

# Indonesia – U.S. Council on Religion and Pluralism (CRP)



The Indonesia – U.S. Council on Religion and Pluralism is an innovative bi-national, independent, non-governmental body, providing religious leaders, civil society organizations, scholars, and media leaders in both Indonesia and the United States a mechanism to jointly examine, address, and agree on ways the societies of our two countries can cooperate on activities and programs to share and promote the values of pluralism, diversity, and tolerance. The Council is endorsed by President Obama and President Jokowi as a civil society undertaking in a sector where both countries have much to learn from each other.

The Council was officially established during a Founding and Roadmap Conference held on August 10-11, 2016 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The United States-Indonesia Society (USINDO), the premier bi-national non-governmental organization exclusively deepening United States-Indonesia relations and mutual understanding, was instrumental in facilitating this initial founding conference and continues to play a significant role in facilitating and providing staff support to the Council's work.

The Council itself is composed of very senior and eminent representatives from highly respected non-governmental organizations, faith-based institutions, academicians, and media leaders who have a vast depth and breadth of expertise in the field of religion and pluralism. These members make up the Senior Advisory and Executive Board of the Council, and is led by two Co-Chairs from Indonesia and the U.S. In addition, the Council is also supported by a Panel of Experts which the Council relies on for their knowledgeable advice and ideas to realize the goals that the Council has set out to achieve.

The Founding and Roadmap Conference of the Council held in Yogyakarta not only convened the Council's members, but also allowed them to begin identifying priority areas of shared interest, experience, and concern, which later became the basis for establishing the Council's three core Working Groups.

The Council has already begun to strengthen networks between and in both countries, and has identified proposed concrete initiatives in the priority areas which may be undertaken by the Council. Activities selected for implementation are those that are compelling, relevant, not done effectively previously, draw on the unique composition of the Council, and use an evidence-based process. These would, subject to further refinement and availability of resources, start to address the Council's selected goals.

## **CRP Working Groups:**

### ***Working Group I***

***Increasing Religious Understanding, Mutual Respect, and Collaboration.*** Working Group One on Increasing Religious Understanding recommended a set of seminars and outreach programs aimed at increasing religious understanding; digital outreach programs specifically targeting youth; creating religious understanding exchange programs; and enhancing the capacity of journalists in both countries to increase understanding of other religions and the role of religion in broader issues.

## Working Group II

**Identifying and Fostering Positive Civic and Religious Education Models that Promote Analytical Thinking and Respect.** Working Group Two on Religious Education Models identified three proposed programs related to religious education, including exchange programs for teachers and students, workshops on how to teach about religious differences, and creating an interreligious homestay for teachers and youth.

## Working Group III

**Empowering Civil Society to Deter Violent Extremism.** Working Group Three made recommendations for programs intended to empower communities to deter violent extremism – as based on recent expert experience, a community-based approach was seen to be the most promising. Recommendations included seminars, lectures and bilateral visits by practitioners and experts to share best practices with communities and governments, creating training modules for programs to counter violent extremism, creating counter-narratives to counter misconceptions about Islam, and calling for evidence-based research on the factors in deterring violent extremism that need to be better understood.

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# Council Members and Panel of Experts

## Co-Chairs



**Yenny Wahid**  
Indonesian Co-Chair  
Executive Director, The Wahid Foundation



**Imam Jihad Turk**  
U.S. Co-Chair  
Founding President, Bayan Claremont

## Senior Advisory Board

United States	Indonesia
<b>Galen Carey</b> Vice President for Government Affairs, National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)	<b>Rev. Agustinus Ulahayanan</b> Executive Secretary for the Commission for Interreligious and Interfaith Affairs, Bishop's Conference of Indonesia
<b>Jim Winkler</b> President and General Secretary, National Council of Churches	<b>Prof. Azyumardi Azra</b> Director, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University
<b>Imam Mohamed Magid</b> Executive Director, All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) and Former President, ISNA	<b>Rev. Dr. Henriette-Lebang</b> General Chairperson, Communion of Churches in Indonesia (CCI)
<b>Elder Randy D. Funk</b> General Authority Seventy, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	<b>Dr. Muhammad Sirajuddin Syamsuddin</b> President's Special Envoy for Interfaith Dialog and Civilization Affairs, Presidium of Inter Religious Council Indonesia and Former President of Muhammadiyah
<b>Salam Al-Marayati</b> President, Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC)	<b>Major Gen. (Ret) Sang Nyoman Suwisma</b> Chairman, Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI) Represented by: KS Arsana, Chairman for International Affairs, Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI)
<b>Representative from U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops</b>	

## Executive Board

United States	Indonesia
<p><b>Rabbi David Rosen</b> International Director for Interreligious Affairs, American Jewish Committee (AJC)</p> <p>Represented by: Robert Silverman, U.S. Director, Muslim-Jewish Relations, American Jewish Committee</p>	<p><b>Dr. Abdul Mu'ti</b> Secretary General, Muhammadiyah</p>
<p><b>Dr. Debra L. Mason</b> Director of the Center on Religion and the Professions, Missouri School of Journalism and Former Director of Religion News writers Association (RNA)</p>	<p><b>Dr. Bahrul Hayat</b> Senior Lecturer, State Islamic University and Vice Chairman of the Executive Board, the Istiqlal State Mosque</p>
<p><b>Prof. James Hoesterey</b> Assistant Professor, Department of Religion, Emory College of Arts and Sciences</p>	<p><b>Dr. Chandra Setiawan</b> Rector of President University and Former Chairman, Council of Confucian Religion in Indonesia (MATAKIN)</p>
<p><b>Imam Jihad Turk</b> Founding President, Bayan Claremont</p>	<p><b>Endy Bayuni</b> Executive Director, International Association of Religion Journalists (IARJ) and Editor-in-chief, the Jakarta Post</p>
<p><b>Prof. Katherine Marshall</b> Senior Fellow, Georgetown's Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs</p>	<p><b>Prof. Muhammad Ali</b> Associate Professor in Islamic Studies, Religious Studies Department, University of California</p>
<p><b>Imam Plemon El-Amin</b> Imam Emeritus, Atlanta Masjid of Al-Islam</p>	<p><b>Prof. Dr. Philip Wijaya</b> Former Secretary General, Indonesian Buddhists Association (Walubi)</p>
<p><b>Rabia Chaudry</b> Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow, United States Institute of Peace (USIP)</p>	<p><b>Imam Shamsi Ali</b> Imam <i>Islamic Center New York</i> (US Based)</p>
<p><b>Prof. Robert Hefner</b> Director of the Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs (CURA) at Boston University</p>	<p><b>Dr. Siti Syamsiatun</b> Executive Director, Indonesia Consortium of Religious Studies (ICRS)</p>
<p><b>Rev. Susan Hayward</b> Director of Religion &amp; Inclusive Societies, United States Institute of Peace (USIP)</p>	<p><b>Yahya Cholil Staquf</b> Secretary General for Supreme Council, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Member of Presidential Advisory Council</p>
<p><b>Dr. William F. Vendley</b> Secretary General, Religions for Peace International</p> <p>Represented by: Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, Deputy Secretary General, Religions for Peace International</p>	<p><b>Yenny Wahid</b> Director, The Wahid Foundation</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ambassador David Merrill</b> President, USINDO [bi-national organization]</p>	



## Panel of Experts

United States	Indonesia
<b>Alejandro J. Beutel</b> Researcher for Countering Violent Extremism at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)	<b>Dr. Dicky Sofjan</b> Core Doctoral Faculty, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS)
<b>Prof. Julie Chernov Hwang</b> Associate Professor of Political Science and International Relations, Goucher College	<b>Fajar Riza UI Haq</b> Executive Director – Ma'arif Institute for Culture and Humanity
<b>Prof. R. William Liddle</b> Professor Emeritus, Ohio State University and Specialist on Indonesian Politics	<b>Dr. H. Nadirsyah Hosen</b> Senior Lecturer on Syariah and Indonesian Law, Faculty of Law, Monash University
<b>Seamus Hughes</b> Deputy Director of the Program on Extremism, George Washington University	<b>Noor Huda Ismail</b> Executive Director, Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian
	<b>Dr. Zainal Abidin Bagir</b> Executive Director, Center for Religious and Cross-Cultural Studies (CRCS)

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