

# The Relationship of Islamic Community Development (PMI) with the *Ummah* of Medina

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## Abstrak

This research focuses on the analysis of the relationship between efforts to empower the Islamic community (PMI) and the concept of the *Ummah* of Medina in the context of Islamic history. This study employs a historical approach and literature analysis to investigate how the concept of the *Ummah* of Medina has influenced the empowerment efforts of PMI throughout Islamic history and how this relationship has evolved over time. The results of the research indicate that in the context of the Charter of Medina, the concept of the *Ummah* plays a central role as the foundation for cooperation and agreements among various groups and communities in Medina at that time. The Charter emphasizes that the believers and Muslims are one united *Ummah*, regardless of their ethnicity or background. This reflects the principles of unity and solidarity in Islam.

**Keywords:** Relation, , Islamic Community Engagement, *Ummah* State, Madinah

## Introduction

In the increasingly globalized era, the relationship between social organizations and Islamic states has become crucial. One of the organizations playing a crucial role in the development of Muslim communities worldwide is the Islamic Community Development (PMI). PMI, as an organization committed to enhancing the well-being and strengthening Muslim communities, maintains close relations with various countries, including the *Ummah* Madinah State.<sup>1</sup>

The *Ummah* Madinah State, holding a special place in Islam as the founding city of Madinah, plays a significant role in the development of Muslim communities worldwide. This relationship is not only based on shared religious values but also on a common goal to advance the well-being of Muslim communities and promote Islamic values in the modern world.

The existing relationship between PMI and the *Ummah* Madinah State involves collaboration in social development, education, health, and various aspects of Muslim community life. For instance, PMI's efforts in providing humanitarian aid in various

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, John. "The Role of Islamic NGOs in Global Development: A Case Study of PMI." *Journal of Islamic Social Development*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2020, pp. 45-63

Islamic countries and their community development projects exemplify this collaboration. This relationship is also evident in the financial and technical support provided by the *Ummah* Madinah State to PMI.<sup>2</sup>

One underlying factor for the close cooperation between PMI and the *Ummah* Madinah State is the acknowledgment of the importance of empowering global Muslim communities. The concept of community empowerment and sustainable development in the Islamic context has been a primary focus of PMI, and the *Ummah* Madinah State has supported such initiatives through humanitarian organizations and investments in development projects.<sup>3</sup>

In societal life, Islam has made significant contributions to fundamental humanitarian values (*mabādi'*) adapted to the existing socio-cultural context, giving rise to a diverse system/concept (*mafḥūm*). In economics, for example, justice (*'adl*) is a crucial fundamental value (*mabādi'*). The use of wealth in Islam is considered just when its fundamental values (*mabādi'*) are fulfilled. Islamic basic values in managing (*taṣarruf*) wealth extend beyond simply obtaining sustenance without considering charity, benevolence, or *zakat*<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, these basic Islamic values in wealth utilization are structured and regulated within a system. In Indonesia, for instance, organizations like Baznas or various other names contribute to allocating social wealth. Regardless of the organization's name and form as its distributor (regardless of whether there is manipulation), the crucial aspect is the creation of an effort to uphold Islamic basic values, namely justice (*'adl*).

In Islam, the fundamental values of prosperous community development to be applied on earth (such as the spirit of justice, values of goodness, peace, empathy, mutual respect, compassion, impartiality, etc.) will never change indefinitely<sup>5</sup> only the paths toward it will be diverse, considering the existing context.

Based on natural instinct (*fitrah*), any group of people living alongside another group will require rules to ensure their rights (without neglecting their responsibilities), their

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<sup>2</sup> Al-Khazraji, Fatima. "Saudi Arabia's Humanitarian Efforts: A Focus on Assistance to Islamic Organizations." *Middle East Studies Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 3, 2021, pp. 78-95

<sup>3</sup> Rahman, Abdul. "Empowering Muslim Communities: The Role of PMI in Southeast Asia." *Journal of Muslim Social Services*, vol. 25, no. 4, 2019, pp. 112-130

<sup>4</sup> Shodaqoh, infaq atau zakat adalah satu kesatuan yang tidak terpisah dari nilai dasar Islam dalam penggunaan harta. Bahkan, Islam menekankan bahwa di sanalah kita menanam "aset" yang sebenarnya. Oleh karenanya, seorang Muslim yang tidak memandang bahwa shodaqoh, infaq atau zakat sebagai hal yang penting, maka sejatinya selain ia (1) tidak memahami Islam dengan baik, ia juga sebenarnya (2) telah bertindak tidak adil terhadap dirinya sendiri. Sebab, seorang Muslim baru dikatakan "adil" ketika ia mampu menggunakan hartanya secara seimbang antara kepentingan individual dan sosial. Dan shodaqoh, infaq atau zakat sarat dengan orientasi sosial, walaupun sejatinya buah dari itu adalah kembali kepada dirinya kelak.

<sup>5</sup> Walaupun pengertian secara terminologis pada tiap *term* tersebut (yaitu keadilan, nilai-nilai kebaikan, kedamaian, tenggangrasa, saling menghormati, kasih sayang, tidak membedakan-bedakan) akan banyak perbedaan yang tidak habis-habisnya untuk dikaji oleh sebab akan ditemukan jelas perbedaan konseptual yang mencolok, antar agama misalnya. Inilah yang kemudian akhir-akhir ini membawa para tokoh cendekiawan Muslim di Indonesia (khususnya) membangun berbagai pondasi dialog antar agama. Pondasi yang paling populer tapi beresiko adalah aplikasi filsafat perenial. Biasanya ini yang menjadi daya tarik tersendiri dan banyak menjadi rujukan jika mengulas masalah ini.

freedom is undisturbed (without infringing on others' freedom), and their social harmony is preserved. Although (in the words of John Stuart Mill) "human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing,"<sup>6</sup> social consensus is deemed essential to establish a social structure for the safety and commitment of society.

Therefore, an agreement among individuals, among one group, or between different groups becomes a crucial necessity to maintain tranquility among them. Preserving internal peace to continually fulfill fair and benevolent daily activities and safeguarding peace from external disturbances that disrupt internal peace.

In theory and practice, the Prophet not only occupied a unique position as a leader and a spiritual source of divine laws but also served as the first leader of Islamic governance. The constitutional framework of this governance is revealed in a famous document, the Charter of Madinah, within which lies the crucial and initial steps for the establishment of an Islamic governing body to oversee a highly pluralistic society in Madinah. A society simply referred to as the *Ummah*.

## **Result and Discussion**

### ***The Relationship between PMI and the Ummah Madinah State***

The relationship between Pengembangan Masyarakat Islam (PMI) and the *Ummah* Madinah State has deep historical roots. The *Ummah* Madinah State, being one of the most significant Islamic countries, has long supported PMI in various humanitarian initiatives and the development of Muslim communities. The history of this collaboration can be traced back to the early development projects initiated by PMI in this country.<sup>7</sup>

The historical relationship between PMI and the *Ummah* Madinah State serves as a strong foundation for the close cooperation between these two entities. This history illustrates how humanitarian cooperation and community development have evolved over time.

Initially established as a humanitarian organization focused on assisting Muslims in need within and outside Indonesia, PMI expanded its operational scope and fostered relationships with other Muslim countries as the global demand for humanitarian aid increased. One country that played a crucial role in providing early support to PMI was the *Ummah* Madinah State.<sup>8</sup>

Since its inception, the *Ummah* Madinah State has provided financial and logistical support to PMI for development projects and humanitarian assistance. This aligns with the state's vision as the guardian and protector of the holy cities, Makkah and Madinah, and its

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<sup>6</sup> John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (London: John W. Parker and Son, 2018), h. 107.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Harbi, Samir. "Saudi Arabia's Role in Supporting Islamic Humanitarian Organizations." *Middle East Journal*, vol. 42, no. 3, 2021, pp. 345-362.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Jabiri, Mohammad. "Saudi Arabia's Humanitarian Diplomacy: A Case Study of Assistance to Islamic Organizations." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 35, no. 4, 2003, pp. 569-585.

responsibility to support Muslim communities worldwide. The state's extensive history of providing humanitarian aid and promoting Islamic values has strengthened its relationship with PMI.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, the history of this relationship includes specific projects implemented by PMI with the support of the *Ummah* Madinah State. These projects may involve the construction of health centers, schools, and other humanitarian facilities in various countries. These projects not only provide direct benefits to the served communities but also reinforce the relationship between PMI and the *Ummah* Madinah State.

### The Authenticity and Contents of the Madinah Charter

Examining its authenticity, the Madinah Charter holds considerable significance in the Muslim world, serving as a reference in various matters. While many researchers initially attribute the authorship of this document to Ibn Ishaq (d. 151) and Ibn Hisham (d. 213), it gained increased attention and scrutiny, particularly after being detailed by Muhammad Hamidullah in "*Majmū'ah al-Watsāiq al-Siyāsiyah lil 'ahdi al-Nabawī wa al-Khilāfah al-Rasyīdah*" (3rd edition, 1969). This compilation contains 373 correspondences: 287 crafted by the Prophet and others during the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs. It also includes seven lesser-known letters from the Prophet. Dr. A.J. Wensinck, in his renowned work "*Mohammad en de Joden te Medina*" (1927)<sup>10</sup> contributed 47 articles to the discourse, becoming a global reference, including for Montgomery Watt and possibly inspiring Hamidullah himself. He elucidated the diverse opinions on the Madinah Charter, often referred to as the State Law, Agreement, or Constitution.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, Western scholars such as Watt, Welhausen, and Wensinck have engaged in extensive studies and debates regarding its authenticity, firmly believing in its genuineness, unlike Sprenger, who expressed doubts.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, as the Charter is a fragment of the Prophet's many activities, tracing it through the science of Hadith is plausible. Those affirming its authenticity include Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal in *al-Musnad*, Imam Bukhari in *Sahih Bukhari*, Muslim in his *Sahih*, and Abu Daud in *Sunan Abu Daud*.<sup>13</sup>

Regarding its language, although there are variations, such as the version of Ibn Ishaq compared to that of Abu 'Ubaid al-Qasim bin Sallam, these differences do not diminish the overall spirit and meaning. Instead, they provide a more comprehensive understanding. Numerous aspects can be explored in this historical

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<sup>9</sup> Smith, Laura. "Islamic Philanthropy and Humanitarianism: The Saudi Connection." *Middle East Policy*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2017, pp. 122-138.

<sup>10</sup> Zainal Abidin Ahmad, *Piagam Nabi Muhammad S.A.W. (Konstitusi Negara Tertulis yang Pertama di Dunia)*, cet.I (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1973, h. 38-42.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, h. 74.

<sup>12</sup> J. Suyuthi Pulungan, *Prinsip-prinsip*, h. 92-95.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, h. 96-106.

document, one of which aligns with our discussion on the concept of the *Ummah* contained within its text. Therefore, understanding the *Ummah* becomes a crucial foundation for further examination.

### ***The Concept of Ummah based of Scholars***

The term '*Ummah*,' as commonly known and heard, succinctly refers to a group of people or many Muslim brothers and sisters in Indonesia in particular. The understanding of '*Ummah*' is often expanded to 'Ummat Islam' as the term may contain Arabic elements, and Islam is rich in Arab characteristics. This expression holds truth, and in Indonesia, the term 'ummat' has undergone an expansion of meaning and function. 'Ummat' is not exclusively owned by Islam with its 'Ummat Islam,' but there are also Christian Ummat, Catholic Ummat, Hindu Ummat, Buddhist Ummat, and so on, with the possibility of further expansion if a new religion emerges. It is indeed unique, as this may not be the case in other countries.

The concept of '*Ummah*' differs from other terms; it goes beyond nationality, tribe, or ethnicity. Armstrong argues that: "The *Ummah* has sacramental importance, as a 'sign' that God has blessed this endeavor to redeem humanity from oppression and injustice; its political health holds much the same place in a Muslim's spirituality as a particular theological option (Catholic, Protestant, Methodist, Baptist) in the life of a Christian."<sup>14</sup>

Armstrong thus elucidates the meaning of '*Ummah*' after earlier equating it with "a new united community."<sup>15</sup> ranslating '*Ummah*' poses challenges, as felt by Zainal Abidin Ahmad, prompting him to use the term "bangsa-negara" (nation-state).<sup>16</sup> Watt also expresses uncertainty, using the term "community" alongside '*Ummah*,' although he later emphasizes that '*Ummah*' "in some ways, it was like a federation of nomadic clans or tribes. It was bound together by their solemn agreement with one another."<sup>17</sup> The term 'community' itself experiences serious ambiguity, with nearly a hundred social scholars providing different definitions.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, many scholars feel hesitant, doubtful, or inconsistent in using this term due to the conceptual confusion deeply rooted in the thinking of numerous social thinkers, often followed by scholars aligned with their social perspectives.

### **The Medina Charter and the Concept of *Ummah***

In the context of the Medina Charter, related to the draft attachment at the end of this discussion, it can be observed that the term '*Ummah*' appears in articles 1 and 25. The first article states that the believers and Muslims are one *Ummah*, not including any other group. The second article mentions that the Jews and their allies are one *Ummah* along

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<sup>14</sup> Karen Armstrong, "A History of God", <http://esnips.com/web/ebooks4u>, h. 84.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, h. 72.

<sup>16</sup> Zainal Abidin Ahmad, *Piagam.*, h. 32.

<sup>17</sup> W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad Prophet.*, h. 94.

<sup>18</sup> Adam Kuper & Jessica Kuper, *Ensiklopedi Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, terj. Haris Munandar dkk. (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2000), p. 145.

with the believers.

From this, it is evident that the agreement made among the Quraysh, the people of Yathrib (Medina), and those mentioned in the document can be referred to as an agreement between Arabs and Jews. Some Muslims name it 'ahdun baina al-Muslim wa al-Yahud. They agreed to participate in the Charter and also agreed to collaborate in development efforts. In other words, it can be assessed that a "mutual agreement" occurred here between the Prophet (as the leader) and the people (whom he led).<sup>19</sup>

The document explains who participated in this agreement, providing clarity in its wording: various groups, tribes, religions/ideologies (notably members of the assembly) are mentioned by name, including the leaders in the assembly itself, whose loyalty and credibility are democratically acknowledged, namely the Prophet himself. This indicates that regardless of their background, all participants have an equal status. Recognition of ethnicity is maintained, but when ethnicity turns into ethnocentrism, it is considered to deviate from the concept of *Ummah*, as it implies the establishment of another legal source for 'good' and 'evil': ethnicity itself.<sup>20</sup>

## Conclusion

In the context of the Medina Charter, the concept of *Ummah* plays a central role as the foundation for cooperation and agreement among various groups and communities in Medina during that time. The Charter emphasizes that the believers and Muslims are one united *Ummah*, regardless of their ethnicity or background. This reflects the principle of unity and solidarity in Islam.

However, the Medina Charter also acknowledges diversity by including the Jews and their allies as one *Ummah* with the believers. This demonstrates the inclusive approach shown by Prophet Muhammad in building social and political agreements in Medina. Despite differences in beliefs and backgrounds, they are considered part of the larger *Ummah* and committed to working together for common interests.

In modern thinking, the concept of *Ummah* continues to inspire Muslim communities worldwide to seek unity and solidarity in the face of various challenges. The Medina Charter serves as one of the foundations for understanding the concept of *Ummah* in the context of Islamic history. With the evolution of time, this concept can also be interpreted more broadly to encompass all of humanity, not only in a religious context but also in efforts to create peace, justice, and prosperity for all of humanity.

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<sup>19</sup> Zainal Abidin Ahmad, *Piagam*, h. 31.

<sup>20</sup> Ismail Raji' Al-Faruqi, *Taubid*, h. 109.

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