

BRICS, Islam and Alternative World Orders

News:

Indonesia is set to become one of the nine partner countries of the BRICS organization starting January 1, 2025. Apart from Indonesia, eight other countries are confirmed to also hold BRICS partner country status on the same date, namely Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Cuba, Uganda, Malaysia, and Uzbekistan (CNN Indonesia). Controversy arose because a few parties, especially Western countries, viewed Indonesia as adhering to the principle of non-alignment which does not take sides with any party.

Comment:

BRICS rose to prominence on the global stage after the Gaza war where its member countries showed strong alignment with Palestine and an anti-Israel stance. Plus, at the BRICS Summit last October in Kazan, Vladimir Putin stated that it was time to create a multipolar world, replacing the unipolar world previously led by the United States as the sole hegemonic power. In 2023, Kremlin also stressed that the US "will not be the center of the new world order." This sentiment is in line with growing disillusionment among southern countries (known as "global south") with the US-led system (known as global north) which is seen as exploitative, double standard and discriminative in the application of justice.

The controversy over Indonesia's joining BRICS cannot be separated from the concerns of Western countries – as they have clash of interests and ideologies against Russia and China. BRICS considers as revisionist movement or a group of countries that are dissatisfied with the system currently built by the West, as they carry the vision of a 'post-Western world' which seeks to end Western hegemony in global governance, especially in aspects of the international financial economy. Russia has repeatedly tried to take the lead by calling to abandon the US dollar as a means of transactions. BRICS also formed the New Development Bank (NDB) as an alternative financing for developing countries besides the World Bank and IMF.

Inevitably, today's world order faces a strong legitimacy crisis, with BRICS and other alternative blocs offering a framework for weakening the dominance of the US and the G7 countries. Specifically for BRICS, on paper the BRICS countries represent 45% of the world's population, while the G7 countries (United States, Germany, Canada, France, Great Britain, Italy and Japan) only represent 10%. BRICS countries also represent 35% of global GDP, while the G7 is only 30%. Even though today BRICS is mostly used by Eastern powers (Russia and China), its popularity increased during the Russo-Ukrainian War, as well as the heating up of the Gaza crisis in the Middle East.

Indonesia as a Muslim country, which claims to have a "free and active foreign policy", should not look to the Western or Eastern blocs, but only to alternative blocs

that represent ISLAM. When they (non-Muslim countries) openly admit the flaws in the world order and clearly state the urgency of the birth of a new world order, why don't we Muslims think in that direction? They dare to build alternative power blocs and offer alternative ideas, why not Muslim countries offering Islamic vision? In fact, Islam has a rich historical experience spanning centuries and had an influence on the world order. Indonesia should use its free and active foreign policy to return to Islam, neither West nor East, but only Islam. As Allah Ta'ala says in Surah Al-Ma'idah Verse 50: ﴿أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ﴾ ***“What is the law of Jahiliyah that they desire, and whose (law) is better than Allah's (law) for those who believe?”***

O Muslim Rulers! The world stage is starting to vacuum, will Muslims be ready to fill the gap? Realizing that the current destructive world order of kufr is the fruit of the capitalist system and which is maintained and supported by America, we see that America is busy with its internal problems and is not ready to get involved in any external conflict. Russia also continues to bleed in Ukraine, as well as China with its myriads of domestic problems.

This is the time! a unique and ripe time for Muslims to offer ISLAM and bring the change that this dying world needs and establish Islam on this earth. God willing, we will see with our own eyes the fulfillment of Rasulullah (saw)'s prophetic promises: Tamīm ad-Dāri (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: I heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) say: «لَيَبْلُغَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرُ مَا بَلَغَ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَلَا يَتْرُكُ اللَّهُ بَيْتَ مَدْرٍ وَلَا وَبَرٍ إِلَّا أَدْخَلَهُ اللَّهُ هَذَا الدِّينَ بِعِزٍّ عَزِيزٍ أَوْ بِذُلٍّ ذَلِيلٍ عِزًّا يُعِزُّ اللَّهُ بِهِ الْإِسْلَامَ وَذُلًّا يَذِلُّ اللَّهُ بِهِ الْكُفْرَ» ***“Indeed, this matter will reach everywhere the night and day have reached. Allah will not leave a dwelling in a city or a desert except that He will make this religion enter therein, thus honoring the honorable or humiliating the humiliated; an honor which Allah will bestow on Islam, and a humiliation which Allah will inflict on disbelief.”*** Tamīm ad-Dāri used to say: I recognized this within members of my household; those of them who embraced Islam enjoyed good, honor, and high standing, and the disbelievers among them were subject to humiliation, disgrace, and Jizyah (protection tax). [Narrated by Ahmad, Musnad Ahmad - 16957]

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