

Muslim scholars: Suicide attacks violate Islamic principles

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Seventy prominent scholars from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Indonesia issued the fatwa, or edict, at a conference in Indonesia on ways to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan.

From left to right, Head of Indonesian Ulema Council Ma'ruf Amin, Head of Ulema Council of Afghanistan Qiamuddin Kashaf, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, his deputy Jusuf Kalla, and Chairman of Pakistan's Council of Islamic Ideology Qibla Ayaz attend the opening ceremony of the trilateral religious meeting among Islamic scholars from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Indonesia at the presidential palace in Bogor, West Java, Indonesia. (AP Photo)

Muslim scholars from three countries issued an edict today saying that violent extremism and terrorism, including suicide attacks, are against Islamic principles, in an effort to convince the Taliban to end their violence.

Seventy prominent scholars from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Indonesia issued the fatwa, or edict, at a conference in Indonesia on ways to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The Taliban urged Islamic clerics to boycott the Bogor conference and warned Afghan clerics, "Do not afford an opportunity to the invading infidels in Afghanistan to misuse your name and participation in this conference as means of attaining their malicious objective." Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo, who opened the one-day meeting, stressed Indonesia's commitment to helping build peace in the country. Jokowi said the conference was part of Indonesia's efforts to encourage the role of Islamic clerics, or ulema, in promoting peace in Afghanistan.

"Through the voice of ulema, mainly from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Indonesia, presumably the spirit of brotherhood for peace in Afghanistan can be strengthened," Jokowi said.

He said "ulema are the agent of peace; they have the power to form the face of peaceful people." In a declaration, the scholars said Islam was a religion of peace and denounced all kinds of violent extremism and terrorism.

"We reaffirm that violence and terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, as violent extremism and terrorism in all its forms and manifestation including violence against civilians and suicide attacks are against the holy principles of Islam," the declaration said.

The conference at the presidential palace in Bogor, a West Java town on the outskirts of Jakarta, was organized by the Indonesian Ulema Council.

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