

Muslim Politics Review

Vol. 4 No. 1, 2025, 1-3

<https://doi.org/10.56529/mpr.v4i1.450>

Foreword

Philips J. Vermonte, A'an Suryana

Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia

Corresponding Email: aan.suryana@uiii.ac.id

This seventh edition of Muslim Politics Review consists of diverse authors and topics. By nationality, the authors are two Filipinos, two Indonesians, one Bangladeshi author, and one author is Australian. We are pleased with this diversity because it enriches the perspectives being delivered to readers by the journal. The topics covered in this issue are also varied: three articles discuss majority-minority relations and how the state and community manage them; one is about the Republic of the Philippines' foreign policy on Palestine and Israel; and another article is about the relationship between the state and a community organization in Indonesia. The final article is about the projection of Indonesia as a middle-power state. These diverse topics broaden readers' intellectual horizons, as well as geographical ones.

The first article, entitled "How Philippine Political Identities Influence Foreign Policy: Examining the Case of Palestine", is timely. At the time of writing (both the article and this foreword), conflict between Israel and Hamas continues to rage. Now, conflict has expanded to a war between Israel and Iran, after Israel first attacked Iran in early June 2025 by using drones and other devices, killing several top Iranian civilian and military leaders. In this context, the first article discusses the Republic of the Philippines' foreign policy on the Israel and Palestine conflict and gives a fresh Filipino perspective on how key political individuals look at the conflict. This article does not only contribute to policy analysis of the contemporary conflict, but also contributes to existing scholarship on the



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

issue. Previous literature on the Philippines' foreign policy toward Palestine and Israel often does not discuss beyond the personal view of the president, or focuses on the state of the Philippines' instinct for survival amid the competition of the world's great powers. This article offers a new perspective, showing that the Philippines' foreign policy toward Israel and Palestine is largely dictated "by the collusion of domestic political elites with the US".

This issue's second and third articles discuss how mass emotion and dangerous speech are manipulated respectively in Pakistan and Bangladesh, resulting in the repression of minority faiths by the majority. The article on Pakistan contributes to the existing scholarship through its use of a social lens (through mass emotion manipulation) in explaining the violence against a minority faith (Christianity); this is in contrast to previous literature that often employs a political lens to explain the repression. Meanwhile, the article on Bangladesh introduces a concept which has not been much discussed before by scholars, that of dangerous speech, which refers to the speech that is used to incite and spread hatred. The author claims that this concept is much more useful in explaining the majority-led repression of the Ahmadiyyah minority in Bangladesh, arguing that the hate speech concept is too broad and ambiguous.

The fourth article, titled "Synodality as a framework for Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Asia", is also related to majority-minority relations. It argues that synodality, which refers to "a process currently employed by the Catholic Church for its renewal and adaptation to contemporary demands", is a useful approach in bridging the divide between the majority and minority and in boosting their relationship. The fifth article is also about religion but it does not analyze the relationship between majority and minority faiths; instead, it focuses more on the relationship between Muhammadiyah (Indonesia's second largest Muslim organization) and the state (the Indonesian government). The article, titled "Navigating the State: Muhammadiyah's Engagement in Indonesian Local Elections", argues that Muhammadiyah remains dependent on state

resources to survive. Last but not least, the final article discusses the continuity and discontinuity of Indonesia's national roles as a middle-power state. It contributes to existing scholarship on the national role conception through case studies of the Bali Democracy Forum and the Global Maritime Fulcrum. The article, titled "Continuity and Discontinuity of National Roles in Middle-Power States: The Case of Indonesia", argues that the Bali Democracy Forum has sustained its relevance in Indonesian foreign policy discourse because its subsidiary role is "institutionalized, internally legitimized, and externally recognized" by the state. This is in contrast to the Global Maritime Fulcrum, which largely disappeared in Indonesia foreign policy discourse because it "lacks adequate domestic anchoring and was vulnerable to role contestation, bureaucratic fragmentation, and shifting political priorities".

This issue's articles provide interesting and new contributions to their respective areas of scholarship, reflecting the paramount aim of this journal. As always, Muslim Politics Review aims to add different perspectives to the literature, resulting in expanded understanding of an array of worldviews.