PIMPINAN PUSAT
GERAKAN PEMUDA ANSOR

Jl. Kramat Raya No. 65A Jakarta Pusat 10450, Telp./Fax. 021-3162929
Website : www.ansor.or.id |email : sekretariat@ansor.or.id

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Subject : **LETTER OF INSTRUCTION REGARDING GERAKAN PEMUDA ANSOR DECLARATION ON HUMANITARIAN ISLAM**

To the Honorable:
Mr. C. HOLLAND TAYLOR
GP ANSOR INTERNATIONAL EMISSARY FOR THE UNITED NATIONS, AMERICAS AND EUROPE
at –
his present location

Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb. – May the peace and blessings of God be upon you.

Greetings to our dear friend and companion. May you always be under the guidance and protection of God—great and glorious is He!—and may He ease the burden of your daily activities, amen.

We are sending you a copy of a Special Document**,** which is entitled **Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Declaration on Humanitarian Islam**. This Declaration was adopted at the International Gathering of Ulama ("*Halaqah*") held on 21 – 22 May 2017 at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul 'Ulum, Tambak Beras in Jombang, East Java.

We are transmitting a copy of the Declaration to you, along with this letter of instruction and assignment of responsibility, so that you may convey the Declaration to various international parties as you deem necessary and appropriate, and discuss its ramifications with them.

We wish to thank our dear friend and companion for his attention to this matter, and for his cooperation with the Ansor Central Board.

Wallahul Muwafiq Ila Aqwamith Thariq – May God guide us to the straight path [and] Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb. may the peace and blessings of God be upon you.

CENTRAL BOARD
GERAKAN PEMUDA ANSOR

General Chairman,

H. YAQUT CHOLIL QOUMAS

General Secretary,

ABDUL ROCHMAN

Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Declaration on Humanitarian Islam

Towards the Recontextualization of Islamic Teachings, for the Sake of World Peace and Harmony Between Civilizations

Pondok Pesantren (*Madrasah*) Bahrul 'Ulum
Jombang, East Java, Indonesia, May 21 – 22, 2017

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Compassionate

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ (الأنبياء : 107)

"And We sent you (Muhammad) for no purpose other than to be a blessing for all creation." (QS. Al-Anbiya` 21:107)

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ (رواه البيهقي)

"I have been sent only to perfect moral character and virtue." (Hadith, *Sunan Al-Baihaqi*)

وَأَنفِقُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ وَلاَ تُلْقُواْ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوَاْ إِنَّ اللّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (البقرة : 195)

"And spend in God's cause, and let not your own hands throw you into destruction; and persevere in doing good; behold, God loves the doers of good." (QS. Al-Baqara 2:195)

عَلَى الْعَاقِلِ أَنْ يَكُوْنَ عَارِفًا بِزَمَانِهِ مُرِيْدًا بِرَبِّهِ مُقْبِلًا بِشَأْنِهِ

"It is in the nature of a wise man to perfectly understand his era, to seek for God's acceptance and to orient himself to the future." ~ Sayyidina Ali

"The greatest challenge facing the contemporary Muslim world is to bring our limited, human understanding of Islamic law into harmony with its divine spirit—in order to reflect God's

mercy and compassion, and to bring the blessings of peace, justice and tolerance to a suffering world." ~ H.E. Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid, Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (1984 – '99) and 4th President of the Republic of Indonesia

"*Shari'a,* properly understood, expresses and embodies perennial values. Islamic law, on the other hand, is the product of *ijtihad* (interpretation) which depends on circumstances (*al-hukm yadur ma'a al-'illah wujudan wa 'adaman*) and needs to be continuously reviewed in accordance with ever-changing circumstances, to prevent Islamic law from becoming out of date, rigid and non-correlative—not only with Muslims' contemporary lives and conditions, but also with the underlying perennial values of *shari'a* itself." ~ H.E. Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid

"Everything is changing, so we ourselves must change. The *ulama* must change, because failure to do so will only lead to shame and embarrassment." ~ Kyai Haji Maemun Zubair, Senior Advisor to the Nahdlatul Ulama Supreme Council

"In my opinion the Qur'an must provide solutions for humanity—not only for Muslims but for the West as well. 'I (God) sent you (Muhammad) to be nothing but a source of universal love and compassion' (Qur'an 21:107). What does that mean? All creation, and all humans, including those who do not believe (in Islam) should feel that love and compassion. This will truly require a mental revolution, a paradigmatic shift in (Muslims') thought processes, or else we'll remain trapped in our current dilemma." Dr. A. Syafii Maarif, Former Chairman, Muhammadiyah Central Board

"Let's not denigrate earlier interpretations of the Qur'an. The mere existence of a new interpretation is all the reaction we need to generate (towards what went before). I think that if we speak purely of interpretation and scholarly knowledge, there won't be a problem. Especially if our purpose is truly to ascertain how the Qur'an can be relevant in our present age. Because people are always saying that the Qur'an is valid for all times and all places. But if antiquated interpretations are applied in our present age, of course those living today will be disoriented and confused." ~ Kyai Haji A. Mustofa Bisri, Chairman of Bayt ar-Rahmah li ad-Da'wa al-Islamiyah Rahmatan li al-'Alamin and Former Chairman of the Nadhlatul Ulama Supreme Council

"Fourteen centuries ago, in the only use of the word *shari'at* in the Qur'an, God states that humanity was given 'a (broad) path of direction (*shari'atin min al 'amri*)' (QS. al-Jāthiyah 45:18). This path of moral guidance and wisdom leads to fulfilling the purpose of human life: to know the spiritual nature and true dimensions of reality, the essence of which is Love. This path is summarized in *Sūrah Maryam* 19:96: 'Truly, those who attain to faith (having cognized that spiritual reality) and work toward healing and reconciliation (*ṣāliḥati*), the All Compassionate will endow with love.' Muslims are also warned: 'O you who have attained to faith! If you ever abandon your faith, God will in time bring forth [in your place] people whom He loves and who love Him – humble towards the believers, self-confident towards all who deny the truth: [people] who strive hard in God's cause, and do not fear to be censured by anyone who might censure them: such is God's favour, which He grants unto whom He wills. And God is infinite, all-knowing' (QS. al-Māʿidah, 5:54). Love is the essence of Islam." ~ Shaykh Kabir Helminski

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ يَجْرِيْ عَلَى التَّقْدِيْرِ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ لَا نَعْرِفُ التَّقْدِيْرَ إِلَّا بَعْدَ الْوَقَعِ فَعَلَيْنَا الْاِخْتِيَارُ وَعِنْدَ اللهِ الْاِخْتِيَارُ فَمَنْ وَافَقَ اخْتِيَارُهُ بِاخْتِيَارِاللهِ فَهُوَ سَعِيْدٌ

"Everything that occurs is destiny, but we don't actually know what is destined until it occurs. Thus we have a religious duty to carefully choose our goals and the actions we employ to achieve them. God, too, has His goals and methods for achieving them (which manifest as destiny). Anyone whose goals and actions are aligned with those of God, is a fortunate human being. ~ Shaykh al-Habib Zeyn bin Ibrahim bin Sumaith Ba'alwy

Gerakan Pemuda Ansor (GP Ansor) and Bayt ar-Rahmah li ad-Da'wa al-Islamiyah Rahmatan li al-'Alamin hosted an international gathering of *ulama* (Islamic scholars) on 21 and 22 May 2017 at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul 'Ulum in Tambak Beras, Jombang, East Java—birthplace of the Nahdlatul Ulama and its young adults movement, GP Ansor.

After extensive discussion and consultation with experts in a variety of related fields who participated in this gathering of *ulama*, GP Ansor has resolved to adopt the **"Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Declaration on Humanitarian Islam,"** as follows:

Part I:
The Context

1. In the theory of classical Islamic law (*usul fiqh*), religious norms (*ahkam*; singular, *hukm*) constitute a response to reality. The purpose of religious norms (*maqasid al-shari'ah*) is to ensure the spiritual and material well-being of humanity.

2. The authoritative Sunni jurists, Imam al-Ghazali and Imam al-Shatibi, identified five primary components of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, viz., the preservation of faith, life, progeny, reason and property.

3. Religious norms may be universal and unchanging—e.g., the imperative that one strive to attain moral and spiritual perfection—or they may be "contingent," if they address a specific issue that arises within the ever-changing circumstances of time and place.

4. As reality changes, contingent—as opposed to universal—religious norms should also change to reflect the constantly shifting circumstances of life on earth. This was in fact the case during the early centuries of Islam, as various schools of Islamic law (*madzhab*) emerged and evolved. For the past five centuries, however, the practice of *ijtihad* (independent legal reasoning, employed to create new religious norms) has generally lapsed throughout the Sunni Muslim world.

5. When contemporary Muslims seek religious guidance, the most widely-accepted and authoritative reference source—indeed, the standard of Islamic orthodoxy—is the corpus of classical Islamic thought (*turats*)—and especially *fiqh* (jurisprudence)—that reached its peak of development in the Middle Ages and was then frozen in place, largely unchanged to the present day.

6. A wide discrepancy now exists between the structure of Islamic orthodoxy and the context of Muslims' actual (lived) reality, due to immense changes that have occurred since the teachings of orthodox Islam grew ossified towards the end of the medieval era.

7. This disjunct between key tenets of Islamic orthodoxy and the reality of contemporary civilization can, and often does, lead Muslims into physical, moral and spiritual danger, if they insist upon observing certain elements of *fiqh*, regardless of their present context. Among the complex issues that lie at the heart of this discrepancy are:

    - Normative practices governing relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, including the rights, responsibilities and role of non-Muslims who live in Muslim-majority societies, and vice versa;
    - Relations between the Muslim and non-Muslim world, including the proper aims and conduct of warfare;
    - The existence of modern nation states and their validity—or lack thereof—as political systems that govern the lives of Muslims; and
    - State constitutions and statutory laws/legal systems that emerged from modern political processes, and their relationship to *shari'ah*.

8. Social and political instability, civil war and terrorism all arise from the attempt, by ultraconservative Muslims, to implement certain elements of *fiqh* within a context that is no longer compatible with said classical norms.

9. Any attempt to establish a universal Islamic state—*al-imamah al-udzma* (the Great Imamate), also known as *al-khilafah* (the Caliphate)—will only lead to disaster for Muslims, as one aspirant battles with another for dominion of the entire Islamic world.

10. The history of Islam following the death of the Prophet's (saw.) son-in-law, Sayyidina Ali, demonstrates that any attempt to acquire and consolidate political/military power in the form of a Caliphate will inevitably be accompanied by the slaughter of one's opponents, and tragedy for the Muslim community as a whole, particularly at the outset of a new dynasty.

11. When this effort is fused with the orthodox injunction to engage in offensive war against non-Muslims—until they convert or submit to Islamic rule, so that the entire world may be united beneath the banner of Islam—this constitutes a summons to perpetual conflict, whose ever-widening appeal to Muslims is rooted in the very history and teachings of Islam itself.

12. Indeed, authoritative elements of *fiqh* describe such conflict as a religious obligation—which, at times, is incumbent upon the Muslim community in general, and others, upon every Muslim adult male, depending on the circumstances involved—for these religious norms emerged at a time when conflict between Islam and non-Muslim neighboring states was nearly universal.

13. If Muslims do not address the key tenets of Islamic orthodoxy that authorize and explicitly enjoin such violence, anyone—at any time—may harness the orthodox teachings of Islam to defy what they claim to be the illegitimate laws and authority of an infidel state and butcher their fellow citizens, regardless of whether they live in the Islamic world or the West. This is the bloody thread that links so many current events, from Egypt, Syria and Yemen to the streets of Mumbai, Jakarta, Berlin, Nice, Stockholm and Westminster.

14. Civil discord, acts of terrorism, rebellion and outright warfare—all pursued in the name of Islam—will continue to plague Muslims, and threaten humanity at large, until these issues are openly acknowledged and resolved.

15. Clearly, the world is in need of an alternative Islamic orthodoxy, which the vast majority of Muslims will embrace and follow.

16. The question that confronts humanity—Muslims and non-Muslims alike—is: how can we encourage, and ultimately ensure, that such an alternative not only arises, but becomes the dominant orthodoxy?

The History of Efforts to Recontextualize Islamic Teachings Within the Malay Archipelago

17. In contrast to the disjunct between key tenets of Islamic orthodoxy and the actual reality that exists in much of the Muslim world, Indonesia has been blessed by the historic example of those, known as the *Wali Songo* (or "Nine Saints"), who proselytized *Islam Nusantara* ("East Indies Islam"). These Nine Saints and their followers stressed the need to contextualize Islamic teachings and adapt these to the ever-changing realities of space and time, while presenting Islam not as a supremacist ideology or vehicle for conquest, but rather, as one of many paths through which humans may attain spiritual perfection.

18. In line with their teachings, Islam gradually took root throughout much of the East Indies Archipelago, contributing to the depth and beauty of preexisting Nusantara civilization while preserving, rather than disrupting, social harmony.

19. The Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and its young adults movement, GP Ansor, stand heir to this noble tradition. For nearly a century, NU theologians have developed an extensive body of religious discourse that not only secures the legitimacy of Indonesia as a multi-religious and pluralistic nation state, but may also serve as a "pilot project" that demonstrates the feasibility of cooperation between *ulama* and statesmen to develop theologically-legitimate modern socio-political systems that promote the welfare of Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

20. During its 27th national congress held in Situbondo, East Java in 1984, the elected chairman of the NU Supreme Council, Kyai Haji Achmad Shiddiq, established a

theological framework for the concept of brotherhood that was not limited to Muslims (*ukhuwwah islamiyah*), but also encompassed all the citizens of a nation (*ukhuwwah wathaniyah*) and, indeed, the brotherhood of all humanity (*ukhuwwah basyariyah*).

21. In 1992—at a National Gathering of Religious Scholars held in Lampung, under the leadership of H.E. Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid—the NU explicitly acknowledged that the changing context of reality *necessitates* the creation of new interpretations of Islamic law and orthodox Islamic teaching.

22. At this same Congress, the NU issued a formal decree stating that if the Muslim community cannot find individuals who meet the exacting criteria of a *mujtahid* (one qualified to exercise independent reasoning to create Islamic law), then *ulama* must assume the burden of responsibility and perform collective *ijtihad* (the use of independent reasoning to formulate Islamic law), which is called "*al-istinbath al-jama'iy*."

23. *Ulama* have endowed the Indonesian nation state (NKRI) with profound theological legitimacy, by advancing a number of strong religious arguments in its favor. The theological rationale that Indonesian *ulama* employed to legitimize NKRI were the product of new *ijtihad*, which cannot be found within the authoritative texts of *fiqh* from the canon of classical Islamic thought.

24. Moreover, this new *ijtihad* succeeded at securing the support of an overwhelming majority of Indonesian Muslims, while simultaneously helping to shape their religious views and mentality.

A Threat to All Humanity

25. The Islamic world is in the midst of a rapidly metastasizing crisis, with no apparent sign of remission. Among the most obvious manifestations of this crisis are the brutal conflicts now raging across a huge swath of territory inhabited by Muslims, from Africa and the Middle East to the borders of India; rampant social turbulence throughout the Islamic world; the unchecked spread of religious extremism and terror; and a rising tide of Islamophobia among non-Muslim populations, in direct response to these developments.

26. Most of the political and military actors engaged in these conflicts pursue their competing agendas without regard to the cost in human lives and misery. This has led to an immense humanitarian crisis, while heightening the appeal and dramatically accelerating the spread of a de facto Islamist revolutionary movement that threatens the stability and security of the entire world, by summoning Muslims to join a global insurrection against the current world order.

27. In other words, the crisis that engulfs the Islamic world is not limited to armed conflicts raging in various and sundry regions. Due to the transcendent value ascribed to religious

belief by the vast majority of Muslims, the competition for power in the Islamic world necessarily includes a major sectarian/ideological (i.e., religious) component.

28. Various actors—including but not limited to Iran, Saudi Arabia, ISIS, al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, Qatar, the Muslim Brotherhood, the Taliban and Pakistan—cynically manipulate religious sentiment in their struggle to maintain or acquire political, economic and military power, and to destroy their enemies. They do so by drawing upon key elements of classical Islamic law (*fiqh*), to which they ascribe divine authority, in order to mobilize support for their worldly goals.

29. Mirroring this phenomenon, Western populists, Hindu nationalists and Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka and Myanmar often cite the identical elements of Islamic orthodoxy, and the behavior of Muslims, to justify their perception of Islam as a subversive political ideology, rather than as a religion deserving of constitutional protections and respect.

The 2016 ISOMIL Nahdlatul Ulama Declaration Identified the Primary Cause of this Rapidly Escalating Crisis

30. As the International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL) Nahdlatul Ulama Declaration, promulgated in May of 2016, explicitly states:

> 8. The Nahdlatul Ulama regards specific modes of interpreting Islam (*tafsir*) as the most significant factor causing the spread of religious extremism among Muslims.
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> 9. For many decades past, various governments in the Middle East have exploited religious differences, and a history of enmity between sects, without regard to the consequences thereof for humanity at large. By "weaponizing" sectarian differences, these governments have sought to exercise both soft and hard power, and exported their conflict to the entire world. These sectarian propaganda campaigns have deliberately nurtured religious extremism, and stimulated the spread of terrorism throughout the world.
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> 10. This spread of religious extremism, and terrorism, is directly contributing to the rise of Islamophobia throughout the non-Muslim world.
>
> 11. Certain governments in the Middle East derive their political legitimacy from precisely those problematic interpretations of Islam that underlie and animate religious extremism and terror. These governments need to develop an alternate source of political legitimacy if the world is to overcome the threat of religious extremism and terror.
>
> 12. The Nahdlatul Ulama is prepared to help in this effort.
>
> 15. The Nahdlatul Ulama calls upon people of goodwill of every faith and nation to join in building a global consensus not to politicize Islam, and to marginalize those who would exploit Islam in such a way as to harm others.

16. The Nahdlatul Ulama will strive to consolidate the global *ahlusunnah wal jamaah* (Sunni Muslim) community, in order to bring about a world in which Islam, and Muslims, are truly beneficent and contribute to the well-being of all humanity.

A Critical Juncture

31. Whether conscious or not, willing or not, Muslims face a choice between starkly different visions of the future. Will they strive to recreate the long-lost ideal of religious, political and territorial unity beneath the banner of a Caliphate—and thus seek to restore Islamic supremacy—as reflected in their communal memory and still firmly entrenched within the prevailing corpus, and worldview, of orthodox, authoritative Islam? Or will they strive to develop a new religious sensibility that reflects the actual circumstances of our modern civilization, and contributes to the emergence of a truly just and harmonious world order, founded upon respect for the equal dignity and rights of every human being?

32. The first choice obviously leads in the direction of cataclysmic—or, to use the language of Sunni and Shiite extremists, *apocalyptic*—global conflict. To imagine the devastation that would ensue, one need not contemplate the likelihood of Muslims prevailing in an existential struggle with the non-Muslim world, whose military powers include the United States, Russia and China.

33. Any effort to consolidate political and military leadership of the entire Muslim world would, in and of itself, unleash havoc on an immense scale. Nuclear proliferation, mass urbanization, the fragile, interconnected nature of the world economy and the geographic dispersal of Muslims guarantee that any such attempt would threaten the very pillars of civilization itself.

34. The second choice—to develop a new religious sensibility that reflects the actual circumstances of our contemporary world—demands an altogether different type of courage, as well as a vast depth of wisdom and knowledge of the world we inhabit. For it requires Muslims to reevaluate a number of obsolete concepts that remain firmly entrenched within Islamic orthodoxy; develop new religious teachings suitable to the modern era; and mobilize the political support necessary to establish an alternative religious authority that is capable of propagating and defending these new teachings as they gradually come to be accepted and observed in practice by the Muslim community as a whole, and eventually constitute a *new* authoritative orthodoxy.

Part II:
The Road Map

35. The strategy and actions required to address the rapidly escalating crisis within the Islamic world extend far beyond the intellectual sphere, and cannot be reduced to a simple formula of developing new theological ideas that are capable of winning a debate with those who adhere to old ideas. Any global effort to recontextualize (i.e., reform) problematic elements of orthodox Islamic teaching will inevitably fail if not embedded within, and accompanied by, a serious, long-term socio-cultural, political, religious and educational campaign to transform Muslims' understanding of their religious obligations, and the very nature of Islamic orthodoxy.

36. Although *ulama* (Muslim religious scholars) are vital to this endeavor, they cannot accomplish this mission alone. For we live in a world characterized by intimidation and violence, in which governments' monopoly on the use of force is being challenged daily by extremist groups, often subsidized by rival governments that view Islam—and especially, key elements of *fiqh*—as the most potent weapon available to attack and destroy their enemies.

37. Furthermore, a majority of governments in the Muslim world seek to maintain active control of Islamic institutions and what is taught therein. In light of these circumstances, governments that are prepared to adopt a wise and humane approach to the crisis within Islam must join this endeavor, as primary actors, if it is to succeed. Conversely, those that interfere in the domestic affairs of other nations—particularly in the field of religion—must be held accountable for their actions.

38. No nation has a right to manipulate and abuse the noble teachings of religion as a weapon in its competition with rival powers.

39. Key elements of a coordinated, long-term effort to address the rapidly metastasizing crisis within the Islamic world include:

    - Identification and containment of the threat;
    - Conflict resolution;
    - New theological discourse (*ijtihad*) to recontextualize Islamic teachings for the modern era;
    - Development and adoption of new educational curricula throughout the Islamic world; and
    - Grassroots movement(s) to build societal consensus and the political will necessary to resolve the crisis.

Identification and Containment of the Threat

40. No progress can be made towards neutralizing a threat, unless it is understood and identified.

41. It is false and counterproductive to claim that the actions of al-Qaeda, ISIS, Boko Haram and other such groups have nothing to do with Islam, or merely represent a perversion of Islamic teachings. They are, in fact, outgrowths of Wahhabism and other fundamentalist streams of Sunni Islam.

42. For more than fifty years, Saudi Arabia has systematically propagated a supremacist, ultraconservative interpretation of Islam among Sunni Muslim populations worldwide. As is evident from the history of the Muslim World League and other Wahhabi *da'wa* (proselytization) entities, it has done so while operating in close coordination with like-minded activists affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, Jamaat-e-Islami and countless other groups that politicize Islam and seek to revive the observance of obsolete tenets of classical Islamic law, which are premised upon perpetual conflict with those who do not embrace or submit to Islam.

43. Saudi efforts to proselytize an ultraconservative view of Sunni Islam accelerated after the fall of Shah Reza Pahlavi in 1979, and the emergence of Shi'ite Iran as an aggressive and profoundly destabilizing force within the realm of Middle East politics.

44. During the 16th century CE/10th century AH, the Safavid dynasty conquered present-day Azerbaijan and Iran, forcibly converting the indigenous population to Shi'ite Islam. This policy helped forge a distinct religious and political identity for Iran vis-à-vis the Safavids' major rivals, the Ottoman, Uzbek and Mughal Empires, which embraced Sunni Islam.

45. The brutality of the Safavids' religious policy—which amounted to a choice between conversion, flight or death—resulted in the wholesale conversion of the vast majority of Farsi- and Azeri-speakers who chose to remain within the borders of the Safavid Empire.

46. When Ayatollah Khomeini established the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, he deliberately fostered an atavistic Shi'ite sense of victimhood, martyrdom, fanaticism and animosity towards those perceived to have betrayed Sayyidina Ali and his descendants. The constitution of the new Islamic Republic of Iran adopted Khomeini's doctrine of absolute *vilayat-e faqih*, or guardianship of the Islamic jurist, which provided a theological rationale for Shi'ite theocracy and the exercise of absolute power by its Supreme Guardian.

47. The manner in which Iran has conducted its foreign policy, since 1979, has profoundly destabilized the Middle East and South Asia, and triggered an ill-advised response from Saudi Arabia—tacitly endorsed by the United States—which has had profound negative consequences for all humanity.

48. The Wahhabi/ultraconservative view of Islam—which is embraced not only by Saudi Arabia and Qatar, but also by al-Qaeda and ISIS—is intricately wedded to those elements of classical Islamic law that foster sectarian hatred and violence.

49. Wahhabism is characterized by extreme animosity towards Shi'ites. It is also characterized by antipathy—at times violent—towards Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists and Sunni Muslims who do not share the Wahhabis' rigid and authoritarian view of Islam.

50. In seeking to mobilize Sunni Muslims in opposition to Iran, Saudi Arabia has unleashed a demon upon the world, which threatens the temporal and spiritual well-being of Muslims. It does so by indoctrinating Muslims in religious hatred, and teaching them to ignore the primary message of Islam as a source of universal love and compassion (*rahmah*). The government of Pakistan has fallen prey to the same temptation, in its perennial competition with India.

51. U.S. government policy ignores the direct correlation that exists between Saudi and Qatari support of ultraconservative Sunni movements, and the spread of terrorism worldwide.

52. As former Indonesian president and Nahdlatul Ulama Chairman H.E. Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid warned the U.S. in 2008: "Moderate Islam will have a greater chance of triumphing over Islamic radicalism, once Western leaders stop trying to accommodate Islamic extremists. The Saudis are playing a deceptive game: they finance the spread of fundamentalist Islam, while in the West they try to show the 'humanist' side of Islam. These things cannot be reconciled."

53. It is essential to strip away the veil of illusion employed by state and non-state actors, whenever and wherever they seek to instrumentalize Islam to pursue their political, economic and military interests.

54. Those who overtly and/or covertly employ problematic tenets of *fiqh* to achieve their worldly objectives must be held accountable and, whenever possible, required to alter their behavior.

55. Iran, Saudi Arabia and Qatar do not tolerate foreign interference in their domestic affairs, especially in regard to religion and politics. No nation in the world should tolerate, nor be subjected to, interference in its domestic affairs by the governments of Saudi Arabia, Qatar or Iran.

56. Saudi opposition to Iran, ISIS and al-Qaeda does not and should not absolve it from responsibility for promoting the very ideology that underlies and animates Sunni extremism and terror.

57. The temporal and spiritual welfare of Muslims, and humanity at large, requires that Saudi Arabia abandon the "global Wahhabization/radicalization" strategy it has employed, to

date, in seeking to contain Iran. It is a fundamental principle of Sunni Islam not to employ evil means to address problems caused by evil.

58. Gerakan Pemuda Ansor encourages the people and nations of the world—who are the collective victims of Saudi and Qatari policy—to demand that these governments stop financing ultraconservative movements, which provide fertile ground for the radicalization and recruitment of Sunni Muslims by terrorist groups.

59. Gerakan Pemuda Ansor further encourages both Muslim and non-Muslim governments to consistently view and adjust their relations with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United States and Iran in light of their actions in regard to Islamist extremism.

60. It is impossible for Islamic scholars to directly hold "bad actors"—whether state or non-state—accountable for their behavior. Likewise, it is impossible for individual governments in the Muslim world, however well intentioned, to accomplish this objective on their own.

61. Altering the behavior of state sponsors of extremist ideology and terrorism will require political will and resolute engagement on the part of major powers—including the United States—and an unusual degree of international cooperation involving politicians, government officials and those who have the expertise required to advise them.

62. At present, such expertise is in woefully short supply in government circles worldwide, especially in North America and Europe.

63. The societal consensus and political will necessary to identify and contain the threat posed by Islamist extremism is non-existent at present.

64. This significantly heightens the risk that when a societal consensus does eventually emerge in the West—under the stress of further devastating terror attacks—it will unite a majority of non-Muslims in hostility to Islam and precipitate widespread ethnic and religious conflict.

65. In light of these circumstances, and to avert the looming threat of global conflict, Gerakan Pemuda Ansor advises Western opinion leaders and policy makers to:

- *First, do no harm*. This entails not advocating or adopting misguided policies, including those which allow extremist movements such as Wahhabism, the Muslim Brotherhood and Jamaat-e-Islami—or their state sponsors, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Pakistan—to dictate, or even significantly influence, the terms of Western engagement with Muslims;

- Recognize that Islamist extremism and terror arise from a complex web of historical, religious, socio-cultural, economic and political factors—all of which require astute and delicate handling.

    - Primary among the historical and religious factors is the long-lost ideal of

religious, demographic, political and territorial unity of the Islamic world, as reflected in Muslims' communal memory and still firmly entrenched within the prevailing corpus, and worldview, of orthodox, authoritative Islam;

- Primary among the economic and political factors is a brutal competition for wealth and power in the Middle East, and the vital role of petrodollars in financing the spread of religious extremism and proxy militant groups;

- Develop a clear understanding of Islam and the wide spectrum of views within Muslim communities worldwide, which range from religious hatred and supremacism to a profoundly humane and spiritual understanding and practice of Islam;

- Institutionalize that understanding, to ensure hard-won expertise will not be lost through personnel turnover;

- Once the requisite expertise is in place, develop coherent short-, medium- and long-term strategies to marginalize and discredit the ideology of religious hatred that underlies and animates terrorism, with a clearly-defined end state: the global ascendency of a pluralistic, tolerant and spiritual understanding of Islam, at peace with itself and the modern world;

- Systematically implement a wide range of programs to operationalize these strategies, in conjunction with pluralistic and tolerant Muslim leaders, and organizations, of impeccable integrity, and with like-minded Muslim governments;

- Continuously refine and revise said programs, and strategies, to incorporate lessons learned through their execution;

- Systematically develop and zealously preserve the societal consensus required to ensure political coherence and consistency in the execution of sound policy over a period of decades, or even generations, until an alternative Islamic orthodoxy has become firmly entrenched.

66. As H.E. Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid wrote in a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed published in December of 2005: "Only by recognizing the problem, putting an end to the bickering within and between nation-states, and adopting a coherent, long-term plan (executed with international leadership and commitment) can we begin to apply the brakes to the rampant spread of extremist ideas and hope to resolve the world's crisis…before the global economy and modern civilization itself begin to crumble in the face of truly devastating attacks.

"Muslims themselves can and must propagate an understanding of the 'right' Islam, and thereby discredit extremist ideology. Yet to accomplish this task requires the understanding and support of like-minded individuals, organizations and governments throughout the world. Our goal must be to illuminate the hearts and minds of humanity,

and offer a compelling alternate vision of Islam, one that banishes the fanatical ideology of hatred to the darkness from which it emerged."

Conflict Resolution

67. Numerous conflicts are underway across the Islamic world, each of which may be readily exploited by ultraconservative Muslims to propagate a narrative that the West and other non-Muslims are at war with Islam, and that Muslims, therefore, have a religious duty to take up arms and defend their co-religionists—and their faith—against the infidels' brutal, unrelenting assault.

68. Muslims who are psychologically and emotionally swayed by this narrative will naturally harbor a sense of grievance and enmity towards non-Muslims.

69. Conflict resolution is essential to defuse this narrative and neutralize its appeal.

70. Conflict resolution should be explicitly framed as a common effort undertaken by sincere people of every faith and nation, in order to prevent atrocities and promote justice, regardless of any individual or collective perpetrator's, or victim's, faith.

71. In other words, conflict resolution should be framed—and sincerely pursued—as a collective interfaith/international effort for the benefit of all humanity, and not be compromised by hypocritical, self-aggrandizing maneuvers conducted by state and/or non-state actors.

72. "Oh you who have attained to faith! Be ever steadfast in your devotion to God, bearing witness to the truth in all equity; and never let hatred of anyone lead you into the sin of deviating from justice. Be just: this is closest to being God-conscious. And remain conscious of God: verily, God is aware of all that you do." (QS. al-Ma'idah 5:8)

New Theological Discourse to Recontextualize Islamic Teachings for the Modern Era

73. The position occupied by the corpus of classical Islamic thought (*turats*) upon the commanding heights of standard Islamic orthodoxy, leads a majority of Muslims to regard the individual components of that canon as absolute, final and unchanging expressions of *shari'ah*, and thus essentially Divine commandments that humans must obey, regardless of logic or the sacrifice required to do so.

74. Within the canon, one frequently encounters referential terms associated with phenomena that actually existed at the time the canon was established, but no longer correspond to any phenomenologically existent entity. In the past, the very existence of these phenomena—e.g., a universal Islamic state (*dawlah islamiyah*) with its single ruler (*imam*) leading the Muslim community in warfare with neighboring non-Muslim

states—gave rise to certain norms, including the logical requirement that only a Muslim become the head (*imam*) of the unified Islamic state.

75. A wide variety of problems occur when contemporary Muslims employ such familiar terms in reference to a world completely transformed by time. In effect, terminology from the past is reflexively employed in reference to a completely new and different reality, often without any awareness that these changed circumstances dictate that Muslims should adapt the norms associated therewith to reflect this new reality.

76. Failure to do so leads some Muslims to reject the authority of the state in which they live; to demand they be governed according to the norms of the past (which they term *shari'ah*); and even to wage war against their fellow citizens in the name of *shari'ah*.

77. It is difficult for contemporary Muslims to conduct *ijtihad* (independent legal reasoning) to establish new norms because this process is obstructed by a number of factors, including:

- The criteria that must be met in order to act as a *mujtahid* (one qualified to exercise independent reasoning to create Islamic law) are so extensive and demanding that they are nearly impossible to fulfill;
- The absence of any significant demand to conduct *ijtihad*, because *usul fiqh* (the methodology of independent legal reasoning employed to create new Islamic law) does not regard changes within the socio-historical context of Muslim society as inherently precipitating or requiring *ijtihad*;
- The study of circumstances surrounding the revelation of individual Qur'anic verses, and of circumstances surrounding the occurrence of individual hadith, is relatively undeveloped, with the result that Muslims' are generally unaware that there is a necessary and inherent link between text and context, whenever one studies the Qur'an and Sunnah.

78. The vast majority of new *ijtihad* that has been conducted over the past century has been marginalized and ignored, because it did not occur through a process that would ensure theological legitimacy and authority for said products of *ijtihad*.

79. Increasingly, Muslims' behavior patterns reflect an obsession with the formal aspects of religion, and the lack of any concern for Sufi concepts and practice that have traditionally played a vital role in elevating Muslims' spiritual character. With the spread of Wahhabism, many such practices are dismissed as *bid'ah* (innovations). This has led to the widespread phenomenon of outwardly religious people with corrupt souls.

80. Historical records within the canon of Islamic orthodoxy—including biographies of the Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace—are dominated by detailed accounts of battles that accompanied the struggle of a new religion seeking to emerge amidst an era, and society, that violently rejected its arrival. Historical records that describe the humane and spiritual dimensions of Islam are scattered and appear

much less frequently. They do not constitute an integral part of the narrative structure of Islamic history, much less the primary narrative thereof.

81. This continues to play a major role in shaping Muslims' mentality up to the present day. As a result, many Muslims feel that Islam is surrounded by threats; mistrust anyone who is not Muslim; and long for political and military supremacy. Spiritual perfection—which constitutes the very essence and goal of religion—falls by the wayside.

82. The great achievements of the Islamic world tend to be viewed in a reductionist manner, as merely the fruit of political and military success, while ignoring the vital role played by the open and mutually enriching inter-civilizational exchange that actually produced these great achievements. On the other hand, the collapse of socio-cultural vitality and the regimes that led Islam to military and political success for over a thousand years is widely attributed to a failure to properly observe religious practices, thereby eliciting God's punishment, while ignoring the reality that this collapse resulted from quite normal and rationally-intelligible processes.

83. This perception fosters a regressive mentality among Muslims, and a tendency to reject the progress achieved by contemporary civilization, including new socio-political structures. It also induces Muslims to reject the richness of diverse cultures, and to pursue the illusory dream of recreating, in the present, a pure model of social, political and cultural perfection that never existed.

84. A social movement and wide-ranging campaign are needed to foster awareness of the relevance of changes to the prevailing socio-historical context, and how these impact the exercise of reason in regards to religious texts—including the treasury of intellectual discourse by *ulama*, and the source of Islamic teachings, namely, the Qur'an and Sunnah.

85. A social movement and wide-ranging campaign are needed to promote Sufism—i.e., the spiritual dimension and practice of Islam.

86. *Ulama*, scholars, academic institutions and other intellectual communities should be encouraged to mobilize all available resources to address the most crucial issues associated with the crisis posed by the enormous disjunct that exists between the insights contained within classical Islamic orthodoxy and the context of modern civilization, through efforts such as:

- Creating a compilation of valuable new ideas that have emerged as an alternative to the traditional canon of Islamic thought—selecting these on the basis of an objective and appropriate academic standard—and fostering the legitimacy and widespread acceptance of said ideas;
- Conduct extensive study leading to the emergence of new discourse regarding the science of Qur'anic interpretation, the science of hadith interpretation, and the methodology through which new religious norms are created, leading to the adoption—within the structure of these scientific disciplines—of flexibility and adapability in response to ever-changing socio-historical circumstances;

- Conduct extensive study in order to position modern socio-political structures as the de facto reality of contemporary civilization, and integrate these within the framework of religious insight, in order to achieve a logical, just and harmonious relationship between Islam and the socio-political establishments that exist in our modern world;

- Conduct extensive study of Islamic history and the life of the Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, in order to develop a more comprehensive narrative, by focusing more attention upon the humane and spiritual dimensions that exist within the available historical sources.

87. Religious and political authorities need to be consolidated, and mobilized, in order to support religious views that promote peace and harmony between civilizations.

Development and Adoption of New Educational Curricula Throughout the Islamic World

88. So long as problematic elements of classical Islamic thought are systematically transmitted from one generation to the next, via state-controlled educational systems, it will be difficult if not impossible for an alternative Islamic orthodoxy to emerge.

89. It is important to note that extremist *madrasahs* in countries such as Pakistan are effectively state-financed and controlled, albeit by Saudi Arabia, Qatar and other donor nations, with the acquiescence and/or active cooperation of the host nation.

90. In order to develop a new religious sensibility that reflects the actual circumstances of our contemporary world, it will be necessary for *ulama*, educators and government officials to collaborate in the development and adoption of new educational curricula, which simultaneously endow students with *akhlakul karima* (noble character and virtues); a broad knowledge of Islamic and world history and philosophy; a firm grounding in scientific disciplines; and the ability to integrate faith and reason, which requires spiritual depth and a degree of wisdom seldom encountered in government-sponsored curricula, but which are of the utmost importance to the future of Islam and of civilization itself.

91. In the words of KH. A. Mustofa Bisri, former Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Supreme Council: “People often claim that reason, and religion, cannot be reconciled. That is completely untrue, and ridiculous…. As I understand things, *ulama* should be intellectuals, and intellectuals should be spiritual. They must work shoulder-to-shoulder, seeking to revive, in our present day and age, the values exemplified by the Messenger of God (saw.). Both these elements must be brought to bear, whether embodied in separate individuals, or unified in one. For example, an intellectual gifted with profound spiritual ability, or an intellectual working side by side with a spiritual *‘alim* (religious scholar). Either way is not a problem. What is vital is that both these values (intellectual and spiritual clarity) function hand in hand, accompanying the

implementation of educational programs, to show how the teachings of Islam may once again serve as a blessing for all humanity. Without strenuous efforts by these combined parties, it is indeed difficult to hope, or expect, that we can achieve this goal."

92. Thus, in addition to acquiring information, the ability to think critically, and the skills necessary to live a practical life, Islamic education should also develop the inner human being. Without the awakening of essential spiritual attributes such as presence (*hudhur*), conscience (*muhasabah*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), awareness of the effects of our actions (*taqwa*) and remembrance of God (*dhikrullah*), we have not fulfilled our destiny as human beings.

93. "He guides to Himself all who turn to Him—those who have faith and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of God—for, truly, in the remembrance of God hearts find rest." (QS. ar-Raʿd 13:28) "…and remembrance of God is surely the greatest of all." (QS. al-ʿAnkabūt 29:45)

94. By incorporating sublime values in early childhood education, and a profound understanding of Islam as *rahmatan li al-ʻalamin* (a source of universal love and compassion), it is possible to inoculate youth against the lure of religious extremism and hatred.

95. Educational curricula that encourage religious tolerance, respect and harmony—based upon the Qur'an and the example of the Prophet himself—will logically precede and facilitate the emergence of a new religious orthodoxy, the broad contours of which will be apparent within said curricula.

Grassroots Movement to Build Societal Consensus and the Political Will to Resolve the Crisis

96. The rapidly escalating crisis within the Islamic world is inextricably linked to political interests and the cynical, inhumane behavior of state and non-state actors, which must be addressed politically.

97. The crisis is also inextricably linked to conflict between Muslim and non-Muslim populations; to obsolete and problematic elements within the corpus of classical Islamic thought; and to failures within the educational systems and curricula employed in much of the Islamic world.

98. Each of these issues must be addressed in an appropriate manner by responsible authorities who are prepared to assume the burden of doing so.

99. Given the complex, sensitive—and, indeed, in many parts of the world, highly controversial and dangerous—nature of the issues involved, it is clear that significant progress can only be made within the context of an emerging societal consensus.

100. There is no reason to expect that political figures in the Muslim world or the West will act decisively, against their own private interests, in order to resolve this crisis. While visionary leaders may do so for a time, the political coherence and sustained effort required to effectively address these complex issues can only emerge as a result of societal consensus.

101. Gerakan Pemuda Ansor is the world's largest Muslim youth (i.e., young adults) movement, with over 5 million members. Of these, approximately 1.7 million belong to *Barisan Ansor Serbaguna Nahdlatul Ulama*, or Banser—an active militia force. GP Ansor constitutes the front line and primary kinetic element within the world's largest Muslim organization—the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)—and the primary vehicle for the grassroots mobilization of NU followers.

102. GP Ansor's principal mission includes the defense of NKRI (the Indonesian nation state); the 1945 Constitution, which established Indonesia as a multi-religious and pluralistic nation; Bhinneka Tunggal Ika ("Oneness Amid Diversity"); and the profoundly spiritual—i.e., *humanitarian*—values of Sunni Islam, which flourished in harmony with pre-existing East Indies civilization and cultures to produce *Islam Nusantara*.

103. On March 30, 2017, GP Ansor announced the launch of a concerted effort to promote Humanitarian Islam, by developing and operationalizing a global strategy to recontextualize the teachings of orthodox, authoritative Islam and thereby reconcile certain problematic elements of *fiqh* with the reality of contemporary civilization, whose context and conditions differ significantly from those in which classical Islamic law emerged.

104. GP Ansor has appointed Emissaries to the Islamic World, and to the United Nations, Americas and Europe, who shall "convey GP Ansor's communiqués to various strategic parties within the international arena, and engage them in dialogue; as well as develop an international network leading to the emergence of a global movement which shall be dedicated to the well-being of humanity as a whole—and to the fostering of a truly global civilization—inspired by Humanitarian Islam, i.e., *Islam rahmatan li al-'alamin*, which serves as a blessing for all creation."

105. In the words of Kyai Haji Yahya Cholil Staquf, General Secretary of the Nahdlatul Ulama Supreme Council: "Humanitarian Islam does not arrive seeking to conquer anyone. It does not come to destroy, like those (extremists) do."

106. The Humanitarian Islam movement is dedicated to facilitating the emergence of societal consensus, among Muslims and non-Muslims alike, to depoliticize the issue of Islam, and prevent the abuse of religion to promote sectarian hatred, supremacism and violence.

107. Building this grassroots movement will require cooperation between key opinion leaders in the fields of religion, pop culture, government, business and the mass media. It

will also require cooperation between countless individuals—whose ethnicity, culture, nationality and faith may vary widely—in service to a shared humanitarian ideal.

108. Religious and cultural figures shall serve as icons for the Humanitarian Islam movement, and as beacons of light attracting others to join.

109. GP Ansor invites public intellectuals to help lay the foundation, and artists to express, the vision of Humanitarian Islam, which is inextricably linked to the emergence of a new reality in which people of every faith and nation renounce the use of religion as a means to justify hatred and violence towards those who adhere to a different faith.

110. The Humanitarian Islam movement is—in and of itself—an expression of this emerging reality, and thus reflects the changing circumstances of the 21st century.

111. To facilitate the emergence of Humanitarian Islam as a global mass movement—and the recontextualization of Islamic teachings for the sake of world peace and harmony between civilizations—Gerakan Pemuda Ansor shall convene a Global Unity Forum and invite representatives of every major religion to join GP Ansor in issuing a public declaration calling for the end of conflict in the name of religion, and renouncing the use of religion to legitimize or promote sectarian hatred, supremacy and violence.

112. From the perspective of *usul fiqh* (the theory of classical Islamic law), this will serve as the legitimate basis for new *ijtihad* that reflects the transformed reality of interfaith relations in the 21st century. The recontextualization of Islamic teachings will, in turn, support efforts to contain religious extremism, resolve conflict and transform educational curricula—thereby fulfilling the purpose of religious norms (*maqasid al-shari'ah*), which is to promote the spiritual and material well-being of humanity.

وَاللهُ يُوَفِّقُنَا فِيْمَا يُحِبُّهُ وَيَرْضَاهُ

May God aid us in the performance of actions that are dear to Him,
and that attract His infinite blessings.

Part III:
Partial List of Documents Consulted by the Committee that Drafted the "Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Declaration on Humanitarian Islam"

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