

MUI Attitude in Maintaining Ukhuwah Ahead of the 2024 Election

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ABSTRACT

Elections every year inevitably bring up certain camps that differ in opinion, and the factor of the dispute can divide the Indonesian nation itself, therefore the Indonesian Ulema Council as a government agency needs to strive to always maintain ukhuwah during these election times so that later these camps will not have a bad impact on this country. This journal aims to find out about the attitude of the Indonesian Ulema Council in Maintaining Ukhuwah ahead of the 2024 election. This research uses descriptive qualitative, primary and secondary data. The secondary data used by the author is news spread in online media such as CNN.Com, Kompas.com, and others. While the secondary data are all materials or writings about the things the author examines such as journals, books and others. The results of this study are the attitudes that MUI appealed to the Indonesian people not to criticize each other, so as not to cause a commotion or even the division itself, and always maintain the relationship between one another.

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INTRODUCTION

General elections, or what we often call elections, are one of the instruments of democracy to implement popular sovereignty within the framework of Pancasila and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) based on the 1945 Constitution. Through elections, citizens can choose leaders who are expected to be able to change the country for the better. (Meyliza & Firdaus, 2022).

One of the principles upheld in the conduct of elections in Indonesia is the principle of democracy. The most basic indicator of the success and quality of a democratic election, in accordance with the principles espoused, is the participation of local communities in the selection of leaders who will lead the country for a certain period of time. This is referred to as political participation.

The problem of applying Islamic law is that the applicable law in Indonesia is positive law, meaning that the applicable regulations are laws and regulations that have been passed by the government. The transformation process from sharia law to positive law occurs when Islamic law gains political power, so that Islamic law is transmitted not only from the mouths of scholars in the pulpit of the mosque, but also from but out of government offices to become state law. (DHF, 2018).

Many of the pros and cons in each election will certainly lead to positive and negative public opinions, especially in the 2024 election, there are many pieces of video on social media, of course, it raises a lot of these opinions which ultimately give rise to certain camps and in the end can divide between one another, therefore

the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) certainly always educates the public about the attitudes that must be maintained during election times.

Deputy Chairman of the MUI Advisory Council Zainut Tauhid Sa'adi said that the Chairman of the MUI Advisory Council emphasized that the MUI should not enter into practical politics. MUI will certainly maintain organizational neutrality and institutionally not dragged into a group that fights in the 2024 presidential election. Furthermore, he also said "MUI politics is state politics, high politics, value politics, so it must be a guidance (for) all levels of MUI," then he also said that, Politics must be in accordance with morals and adab. It should not demonize each other, always keep honoring each other, should not injure each other, and keep strengthening the unity and integrity of the nation (Susilo, 2023).

In addition, these guidelines also need to be conveyed to the people. Thus, politics must be carried out according to morals and manners. "We should not demonize each other, (we should) honor each other, we should not injure each other, and (we should) strengthen the unity of the nation," he added.

From the background that has been stated above, the author examines the attitude of the Indonesian Ulema Council in maintaining Ukhuwah ahead of the 2024 election. This research uses qualitative methods, as for the data sources used by the author there are two, namely, secondary and primary data, where the data can be in the form of videos obtained by the author from social media, meeting minutes, articles and journals. Therefore, the formulation of the problem in this study is how is the attitude of the Indonesian Ulema Council in Maintaining Ukhuwah ahead of the 2024 election.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods. Qualitative research according to Priadana & Sanursi (2021) is research that presents descriptive, narrative or investigative data. Qualitative research consists of observation, interview and documentation methods. The researcher made observations to the MUI office directly during the 2-month period. The researcher observed how MUI's attitude towards issues or news that could divide the Indonesian state itself just because of differences in camps. Documentation method of research is done through these data are then analyzed and conclusions are drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Overview of the Indonesian Ulema Council

The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) is a forum or association that brings together Indonesian Muslim scholars and intellectuals to unite the movements and steps of Indonesian Muslims towards the realization of common goals. In the month of Rajab, precisely on July 26, 1975, the Indonesian Ulema Council was built with the members of Islamic scholars from Indonesia, including from Islamic organizations at the central level and twenty-six (26) scholars, each of whom represents 26 provinces in Indonesia. Jakarta as a result of a meeting or consultation of intellectuals. Four scholars from Islamic organizations: Matraul Anwar, DMI, Muhammadiyah, GUPPI, NU, Perti, Syariat Islam, PTDI, Al Wasilit, AlIttuhadiyah, Bakti Kerohanian Islam, POLRI, Army, Navy, Air Force, and thirteen (13) people from figures and scholars. The result of the negotiation was an agreement to form a discussion forum for Islamic scholars and intellectuals, which was outlined in the "MUI Establishment Charter" signed by all participants of the deliberation, which was then designated by the name "National Ulama Conference I" (Mui.or.id, 2023).

The establishment of MUI coincided with a time when the Indonesian state was undergoing a period of reconstruction after 30 years of independence, where most of the state's energy was spent on collective political struggle and less attention was paid to issues in the mental welfare of the ummah itself, which was not. The state cares about its people. For 20 years MUI tried to be a discussion forum for ulama, Zuama, and Islamic scholars:

1. Building a religious and social life that is favored by Allah SWT, by providing guidance to Indonesian Muslims.
2. Providing advice and fatwas on religious and social issues to the government and society.
3. In the creation of national unity and integrity, of course, it is necessary to have Islamic relations and harmony within the Indonesian community itself.
4. The Indonesian Ulema Council serves as an intermediary between the ulama, the government and the community, in order to achieve the success of national development.
5. Improving relations and cooperation between organizations, Islamic organizations, and scholars in providing guidance and appeals to the community, especially Muslims, through mutual consultation and information.

The Indonesian Ulema Council certainly has an important role in terms of socio-cultural, political and also of course religious matters, according to the nature and responsibility of MUI itself. This shows that MUI is an institutional institution whose policy is to give advice and fatwa on existing problems such as religious and social matters to the government and especially to Muslims, as *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* in an effort to improve national resilience (Muhaimin, 2005).

Furthermore, MUI also has its own role in the political world, namely as a protector of Islamic teachings and supervisor of Muslims, who must be consistently related to sharia provisions both in terms of religious ceremonies and in terms of social community relations or business transactions (*muamalat*).

The involvement of ulama in politics in Indonesia has become commonplace. For a long time, the role of ulama in the formation of the Indonesian state has been recognized. It is not surprising that ulama are involved in political affairs, and some even deliberately choose to enter politics. On the other hand, ulama are known as the spiritual leaders of Muslims because of their expertise in Islamic science. The function of the Indonesian Ulema Council is to ensure that Indonesian society can be good and not divided, and also keep society away from damage. Because the Indonesian Ulema Council must be able to bring politics that can deliver differences, maintain peace, strengthen interfaith harmony and also increase nationality (Chalik & Abdul, 2015).

2. The influence of MUI in politics

The Indonesian Ulema Council is considered a unique institution by Andi Syafrani. The Indonesian Ulema Council is an institution that is given the authority to provide halal certification by the state through law. On the other hand, the Indonesian Ulema Council can be considered as an NGO, but MUI is not the only NGO included in the Indonesian legal system. In the journey of the Indonesian Ulema Council, there is a shift that shows that the Indonesian Ulema Council has influence in the political sphere.

The reformation period changed the position of the Indonesian Ulema Council in the government. Compared to the New Order era where the Indonesian Ulema Council was more pro-Soeharto's government, but in the first election in the Reform era in 1999, the Indonesian Ulema Council showed its alignment with Islamic parties by giving a call to the Indonesian people, especially the Muslim community, to vote for parties that always fight for the interests of the people (Hilmi, 2004). In this statement, of course, it is very visible that the Indonesian Ulema Council is more in favor of parties that lean towards Muslims. During Soeharto's presidency, MUI's alignment experienced a political shift in the body of government in

Indonesia, namely in the early 1990s. Some political researchers said that the period was called the Islamic turn, in which Soeharto as president sided more with Islamic groups. During the Reformation period, this euphoria continued, especially the emergence of Islamic parties such as PNU, PAN, PK and PBB (Darmawijaya, 2015).

Unlike the New Order period in 2004, 2009, and 2014, MUI was relatively neutral and did not take sides with any party. In fact, MUI openly called for neutrality to the Indonesian people to vote and allocate voting rights according to their preferences. In 2009, MUI even issued a fatwa prohibiting abstention in an effort to increase public participation in elections. The same thing was repeated in 2014 when MUI conveyed the same appeal not to abstain from voting and to voice their choices at the KPU. (Evelina & Angeline, 2015)

In the field of politics, MUI needs to assess the situation carefully and needs to have a broad insight. Therefore, in accordance with the definition of ulama itself that ulama are "people of reason", MUI clerics provide religious and other knowledge to politicians so that they can do politics well and ethically, so that they can provide enlightenment and peaceful dialog with politicians. The entry of MUI into the political process of the Indonesian state does not mean that MUI will disrupt the balance of "trias politics" and act according to the interests of the people in the midst of political life that is full of temptation and uncertainty in politics (Francoise, 2017).

The partisanship of MUI to a party or candidate is certainly very influential in the political field, therefore in this 2024 election, MUI does not urge or show any partisanship to a party or candidate itself. MUI more appealed to the whole society to take part in the 2024 election and not abstain, besides that MUI also appealed not to criticize each other's camp which caused division in the country itself.

3. The Neutralist Stance of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI)

The existence of political differences among the ulama is certainly not an indication of the breakup of MUI. Ulama do not experience division, because political attitudes are considered the prerogative of each individual. For ulama who are involved in political contestation, they tend to have different political tendencies. MUI only proposes a call for each member or Indonesian cleric to show themselves as individuals who are knowledgeable, noble, and exemplary.

The Indonesian Ulema Council as an independent institution declares itself independent and unaffiliated in determining political votes. This was also mentioned by the Secretary General of the MUI consideration god Ustadz Zaitun Rasmin in his video uploaded on his personal Instagram social media account that the MUI is

independent but not passive, in the video he also invites the public to vote and not abstain when the election takes place (Prihantoro, 2019).

During the national *tausiyah* for peace organized by MUI, it was revealed that MUI called on all Indonesian people to always care for and maintain unity within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. This call was based on the spirit of true brotherhood (*ukhuwah*). This is considered as a form of responsibility and commitment in religious and national aspects (*mas'uliyah diniyyah wa mas'uliyah wathaniyyah*).

Furthermore, the Indonesian Ulema Council appealed to all Indonesian people not to be provoked by any calls and calls to join and carry out the People Power Movement. Because, it will cause great harm (*mafsadat*) and endanger the sovereignty and integrity of the Republic of Indonesia (*Dar-ul mafsaid muqoddamun 'ala jalbi masholih*).

CONCLUSION

Based on the observations and analysis that the author has briefly conveyed above in the previous section, the conclusions that can be conveyed are. Based on the description above, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Related to the circulation of news and issues that can trigger conflict and divide the people during the election period, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) always invites the public to always maintain *ukhuwah* by always respecting and appreciating each other and not criticizing each other.
2. The Indonesian Ulema Council calls on all Indonesian people to always maintain and preserve unity within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on the spirit of true brotherhood (*ukhuwah*) in the form of responsibility and commitment in religion and nationality.
3. And third, the Indonesian Ulema Council calls on all Indonesian people not to be provoked by news that causes division and also invitations to follow and carry out the people power movement, which can be the beginning of enormous damage (*mafsadat*) and threaten the sovereignty and integrity of the Republic of Indonesia.

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