

UGM Held International Conference on Religion's Awakening in South East Asia

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Yogyakarta- In the past 15 years, religious community in South East Asia has experienced drastic changes in religious, political, economic and social life, including the awakening of religious movements along with reform and democratization movements.


Against this background, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS-Yogya) together with Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies (CRCS) UGM, in cooperation with Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU), Georgetown University and Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs (ICRWA), Boston University will hold an international conference and research entitled *International Conference and Research on the Resurgence of Religions in Southeast Asia, 1997-2011*.

"Conference and research on the awakening of religions in South East Asia will be held from 4-8 January 2011 and will be attended by 40 experts from many countries," said Dr. Siti Syamsiyatun, Director of ICRS Yogyakarta, on Tuesday (21/12) at Stana Parahita, UGM. On that occasion, Siti was accompanied by Prof. Dr. Bernard Adeney-Risakotta, International Representative of ICRS, and Dr. Wening Udasmoro, Associate Director of ICRS.

Several experts are John Esposito (professor on International Affairs and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, USA), Robert Hefner (professor on anthropology and Director of Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs at Boston University, USA), Amina Rasul (Director of Philippine Council on Islam and Democracy, the Philippines), Osman Bakar (Deputy CEO of International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies, Malaysia), Imtiyaz Yusuf (Head of Religion Department, Graduate School of Philosophy and Religion, Assumption University, Thailand), and Vineeta Sinha (Associate Professor at Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore).

"Besides, there will be no less than 60 invitees from among students and activists from all over Indonesia and 80 from academic and religious communities," she emphasized.

Meanwhile, Dr. Bernard Adeney-Risakotta, added that the aim of the conference and research is to create dialogue among experts from various backgrounds of religion and culture from different regions in the world, particularly South East Asia.



The conference is also to create understanding on the relation between religious revitalization and changes in politics, social matters and economy and to provide basic interpretation that maps interaction between religious community and social changes in South East Asia during the past fifteen years based on empirical research.

“The event is also to explain the similarities and differences among various religious movements in South East Asia and to give understanding about various religious responses to the challenge of social, cultural, politic and economic transformation in the region,” Bernard said.

Meanwhile, according to Dr. Wening Udasmoro, the main focus of the conference and research is to answer questions about how religious revitalization has influenced and been influenced by political, social and economic life in South East Asia for the past 15 years.

“For 4 days, the speakers will interact and be involved in the process of planning and research about the sub-focus that has been prepared that will produce a book entitled *The Resurgence of Religions in Southeast Asia: 1997-2011*,” said Wening.

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