

Resolving conflicts through peaceful dialogue

<https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/columnists/2023/01/871051/resolving-conflicts-through-peaceful-dialogue>

Mehmet Özay

16.01.2023

Nowadays, the problems of humanity encountered in local, regional and global scale have been increasingly the focus of daily conversation. Some people of privileged social positions venture solutions for global peace.

Whether we are aware or not, it is one of the obligations as a global citizen. It is in the nature of human beings to ensure that peace and security are guaranteed.

The main apprehension here is not limited to the conflicts and wars in different parts of the world which have affected the balance of regional and global peace. Rather, they include mostly disputes, misinterpretation of the nature of relations added with ethnic, racial and religious phobias among the world's diverse communities.

When talking about peace, we should revisit the philosophical and religious thoughts and, in particular, strive for harmony. To seek solutions to existential human problems, there are some guiding principles. Of prime importance is the ability to propagate understanding between people of different religious, political and philosophical branches of humanity.

We should look at a book titled *The Wisdom of Tolerance: A Philosophy of Generosity and Peace* written by the late Abdurrahman Wahid, the first directly-elected Indonesian president Japanese philosopher Daisaku Ikeda, the third leader of Japanese Buddhist community group Soka Gakkai, a branch of *Nichiren* Buddhism, 13 years ago.

The book emphasizes the saliency and urgency of constructive dialogue to achieve a significant level of peace in diverse societies. Translated into Bahasa Malaysia and titled *Hikmah Toleransi: Falsafah Kepemurahan dan Keamanan*, by International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, it is a good starting point in the process of thinking about a possibility of rebalancing the global understanding of different communities and of peace.

It is based on the sincere 'dialogue' and 'conversation' between the two distinguished thinkers in Asia-Pacific region, namely, late Wahid, popularly known as Gus Dur and Ikeda. Both shared a major concern on global peace especially the scope of threats and dangers felt by societies.

This book represents a model to all of us on how to act rationally amid the widespread global problems threatening humanity. The concept of dialogue does not merely signify a talking session between relevant parties but a need for daily actions and deeds in public-personal relationships.

As argued by the respective parties, 'wisdom' and 'tolerance' are not inclusive to any single religious system, they are shared as a fundamental essence of all religious belief systems. There is a need to prioritize dialogue sessions comprising all segments of society.

What Wahid and Ikeda emphasize in their book is to remind us that restarting of peaceful dialogues is urgent to end conflicts and wars whether local, regional and global. It necessitates

the responsibility of all social segments to think about how to live together in a peaceful way and by respecting all our differences.

<https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/columnists/2023/01/871051/resolving-conflicts-through-peaceful-dialogue>