

IIS Researcher Among Parties Advocating for Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty

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UGM Institute of International Studies (IIS) has partnered with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) since 2013 to advocate the prohibition of nuclear weapons in the world.

IIS researcher Muhadi Sugiono said the first involvement of IIS in the campaign was through the Oslo Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in 2013. Since then, IIS has organized various regional meetings, attended by government representatives, academics, and civil society, to discuss nuclear disarmament diplomacy strategies and conception based on humanitarian arguments.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was adopted by 122 nations at the UN General Assembly in New York in 2017 and entered into force in January this year. For this success, ICAN received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017.

“Universitas Gadjah Mada, through the Institute of International Studies, is part of this grand coalition. IIS participated in various ICAN’s diplomacy and advocacy activities that helped bring



about the adoption of the treaty on 7 July 2017,” explained Muhadi.

He added that although this legal framework did not necessarily wipe nuclear weapons off the face of the earth, the treaty is a crucial first step towards realizing humankind’s dream of living without the threat of nuclear weapons. The key to the successful adoption, he continued, was by shifting the perspective on nuclear weapons, which ironically was previously associated with peace. The essence of ICAN’s disarmament movement was to change the discourse and meaning of nuclear weapons or defense instruments into an existential threat to humankind that would bring about extinction.

“Finally, after more than 75 years, humanity’s aspirations for a world free of nuclear weapons are underpinned by a legal framework,” he added.

According to Muhadi, being part of a major change that will affect the future of humanity is a valuable opportunity. It may review the role of social scientists and emphasize the need to build bridges between academia and activism.

“The dichotomy needs to be reexamined. Involvement in humanitarian diplomacy for nuclear disarmament teaches us not to regard the world of academia and the world of activism as two opposing worlds,” said Muhadi.

Author: Gloria

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