

## Message

### Ms. Alissa Qotrunnada Munawaroh Wahid, Recipient of the 1st Niwano Peace Prize Visionary Award

It is with great humility and honor for me to receive the Niwano Peace Prize for Visionary Award from Niwano Peace Foundation. This award is not only an acknowledgement of the struggle in a road less travelled, but a recognition that we are travelling on the right track, even though it is not an easy path.

When I started to work for peace and humanity, the motivation was very personal. My father, President Wahid or Gus Dur as he is fondly known in Indonesia, passed away at the end of 2009. His demise was mourned by millions of people, but mostly by rakyat (little people) and vulnerable groups of Indonesia. He was a champion for humanity, peace and justice. He was a shelter for those most vulnerable, and they asked where would they go whenever they need support now that Gus Dur has passed away. So my siblings and I decided to continue his work.

With the help of a group of people, we started the Gusdurian Network in 2011, with nothing but a spirit and a strong call from the people. We did not have financial or other resources. We did not even have a single concrete idea of how the network would be like. We only knew that we had to start, as the challenges got bigger and bigger, and more vulnerable groups needed support.

As of now, the network has chapters in more than 150 cities, with thousands of grass-roots actors promoting humanity and justice. We worked with faith leaders, youth, women, journalists, state actors, civil society organizations, and local communities to build bridges and create holding spaces for people. We advocate for constitutional and human rights, attending to local cases up to national strategic issues.

We still do not have any financial machine, we still work with resource limitation. But this has become the best lesson I learned: when you have vision and sincere intentions for the people, the people would join your initiative with commitment and willingness to share consequences. And when the people own the movement, then the movement would grow bigger than your own personal capacity. The key is building the credibility that comes from staying true to the noble intention and the integrity of the movement.

Sometimes peace feels so far out to realize, because like Gus Dur always said: "Peace without justice is only an illusion." And justice is always elusive and sometimes even feels unattainable. But the price of not fighting is too big and too hard on our conscience than leading a life of comfort, at the cost of the lives of the vulnerable people. We embrace the pain of struggle, learning the dance of progress: one step ahead, two steps back, three steps ahead, one step back, and on and on our journey towards a better world for all.

Along with the growth of the work, my personal motivation transforms into a bigger calling to serve humanity in my best capacity. The challenges keeps getting bigger, so does the work. As a leader for the movement, the most important personal task is to nurture a growth mindset and be a lifelong learner that will help me to learn new skills and wisdom. I believe leaders are learners, for themselves and for the people they lead.

This NPP Visionary Award brings me to a reflection of our journey. We have never set our work to get any award, to receive it is a great honor. It is a recognition that we move in the right direction. It renews our spirit to serve the people, especially those most marginalized and vulnerable. It re-strengthens our pledge to fight for a better world. A just and peaceful world. For this, on behalf of all gusdurian from every cardinal direction in this world, we thank you from the bottom of our heart.

May peace be upon us and this world.

Ms. Alissa Qotrunnada Munawaroh Wahid  
(National Director, Gusdurian Network)

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