach. Youth diplomacy does not only occur in formal settings such as conferences and forums, but also in digital spaces, awareness campaigns, and cross-country humanitarian actions.

Their active involvement in international forums is also a powerful tool of soft diplomacy, especially in strengthening the positive image of Islam and reducing misunderstandings about Muslims. They act as agents of change who are able to bridge cultural differences and strengthen cross-national solidarity (Fadli, 2020).

Analysis of the findings of GP Ansor's international diplomacy strategies and challenges shows two interrelated sides: significant achievements in developing diplomacy based on moderate Islamic values and substantial challenges that the organization must face. GP Ansor's strategy emphasizing narrative diplomacy through social media and international digital platforms reflects progress in utilizing technology to convey the message of peaceful Islam to a global audience. By using social media as the main channel, GP Ansor has succeeded in reaching the younger generation, spreading the values of Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin, and creating a more inclusive and moderate image in global discourse. This approach focuses on utilizing more open international platforms, such as

world peace forums and interfaith dialogue, to strengthen GP Ansor's role in global discussions on peace, tolerance, and pluralism.

However, the challenges faced by GP Ansor in international diplomacy are very significant. First, the lack of access to formal diplomatic platforms dominated by state actors and large institutions is a major obstacle in efforts to expand their diplomatic influence. As a civil society organization, GP Ansor must fight hard to gain recognition and equal space in international forums, which often prioritize the interests of countries and institutions that have greater political and economic power.

The second challenge, which is no less important, is the global perception which tends to simplify the face of Islam . International media and global discourse often focus on extreme and conflictual representations of Islam, which makes it difficult for GP Ansor to highlight the moderate Islamic narrative it promotes. This narrow perception limits the space for deeper discussions on pluralism, diversity, and human values in Islam.

In addition, more complex challenges arise from differences in ideology and global political interests , which often clash with the values of moderation championed by GP Ansor. International diplomacy, which is full of political interests, sometimes puts organizations like GP Ansor in a less advantageous position, especially when large countries or dominant political actors have a more pragmatic agenda. In facing this condition, GP Ansor needs to ensure that universal humanitarian values, such as human rights, peace, and tolerance, remain at the core of every diplomatic step, despite facing pressure from international actors with different interests.

Limitations in human and financial resources also exacerbate the diplomatic challenges faced by GP Ansor. Without sufficient access to funds and adequate managerial capacity, the organization sometimes struggles to produce high-quality content in multiple languages and to develop an effective long-term diplomatic agenda. To this end, GP Ansor must develop strategies to strengthen its internal capacity, by strengthening cadre training, building strategic partnerships, and expanding its international network to overcome these limitations. A cross-sector collaboration-based approach (whether with international institutions, civil society organizations, or the private sector) could be a solution to strengthen their role in more inclusive and transformative international diplomacy.

Overall, although GP Ansor faces various tough challenges in international diplomacy, strategies based on the values of moderation and narrative diplomacy provide great opportunities to strengthen Indonesia's position in the global arena as a country with peaceful and tolerant Islam. Therefore, strengthening institutional capacity, developing international networks, and adapting to the dynamics of global diplomacy are key steps that must be taken so that GP Ansor can continue to play an important role in shaping a more peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable world order.

Conclusions

From the findings and discussions that have been presented, it can be concluded that GP Ansor plays an important role in international diplomacy by upholding moderate Islamic values that emphasize peace, tolerance, and pluralism. Through narrative diplomacy strategies, the organization has successfully utilized social media and international digital platforms to spread the message of peaceful Islam, as well as actively participating in international forums, such as peace conferences and interfaith dialogues. This approach has helped GP Ansor strengthen its influence on the global stage despite facing significant challenges.

However, the main challenge faced by GP Ansor is limited access to formal diplomatic platforms dominated by large state actors and international institutions. In addition, the global perception that often simplifies the face of Islam is an obstacle in putting forward the moderate Islamic narrative promoted by GP Ansor. Differences in ideology and global political interests, as well as limited human and financial resources, also add to the complexity of the diplomatic challenges faced.

Nevertheless, by continuing to improve institutional capacity, expand strategic networks, and strengthen cross-sector cooperation, GP Ansor can use this challenge as an opportunity to strengthen their role in inclusive and transformative international diplomacy. Strengthening internal capacity and international collaboration are the main keys to the sustainability and success of GP Ansor's international diplomacy in facing increasingly complex global challenges.

Conflict of Interest

The manuscript author has absolutely no financial or non-financial conflict of interest regarding the subject matter or material discussed in this manuscript

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