Policy Summary
Workshop on 'Pluralism, Coexistence and Conflict
Majority and Minority in Muslim Scocieties'
The Harvard University Initiative on Contemporary Muslim Societies &
Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies
Cambridge, MA, October 27-29, 2011

Policy Implications and Challenges for Majority-Minority Ethnic and Religious Accommodation in Indonesia

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Policy Summary

Reflecting on Indonesian experience in the subject discussed, a number of policy recommendation can be suggested, such as the following:

1.The adoption of 'non-confessional' basis of the state such as Pancasila in the Indonesian case. With Pancasila—a de-confessional basis of the state—majority-minority relations are arranged not on the religious and ethnic considerations. This kind of 'de-confessional' basis of the state can accommodate religious and ethnic differences regardless the number of respective followers. Therefore, as much as possible, the adoption should be avoided of religion as the basis of the state that will lead to constitutional domination of the majority at the expense of minority groups. By the same token should be avoided the adoption of a 'not-

religiously friendly' or worse, an 'anti-religious' basis of the state that would result in the imbalance of relations and, in turn, in conflicts among the adherents of different religions—particularly between majority and minority groups.

2. Adoption may be recommened of other accommodative non-religious state principles such as the principle of *bhinneka tunggal ika*, or unity in diversity, in the Indonesian case. Again, this principle can accommodate religious and ethnic diversity and plurality that exist in the nation-state. This kind of multicultural principle is in fact 'politics of recognition', by which principle all different religious and ethnic groups can live in peaceful co-existence, mutual respect and harmony.

3.The strengthening of moderate mainstream religious groups that in the Indonesian case are represented by religious-based organizations such as the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU, Muhammadiyah and many other similar Muslim organizations, and also non-Muslim groups. These religious organizations also play an important role as 'religious-based civil society' since they are self-organized, self-funded, and independent vis-a-vis the state; they are a mediating and bridging force between society on the one hand and the state on the other. The empowerment of these organizations contributes to further strengthening of social cohesion and harmony.

4.The strengthening and empowerment of intra- and inter-religious dialogs at national, regional and local levels that contribute significantly to the strengthening of mutual understanding as well as to peaceful resolution of conflict when it does occur. These religious dialogs should

be conducted by council of religious groups—formed voluntarily by each and all religious groups. In addition, the state should also sponsor and facilitate the formation and the work of a 'semi-government' institution (such as the Forum for Religious Harmony in the Indonesian case) that consists of prominent figures as representatives of different religious groups. Members of the Forum meet regularly to discuss and conduct programs to continually strengthen peaceful co-existence and harmony.

5.The strengthening of democracy, democratic institutions, and law enforcement. New democracies like Indonesia, should further consolidate democracy that guarantee equal participation of each and every citizen regardless of religious and ethnic affiliation. Democratic institutions should also be further consolidated in order to strengthen civic culture and civility among people. At the same time, consolidated democracy provides political platform for peaceful resolution of conflict that can occur among different religious and ethnic groups. At the same time, fair and just law enforcement should be also guaranteed, so that all people are equal and protected before the law.