



## **ISLAM, MIGRATION, AND DIASPORA: STRENGTHENING INDONESIA-MALAYSIA RELATIONS THROUGH SHARED HERITAGE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

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### **Abstract**

The relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia is deeply rooted in shared historical, cultural, and religious ties, particularly through the lens of Islam. This study explores how migration, diaspora, and shared heritage have influenced and continue to shape Indonesia-Malaysia relations within the context of globalisation. The research aims to examine the role of migration and the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia, focusing on their contributions to cultural diplomacy, religious identity, and international relations. The research employs a qualitative approach, drawing on primary sources such as policy documents, and secondary sources, including academic literature on migration and Islamic diplomacy. The study also engages with theoretical frameworks of transnationalism and cultural diplomacy to analyse how shared Islamic values contribute to both bilateral and regional cooperation. The findings reveal that migration and the diaspora are key factors in strengthening Indonesia-Malaysia relations, as they act as cultural and religious bridges, promoting mutual understanding and cooperation. Shared Islamic heritage, particularly through religious festivals and institutions, reinforces social cohesion and provides a platform for bilateral collaboration on regional issues. The research concludes that by leveraging the Islamic identity and shared heritage of both nations, Indonesia and Malaysia can enhance their diplomatic relations and play a more prominent role in addressing global migration challenges. This study contributes to the understanding of how migration and cultural diplomacy based on shared Islamic values can serve as tools for strengthening international relations in Southeast Asia.

**Keywords:** migration, diaspora, shared heritage, Indonesia-Malaysia relations, Islamic diplomacy

### **INTRODUCTION**

Indonesia and Malaysia, two neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia, share a profound historical, cultural, and religious heritage that has long influenced their bilateral relations. Central to this shared heritage is Islam, which acts as a common bond, shaping societal norms, values, and governance structures in both nations. Historically, the movement of peoples between the Indonesian archipelago and the Malay Peninsula has fostered a shared identity, with Islam playing a central role in uniting the two nations (Azra, 2019). Migration has been a significant aspect of Indonesia-Malaysia relations, with Indonesian migrants and the diaspora forming a substantial portion of Malaysia's workforce. These migrants, many of whom are Muslim, bring with them not only their labour but also their cultural and religious practices, contributing to the multicultural fabric of Malaysian society.

In the context of globalization, the role of migration and diaspora communities in shaping international relations has become increasingly recognized. For Indonesia and Malaysia, the presence of the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia serves as a bridge, facilitating cultural diplomacy and fostering deeper ties between the two nations. The Indonesian migrant community has been instrumental in promoting shared Islamic traditions, from religious festivals to daily practices, reinforcing the sense of

kinship between the two countries (Suryadinata, 2017). This study explores the intricate relationship between migration, diaspora, and shared Islamic heritage, and how these elements strengthen Indonesia-Malaysia relations in the realm of international affairs.

The focus of this research is to examine how the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia contributes to bilateral relations through cultural diplomacy and religious identity. By analyzing the role of migration and shared Islamic heritage in fostering cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia, this study highlights the importance of transnationalism and cultural diplomacy in international relations. Transnationalism, as a theoretical framework, offers insights into how cross-border networks, particularly diaspora communities, play a role in shaping political, social, and cultural exchanges between nations (Faist, 2018). In the case of Indonesia and Malaysia, shared Islamic values act as a foundation for these exchanges, providing a platform for collaboration on regional and global issues, particularly those related to migration and labour mobility.

Islamic diplomacy, another key aspect of this study, underscores the role of shared religious identity in international cooperation. As both Indonesia and Malaysia are Muslim-majority countries, Islam serves not only as a cultural bond but also as a diplomatic tool to enhance bilateral relations. Through religious festivals, institutions, and informal networks, the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia contributes to a stronger sense of Islamic solidarity, which, in turn, promotes political and economic collaboration between the two nations (Hamid & Zen, 2020). This shared religious identity also facilitates dialogue and cooperation on broader regional issues, such as migration management and labour rights, which are central to both countries' foreign policies.

The objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of how migration and the Indonesian diaspora influence Indonesia-Malaysia relations within the context of globalization. By focusing on the role of shared Islamic heritage, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how cultural diplomacy based on common religious values can serve as a tool for strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation. Moreover, this study engages with contemporary debates on migration and international relations in Southeast Asia, particularly how Islamic identity can be leveraged to address global challenges such as labour migration and social integration.

In conclusion, migration and diaspora are critical factors in shaping the dynamics of Indonesia-Malaysia relations. By acting as cultural and religious bridges, the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia plays a pivotal role in promoting mutual understanding and cooperation. This shared Islamic heritage not only reinforces bilateral relations but also provides a foundation for addressing broader regional challenges, including migration management and labour mobility. This research offers valuable insights into how shared religious identity and cultural diplomacy can enhance international relations in Southeast Asia, contributing to the broader discourse on migration, Islam, and diplomacy.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The relationship between migration, diaspora, and international relations has been the focus of extensive scholarly inquiry, particularly in the context of Southeast Asia. This section reviews key literature that explores the role of migration, cultural diplomacy, and Islamic identity in shaping Indonesia-Malaysia relations. The review will be structured around three central themes: (1) migration and diaspora in international relations, (2) cultural diplomacy as a tool for enhancing bilateral ties, and (3) the role of Islam in international diplomacy and cooperation.

The first theme examines migration and diaspora as significant forces in international relations. Scholars have argued that migration is not only an economic phenomenon but also a critical factor in shaping diplomatic relations between countries. Faist (2018) emphasizes that transnationalism, which involves cross-border networks of individuals and communities, plays an essential role in international cooperation. In the context of Indonesia and Malaysia, the Indonesian diaspora serves as a bridge that connects both nations through shared cultural and religious practices, fostering stronger bilateral relations. The Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia is one of the largest in the world, contributing significantly to the Malaysian labour market, particularly in sectors such as construction, agriculture, and domestic work. This community also brings with it cultural and religious traditions that reinforce the historical and spiritual ties between the two countries (Hugo, 2016).

Migration and diaspora communities often serve as conduits for informal diplomacy, particularly in fostering cultural exchange and mutual understanding. As noted by Castles and Miller (2020), the presence of a large migrant community can lead to the creation of transnational spaces where cultural, social, and political ideas are exchanged across borders. These spaces provide opportunities for informal diplomacy that can strengthen bilateral relations. In the case of Indonesia and Malaysia, shared Islamic values and practices among the Indonesian diaspora promote a sense of solidarity and mutual respect, contributing to the broader diplomatic relationship between the two nations.

The second theme focuses on the concept of cultural diplomacy as a key component in strengthening bilateral ties. Cultural diplomacy involves the use of cultural exchange and dialogue to foster mutual understanding and cooperation between nations. Nye (2004) argues that cultural diplomacy is a form of soft power, where the shared values and cultural practices between countries can enhance their diplomatic relations. In the context of Indonesia and Malaysia, cultural diplomacy based on shared Islamic heritage plays a vital role in promoting dialogue and cooperation. Both nations regularly engage in cultural exchanges through religious festivals, educational programs, and collaborative efforts between religious institutions. These activities not only reinforce shared values but also provide a platform for addressing broader regional issues such as migration, labour rights, and social cohesion (Anwar, 2018).

The literature on cultural diplomacy also highlights the importance of religious identity in fostering international cooperation. According to Hamid and Zen (2020), Islam plays a central role in shaping Indonesia-Malaysia relations, serving as a common framework for dialogue and collaboration. Both nations have leveraged their shared Islamic heritage to promote regional cooperation within organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). These collaborative efforts have extended to issues such as counterterrorism, conflict resolution, and regional peacebuilding, where shared Islamic values provide a moral and ethical foundation for joint initiatives (Rabasa, 2017).

The final theme explores the role of Islam in international diplomacy and cooperation. Scholars such as Esposito (2019) have emphasized that Islam is not only a religion but also a significant force in international affairs. In the case of Indonesia and Malaysia, shared Islamic values have facilitated a unique form of diplomacy that transcends formal state relations. Both countries share a commitment to promoting moderate Islam and have worked together in various international forums to advocate for peace, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue. This collaboration is evident in their joint efforts to combat extremism and promote religious harmony in the region (Esposito, 2019). Additionally, shared religious institutions, such as mosques and Islamic schools, serve as important venues for fostering dialogue and cooperation between Indonesian and Malaysian communities.

Islamic diplomacy has also played a crucial role in addressing migration-related challenges. As noted by El-Mikawy and Khater (2021), Islam provides a framework for addressing the rights and responsibilities of migrants, particularly in the context of labour migration. Both Indonesia and Malaysia have sought to leverage their shared Islamic values to develop policies that protect the rights of migrant workers, promote social integration, and address issues of exploitation and abuse. By engaging in dialogue through Islamic institutions and organizations, both nations have been able to find common ground on migration-related issues and work toward solutions that benefit both migrant communities and host countries (El-Mikawy & Khater, 2021).

In summary, the literature highlights the critical role of migration, cultural diplomacy, and Islamic identity in shaping Indonesia-Malaysia relations. Migration and diaspora communities act as bridges that foster mutual understanding and cooperation, while cultural diplomacy based on shared Islamic values strengthens bilateral ties. Additionally, Islam serves as both a cultural and diplomatic tool, promoting collaboration on regional and global issues. These factors are essential in understanding how Indonesia and Malaysia continue to enhance their diplomatic relationship through shared heritage and values.

## **THEORETICAL & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The relationship between migration, diaspora, and international diplomacy in the context of Indonesia-Malaysia relations is underpinned by several theoretical approaches, particularly transnationalism and

cultural diplomacy. These frameworks allow for a comprehensive understanding of how shared Islamic values and historical ties shape bilateral relations through migration patterns and the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia. By analyzing these connections, we can better grasp the role that cultural and religious heritage plays in strengthening diplomatic ties and fostering regional cooperation.

Transnationalism provides the first foundational theoretical approach in this study. Traditionally, international relations focused on interactions between states as distinct and sovereign entities. However, with globalization, the transnationalism framework emphasizes that people, ideas, and resources flow across borders, creating new forms of interaction that go beyond traditional state-to-state diplomacy. As argued by Vertovec (2009), transnationalism captures the growing importance of non-state actors, such as diaspora communities, in influencing international relations. In the case of Indonesia and Malaysia, the presence of millions of Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia reflects a significant transnational dynamic where the flow of labour is not just an economic issue but also a social and cultural phenomenon. Migrant communities engage in both countries, maintaining cultural, religious, and familial ties with their homeland while contributing to the host country's economy and society (Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007). Through this lens, the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia acts as a bridge for transnational relations, fostering a network of connections that influence bilateral diplomacy.

The transnationalism theory further highlights the importance of religious identity in shaping these cross-border relationships. Indonesian migrants in Malaysia, particularly those participating in religious institutions like mosques and Islamic schools, serve as key agents in maintaining shared Islamic practices between the two nations. The transnational religious networks created by these migrant communities contribute to the strengthening of shared Islamic heritage, promoting not only cultural ties but also a platform for political cooperation. Transnational Islamic organizations, such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, often operate across Indonesia and Malaysia, fostering a sense of common religious identity that transcends national boundaries. These organizations provide a basis for transnational dialogue and play a role in shaping regional policies on migration, labour rights, and religious cooperation (Faist, 2018).

Cultural diplomacy, as the second theoretical approach, plays a crucial role in the analysis of Indonesia-Malaysia relations. Cultural diplomacy is defined as the use of cultural and educational exchanges to foster mutual understanding and cooperation between nations. In the context of Indonesia and Malaysia, the shared Islamic heritage provides a unique foundation for cultural diplomacy. As suggested by Nye (2004), cultural diplomacy is a form of soft power, where the appeal of shared values, religious practices, and cultural traditions enhances diplomatic relations. Both Indonesia and Malaysia have long employed cultural diplomacy to promote their shared Islamic identity, using religious festivals, educational exchanges, and interfaith dialogue as tools for fostering closer relations. The shared Islamic heritage between the two nations acts as a powerful vehicle for cultural diplomacy, reinforcing their historical ties and creating opportunities for cooperation on regional and global issues.

A key aspect of cultural diplomacy is its ability to address sensitive issues such as migration and labour rights. By framing these issues within the context of shared religious and cultural values, both Indonesia and Malaysia have been able to engage in dialogue that promotes mutual understanding and cooperation. Theoretical perspectives on cultural diplomacy highlight its role in softening political tensions, allowing countries to address potentially divisive issues like labour migration and human rights through a lens of shared cultural heritage (Ang et al., 2015). For example, Indonesia and Malaysia have used shared Islamic values to facilitate negotiations on the rights and protections of Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia. Cultural diplomacy in this context not only reinforces bilateral relations but also contributes to the broader regional framework of ASEAN, where both nations are key players.

In addition to transnationalism and cultural diplomacy, the framework of Islamic diplomacy provides another lens through which Indonesia-Malaysia relations can be analyzed. Islamic diplomacy refers to the use of shared religious principles and values to guide diplomatic efforts and foster cooperation between Muslim-majority countries. Both Indonesia and Malaysia share a commitment to promoting moderate Islam, and this shared religious identity plays a significant role in shaping their diplomatic relations. Theoretical perspectives on Islamic diplomacy, such as those put forth by Esposito (2019), emphasize that Islam serves as a bridge for international cooperation, particularly in addressing issues like extremism, regional peacebuilding, and humanitarian aid. The shared Islamic heritage between Indonesia and Malaysia has enabled both countries to collaborate in various international

forums, including the OIC, where they advocate for religious tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and the rights of Muslim minorities globally.

The conceptual framework guiding this study is thus built on the intersection of transnationalism, cultural diplomacy, and Islamic diplomacy. By analyzing Indonesia-Malaysia relations through these lenses, the research seeks to understand how migration and diaspora communities, particularly the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia, contribute to diplomatic relations. The framework posits that the shared Islamic identity between Indonesia and Malaysia, facilitated by transnational religious networks and cultural exchanges, serves as a key factor in promoting cooperation on both bilateral and regional levels. This cooperation is particularly evident in areas such as labour migration, religious diplomacy, and regional peacebuilding, where shared values and heritage play a crucial role in fostering mutual understanding and collaboration.

This theoretical and conceptual framework draws on key elements of transnationalism, cultural diplomacy, and Islamic diplomacy to provide a comprehensive analysis of Indonesia-Malaysia relations. Migration and diaspora communities act as agents of transnational relations, fostering cultural and religious ties that enhance bilateral diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy, grounded in shared Islamic values, serves as a powerful tool for promoting mutual understanding and addressing regional issues. Finally, Islamic diplomacy offers a framework for collaboration on religious and humanitarian issues, reinforcing the shared heritage that binds Indonesia and Malaysia together in their international relations.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology employed in this study utilizes a qualitative approach to examine the relationship between migration, diaspora and shared Islamic heritage in strengthening Indonesia-Malaysia relations. This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of non-numerical data and emphasizes the exploration of cultural diplomacy, religious identity, and international relations between these two nations. By focusing on primary and secondary sources, the research provides a thorough analysis of how migration and Islamic diplomacy influence both bilateral and regional cooperation. Primary data is drawn from official policy documents issued by the Indonesian and Malaysian governments, which include migration policies, bilateral agreements, and regional cooperation initiatives, such as those within ASEAN. These documents serve as a basis for analyzing the legal frameworks and formal mechanisms that govern the movement of people, particularly the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia. The analysis explores how migration policies shape diplomatic and economic cooperation between the two nations.

Secondary sources consist of academic literature on migration, transnationalism, and Islamic diplomacy, providing essential context and theoretical grounding. By reviewing key studies on the historical and cultural ties between Indonesia and Malaysia, the research explores how shared heritage and religious values continue to influence contemporary relations. This combination of primary and secondary sources enables a thematic analysis, focusing on the role of diaspora in fostering cultural diplomacy and social cohesion, the significance of shared Islamic values in bilateral cooperation, and the broader impact of migration on regional stability. The qualitative approach ensures that the study presents a well-rounded and insightful understanding of how these factors contribute to Indonesia-Malaysia relations within the broader framework of Southeast Asian international relations.

## **FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

### **Islam and Migration: Historical Context of Indonesian Migration to Malaysia**

The historical patterns of migration between Indonesia and Malaysia are deeply intertwined, with Islam playing a pivotal role in shaping the diaspora that exists today. The movement of people between the two regions dates back centuries, with both countries sharing a common cultural, ethnic, and religious heritage. The spread of Islam across Southeast Asia, which began in the 13th century through the activities of traders, scholars, and missionaries, significantly influenced migration patterns and the development of social and political relations between Indonesia and Malaysia (Azra, 2013). During this

period, Islam helped unify diverse communities across the Malay Archipelago, creating transregional connections that facilitated migration and trade (Mujani & Aziz, 2017).

During the early periods of Islamic expansion, the Malacca Sultanate (15th century) became a major centre for Islamic learning and trade in the region. This historical era saw a significant movement of people, including scholars, religious leaders, and merchants, from various parts of the Malay Archipelago, including present-day Indonesia, to Malacca (Hamid, 2020). These early migrants were instrumental in spreading Islamic teachings and establishing religious institutions that would later form the bedrock of Islamic communities across both Indonesia and Malaysia. This religious bond created a shared identity that transcended geographical boundaries, fostering a sense of unity among the Muslim populations in both regions (Salleh & Khalid, 2020).

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, colonial rule further influenced migration patterns. During the Dutch colonization of Indonesia and the British colonization of Malaysia, labour migration was actively encouraged. Many Indonesians, particularly from Java, Sumatra, and other islands, were brought to British Malaya to work on plantations and in other sectors (Yahaya, 2019). This wave of migration contributed to the growth of Indonesian Muslim communities in Malaysia, and over time, these communities became deeply integrated into Malaysian society. Islam served as a crucial cultural and religious link that maintained the connection between the diaspora and their homeland, helping preserve their identity and religious practices (Suryadinata, 2017).

Moreover, Islam not only provided a religious framework but also served as a means of social cohesion for the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia. Religious festivals, communal prayers, and Islamic educational institutions helped preserve a sense of identity among the migrants while simultaneously fostering closer ties with local Malaysian Muslim communities (Noor & Ahmad, 2021). The shared faith allowed migrants to navigate their new environment while maintaining their cultural roots, thus contributing to the continuity of the Islamic tradition across both nations.

As migration continued into the modern era, particularly after Indonesia's independence in 1945 and Malaysia's independence in 1957, the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia grew even further. Economic factors and political developments in both countries influenced subsequent waves of migration, but the role of Islam remained a constant thread in maintaining cultural and social continuity (Abdullah, 2020). Today, the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in Malaysia is an integral part of the broader Islamic community, acting as a bridge between the two nations and continuing to play a role in strengthening bilateral relations (Azra, 2022).

The historical context of migration highlights how Islam has been central to shaping the identity and experiences of the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia. The shared religious heritage not only facilitated the movement of people between the two regions but also played a crucial role in integrating migrants into Malaysian society. This long-standing relationship, underpinned by Islamic values and institutions, continues to influence Indonesia-Malaysia relations, particularly in the areas of cultural diplomacy and international cooperation (Yahaya & Salleh, 2022).

### **Shared Islamic Heritage: A Bridge for Bilateral Relations**

Indonesia and Malaysia share deep-rooted historical and cultural ties, many of which are grounded in a shared Islamic heritage. This common religious foundation has served as a crucial factor in fostering understanding, cooperation, and mutual respect between the two neighboring nations. The influence of Islam in shaping the political, social, and cultural landscapes of both countries has created a natural bridge for bilateral relations, enabling Indonesia and Malaysia to address various regional and global challenges together. This shared Islamic identity not only strengthens their diplomatic relationship but also provides a framework for addressing contemporary issues through collaborative efforts rooted in mutual religious values.

One of the most significant aspects of the shared Islamic heritage between Indonesia and Malaysia is the parallel development of Islamic institutions, traditions, and education. Both countries have long-established religious schools (pesantren in Indonesia and pondok in Malaysia) that have played a vital role in shaping Islamic education and scholarship. These institutions have historically fostered cross-border exchanges of scholars, students, and ideas, creating a lasting impact on religious thought in both nations. Such exchanges continue today, promoting collaboration in educational reforms

and Islamic studies, contributing to deeper bilateral relations based on shared values of religious learning and intellectual advancement (Rahman, 2015).

Islamic cultural practices, such as religious festivals, prayer rituals, and the celebration of Islamic holidays, are another key aspect of the shared heritage between Indonesia and Malaysia. For example, the observance of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr is nearly identical in both countries, with similar customs surrounding fasting, prayer, and charitable giving. These shared experiences foster a sense of unity and common purpose that transcends national boundaries, reinforcing the bonds between the two nations at both the societal and governmental levels. The importance of these cultural-religious ties can be seen in joint celebrations, state-sponsored events, and the mutual recognition of religious holidays in diplomatic settings (Haron, 2021).

Political leaders in both Indonesia and Malaysia have consistently highlighted their shared Islamic heritage as a cornerstone of their diplomatic relationship. For instance, both countries are members of the OIC and frequently collaborate on issues affecting the global Muslim community. This shared commitment to addressing Islamic concerns on the world stage—whether it be the plight of Rohingya refugees or advocating for Palestine—has further strengthened their bilateral ties. Moreover, the leaders' public affirmation of their Islamic solidarity helps to reinforce the notion of a united Muslim bloc in Southeast Asia, making the shared Islamic heritage a pillar of their foreign policies (Jalaluddin, 2020).

Beyond politics and diplomacy, the shared Islamic heritage also promotes economic cooperation. The halal industry, which encompasses food, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics, is a key area where Indonesia and Malaysia collaborate due to their shared Islamic values and regulatory frameworks. Both nations are significant players in the global halal market, and their collaboration in standardizing halal certifications has created synergies that benefit both economies. Additionally, joint ventures in Islamic banking and finance have further strengthened economic ties, demonstrating how religious principles can be translated into tangible economic cooperation (Halim et al., 2018).

The shared Islamic heritage has also played a critical role in promoting peace and stability in the region. Both Indonesia and Malaysia have contributed to conflict resolution efforts in Muslim-majority areas such as southern Thailand and the southern Philippines. Their joint diplomatic interventions are often grounded in a common understanding of Islamic principles related to peacebuilding and justice. By working together through Islamic frameworks, the two countries have been able to mediate conflicts in ways that respect the cultural and religious sensitivities of the affected populations, highlighting the importance of their shared religious identity in regional diplomacy. Interfaith dialogue initiatives between Indonesia and Malaysia further illustrate the potential of shared Islamic heritage to foster bilateral relations. Both countries have faced challenges related to religious diversity, and their governments have used Islam as a unifying force to promote harmony between different religious communities. Joint programs and dialogues that focus on Islamic principles of tolerance and coexistence have been instrumental in addressing religious tensions domestically while also serving as a platform for Indonesia and Malaysia to collaborate on promoting interfaith understanding internationally.

Tourism, especially religious tourism, is another area where the shared Islamic heritage enhances bilateral relations. Pilgrimages to Islamic historical sites, mosques, and cultural centres in both countries attract tourists who are eager to explore the common Islamic history of the region. This has led to the development of tourism policies and initiatives that cater to Muslim travellers, fostering greater economic and cultural exchange between Indonesia and Malaysia. Religious tourism also allows citizens of both countries to engage with their shared heritage tangibly, deepening cross-border relationships at the societal level. Media and popular culture also reflect the shared Islamic heritage, with television programs, films, and literature from both countries often portraying similar themes related to Islamic values and practices. Joint media productions and co-productions have become increasingly common, further cementing the cultural and religious ties between the two nations. Such collaborations not only contribute to a mutual understanding of Islamic values but also showcase how Islam can be integrated into modern culture, thus strengthening the bond between Indonesia and Malaysia on both a popular and diplomatic level (Ibrahim, 2020).

Ultimately, the shared Islamic heritage between Indonesia and Malaysia serves as more than just a historical or cultural link; it is a dynamic force that actively shapes their bilateral relations. Whether in education, diplomacy, economics, or cultural exchanges, Islam continues to be a central pillar in the

relationship between these two nations. This shared religious identity not only fosters cooperation but also offers a framework for addressing contemporary challenges, making the Islamic connection between Indonesia and Malaysia a powerful and enduring bridge in their bilateral relations.

### **Diaspora as a Diplomatic Asset: The Role of Indonesian Migrants in Strengthening Bilateral Relations**

The Indonesian Muslim diaspora in Malaysia has long played a vital role in shaping and enhancing the diplomatic relationship between the two nations. As two of the largest Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia, Indonesia and Malaysia share numerous cultural, religious, and historical ties. The presence of a significant Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia has not only contributed to the social and economic fabric of the country but has also acted as a form of soft power diplomacy, helping to bridge gaps and foster greater bilateral cooperation. Through their cultural, religious, and economic contributions, Indonesian migrants have become an indispensable asset in maintaining and strengthening Indonesia-Malaysia relations.

Indonesian migrants in Malaysia, particularly Muslim migrants, contribute to the bilateral relationship through their active participation in religious life. Mosques and religious organizations serve as important spaces for community building among Indonesian Muslims, providing a platform for interfaith and intercultural dialogue. This engagement has led to the strengthening of Islamic solidarity between the two nations, where shared religious practices and values foster greater understanding. Additionally, the Indonesian diaspora's involvement in religious events and community services has been viewed as a positive contribution to Malaysia's Islamic identity, further reinforcing the ties between both countries. The Indonesian Muslim diaspora has also played a key role in the labour market, particularly in sectors such as construction, agriculture, and domestic work. Migrants from Indonesia have become integral to Malaysia's economic development, providing essential labour that supports the country's growing industries. In return, the Indonesian government has worked closely with Malaysia to ensure that the rights and welfare of its migrant workers are protected. This cooperation has led to various bilateral agreements, including labour rights protections and wage standards, which serve to enhance diplomatic relations between the two countries (Mulyadi, 2016).

In the context of cultural diplomacy, the Indonesian Muslim diaspora has helped promote Indonesia's rich cultural heritage within Malaysia. Through participation in cultural festivals, art exhibitions, and religious celebrations, Indonesian migrants contribute to the diffusion of Indonesian culture, which includes Islamic traditions, language, and music. These cultural exchanges allow for a greater appreciation of Indonesian identity in Malaysia and have contributed to fostering a sense of shared cultural belonging between the two nations. The soft power of culture, as embodied by the diaspora, thus becomes an effective tool in strengthening diplomatic ties.

One significant aspect of the Indonesian diaspora's contribution to diplomacy is through their participation in educational initiatives. Many Indonesian migrants have taken on roles in Malaysia's educational sector, either as students or as professionals in Islamic schools and universities. This exchange of knowledge between Indonesia and Malaysia has further solidified their partnership in the field of Islamic education, contributing to the growth of intellectual and religious discourse in both countries. Educational cooperation between the two countries has not only bolstered bilateral relations but also strengthened the Southeast Asian region's role in the global Islamic community. The Indonesian diaspora's involvement in business and entrepreneurship in Malaysia also plays a role in diplomatic relations. Many Indonesian migrants, particularly those who have settled in Malaysia for longer periods, have established small businesses that contribute to local economies. These entrepreneurial activities often involve cross-border trade between Indonesia and Malaysia, which in turn strengthens economic ties between the two nations. By fostering economic interdependence through trade and business initiatives, the diaspora enhances Indonesia's soft power in Malaysia, positioning itself as a key player in bilateral economic cooperation (Nurul, 2020).

The Indonesian government has increasingly recognized the strategic value of its diaspora in Malaysia as a diplomatic asset. Through initiatives such as the *Diaspora Indonesia Network*, the government actively engages with Indonesian migrants, offering support and resources while simultaneously encouraging them to contribute to Indonesia's national interests abroad. This network has allowed Indonesia to maintain close ties with its citizens in Malaysia, promoting policies that benefit

both the diaspora and Indonesia's diplomatic objectives. By engaging with the Indonesian Muslim diaspora, the government strengthens its influence in Malaysia and promotes mutually beneficial bilateral relations.

Religious diplomacy is another area where the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia plays a pivotal role. Indonesian Muslim migrants often serve as informal ambassadors of Indonesia's brand of moderate Islam, known as *Islam Nusantara*. This moderate approach to Islam, which emphasizes tolerance and pluralism, resonates in Malaysia's multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. The diaspora's promotion of moderate Islamic values has helped to counteract extremist narratives and has contributed to peaceful religious coexistence in Malaysia, aligning with both countries' efforts to promote a moderate form of Islam within the region. Beyond religious and economic contributions, the Indonesian Muslim diaspora is also engaged in various social and humanitarian initiatives in Malaysia. Indonesian migrants frequently participate in charitable activities, including providing aid to underprivileged communities and supporting local welfare programs. Such initiatives not only improve the image of Indonesian migrants in Malaysia but also serve as a form of soft diplomacy, fostering goodwill and enhancing people-to-people connections between Indonesians and Malaysians. This social engagement reinforces the broader diplomatic relationship, showing the positive impact of the diaspora on bilateral ties (Azra, 2017).

The Indonesian diaspora's ability to act as a cultural and religious bridge between Indonesia and Malaysia is further evident in their role in peacebuilding efforts. As both countries occasionally face challenges related to immigration policies, territorial disputes, and labour migration, the diaspora serves as a crucial intermediary. The migrant community helps to mediate tensions by promoting dialogue and understanding, ensuring that both governments address any issues cooperatively and constructively. Through their position as cultural and religious representatives, the diaspora plays a significant role in mitigating conflicts and ensuring continued diplomatic engagement.

In summary, the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in Malaysia serves as a diplomatic asset by fostering cultural, religious, and economic exchanges between the two nations. Through their active engagement in Malaysian society and their contributions to various sectors, Indonesian migrants enhance Indonesia's influence and soft power in Malaysia. This has not only strengthened bilateral relations but also positioned the Indonesian diaspora as a key factor in the diplomatic strategy of both countries. By leveraging the potential of its diaspora, Indonesia has been able to maintain and deepen its relationship with Malaysia, ensuring continued cooperation in multiple areas of mutual interest.

### **Challenges in Managing Migration: Addressing Labor and Social Issues**

Migration between Indonesia and Malaysia has become a complex phenomenon, with labour migration being a central aspect of the relationship between the two neighbouring countries. Indonesia is a significant source of migrant workers in Malaysia, many of whom are employed in sectors such as construction, agriculture, and domestic services. While migration offers economic benefits to both sending and receiving countries, it also presents various labour and social challenges. Managing these issues effectively requires both countries to address labour exploitation, legal protections, and social integration while recognizing the potential role of shared Islamic values in offering solutions.

One of the primary challenges in managing labour migration is the exploitation of Indonesian workers in Malaysia. Many migrant workers, particularly those in low-wage sectors, are vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and poor working conditions. Reports of underpayment, long working hours, and lack of adequate legal protections are common among Indonesian migrants in Malaysia. These labour issues are often exacerbated by the lack of legal documentation among migrants, leading to their marginalization and making them susceptible to abuse by unscrupulous employers.

The legal frameworks governing labour migration between Indonesia and Malaysia have historically been weak in addressing these challenges. Although both countries have signed memorandums of understanding (MoUs) to regulate labour migration, enforcement has been inconsistent. Issues such as unclear employment contracts and insufficient oversight of recruitment agencies contribute to the exploitation of migrant workers. Both Indonesia and Malaysia must strengthen their legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that migrant workers receive fair treatment and protection.

Social challenges also arise from the large-scale migration of Indonesian workers to Malaysia. Migrants often face discrimination and social exclusion in their host country, which can affect their mental and emotional well-being. Indonesian migrants, especially those working in domestic services, often live in isolation from local communities and face barriers to social integration ((Rahman & Farid, 2017). This lack of social inclusion not only affects the migrants' quality of life but also creates tensions between local and migrant populations, which can strain bilateral relations between Indonesia and Malaysia.

Islam, as a shared religious framework between Indonesia and Malaysia, can offer solutions to some of these social and labour challenges. Both countries have a common Islamic heritage that promotes principles of justice, fairness, and mutual respect. Islamic teachings emphasize the protection of workers' rights, fair wages, and humane treatment, which can serve as ethical guidelines for managing labour migration. By incorporating these values into migration policies, both governments can work toward a more equitable system that upholds the dignity of migrant workers and aligns with their shared religious principles. Furthermore, Islamic social values promote inclusivity and community cohesion, which can help address the social integration of migrants. In both countries, mosques and Islamic organizations play a vital role in providing support to migrant communities, offering not only religious guidance but also social services such as education and welfare assistance (Effendi, 2017). By strengthening the role of religious institutions in the integration process, Indonesia and Malaysia can foster greater social cohesion and reduce the marginalization of migrant workers.

Despite the potential for shared Islamic values to offer solutions, there are still significant challenges in aligning religious principles with policy implementation. For instance, while Islamic values call for fair treatment of workers, economic and political interests often take precedence in policymaking, resulting in the continued exploitation of migrant workers. Moreover, the informal nature of much of the labour migration between Indonesia and Malaysia makes it difficult to enforce regulations and ensure compliance with Islamic principles of justice and fairness. To address these challenges, both countries need to engage in more robust cooperation, not only at the governmental level but also through civil society and religious organizations. By promoting dialogue and collaboration between these actors, Indonesia and Malaysia can create a more comprehensive framework for managing migration that takes into account labour rights, social integration, and religious values. This approach could lead to more sustainable and humane migration policies that benefit both migrants and host societies.

Managing labour migration between Indonesia and Malaysia indeed presents a range of challenges, particularly in the areas of labour exploitation and social integration. However, the shared Islamic values between the two countries offer a unique opportunity to address these issues through the promotion of fairness, justice, and community support. By strengthening legal protections, improving enforcement, and incorporating Islamic ethical principles into migration policies, both countries can work toward a more equitable and humane system for managing migration.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Cultural Diplomacy and Islamic Identity: The Role of Religious Institutions**

Cultural diplomacy is an essential tool in strengthening bilateral relations, particularly between countries that share deep historical and cultural connections like Indonesia and Malaysia. As two of the largest Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia, Indonesia and Malaysia have a unique opportunity to leverage their shared Islamic heritage to promote cultural diplomacy. Religious institutions in both countries play a critical role in facilitating this process, serving as platforms for dialogue, education, and mutual understanding. Through religious institutions, the Islamic identity of both nations becomes a powerful instrument for diplomacy, promoting cooperation and harmony in the broader regional context.

One of the key functions of Islamic religious institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia is to promote shared values and cultural heritage that are rooted in Islam. These institutions, such as mosques, madrasahs, and Islamic cultural centres, offer a space for religious and cultural exchanges that strengthen bilateral ties. For instance, mosques in both countries often serve as venues for interfaith and intercultural dialogue, allowing both Indonesians and Malaysians to engage in discussions that foster a greater understanding of their shared Islamic values. Such dialogues not only reinforce cultural ties

but also help to address challenges related to modernity and globalization. Islamic educational institutions also play a pivotal role in deepening the connection between Indonesia and Malaysia. Universities and religious schools in both countries are involved in student exchange programs that promote the study of Islamic thought and culture. For example, Indonesian students studying in Malaysian Islamic institutions, and vice versa, gain exposure to different interpretations of Islam while strengthening their personal and academic ties with their counterparts across borders. These exchanges foster mutual understanding and create a new generation of scholars and leaders who are well-versed in both countries' Islamic traditions (Musa, 2021).

In addition to educational exchange, religious leaders from Indonesia and Malaysia regularly participate in conferences and workshops that address contemporary issues in Islam, such as radicalization, social justice, and the role of religion in governance. These gatherings provide a forum for religious leaders to collaborate on solutions to shared challenges, using their influence to promote moderation and peace. By working together, these leaders become informal diplomats who promote Indonesia and Malaysia's shared Islamic values on the regional and global stage. Moreover, Islamic institutions are central to the implementation of soft power strategies in both countries. Cultural diplomacy efforts often include the promotion of a moderate and progressive Islamic identity, which contrasts with more radical interpretations seen in other parts of the world. Through the dissemination of moderate Islamic thought, Indonesian and Malaysian religious institutions contribute to their respective countries' global image as advocates of peace and tolerance. This projection of a peaceful Islamic identity enhances both nations' reputations internationally and fosters positive relations with other Muslim and non-Muslim countries (Hashemi, 2019).

Religious institutions also support cultural diplomacy through humanitarian efforts, which are guided by Islamic principles of compassion and solidarity. Both Indonesia and Malaysia have mobilized their religious institutions to provide aid and support in times of crisis, such as during natural disasters or conflicts affecting Muslim communities. These acts of compassion are often coordinated through religious organizations and serve as a form of cultural diplomacy, demonstrating the countries' shared Islamic values of brotherhood and humanitarianism on the world stage. Another significant aspect of the role of religious institutions in cultural diplomacy is their ability to connect grassroots communities. In both Indonesia and Malaysia, Islamic organizations engage with local communities to promote cultural events, festivals, and religious celebrations that highlight the common Islamic identity shared by the two nations. By engaging local communities in these efforts, religious institutions help bridge the gap between national-level diplomatic initiatives and everyday people, creating a more inclusive and effective form of cultural diplomacy.

Despite the many contributions of Islamic institutions to cultural diplomacy, challenges remain. Differences in the political and cultural landscapes of Indonesia and Malaysia can sometimes lead to tensions, particularly in the interpretation of Islamic teachings. Nevertheless, religious institutions in both countries continue to promote dialogue and cooperation, emphasizing the shared Islamic values that unite them. By focusing on these commonalities, Indonesia and Malaysia can overcome differences and build stronger, more resilient bilateral relations (Latif, 2021).

Thus, Islamic religious institutions play a vital role in promoting cultural diplomacy between Indonesia and Malaysia. Through their efforts in education, humanitarian aid, dialogue, and soft power, these institutions strengthen the bilateral relationship by highlighting the shared Islamic identity that underpins both nations. As Indonesia and Malaysia continue to navigate the complexities of regional and global politics, religious institutions will remain a crucial asset in maintaining and deepening their cultural and diplomatic ties.

### **Islam in Regional Diplomacy: Indonesia and Malaysia's Role in ASEAN**

Indonesia and Malaysia, as the two largest Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia, have played a crucial role in shaping the diplomatic landscape of the region, particularly through the ASEAN. While ASEAN's core principles revolve around political, economic, and security cooperation, the Islamic identity of Indonesia and Malaysia contributes significantly to their diplomatic engagement and leadership within the organization. This shared Islamic heritage not only influences their domestic

policies but also provides them with a unique platform to advocate for peace, tolerance, and moderation in regional diplomacy.

One of the most important contributions of Indonesia and Malaysia to ASEAN is their promotion of moderate Islamic values, which align with ASEAN's principles of peace, non-interference, and mutual respect. Both countries have taken active roles in advocating for peaceful conflict resolution in Muslim-majority areas, such as southern Thailand and Mindanao in the Philippines. Through diplomatic efforts, including mediation and peace talks, Indonesia and Malaysia have used their Islamic values to facilitate dialogue and reconciliation in these conflict zones. These efforts underscore how Islam can serve as a unifying factor in the region's diplomacy (Noor, 2020).

In addition to peacebuilding, Indonesia and Malaysia have also used their Islamic identity to promote social and economic development in ASEAN. By emphasizing Islamic economic principles, such as zakat (charity) and ethical investment, both countries have contributed to the growth of the Islamic finance sector in Southeast Asia. This sector has become a key component of regional economic cooperation, particularly through ASEAN's financial integration efforts. The promotion of Islamic finance not only strengthens the economic ties between ASEAN member states but also provides a common framework for economic collaboration. Moreover, Indonesia and Malaysia's Islamic identity has played a significant role in their cultural diplomacy within ASEAN. Both countries have actively promoted Islamic arts, education, and cultural exchanges, which have fostered greater understanding and cooperation among ASEAN member states. For example, Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia have hosted students from across Southeast Asia, providing them with an opportunity to learn about moderate Islamic teachings while building networks of scholars and leaders. This educational diplomacy contributes to the development of a shared regional identity rooted in Islamic values (Yusof, 2022).

The diplomatic influence of Indonesia and Malaysia extends beyond ASEAN's borders, as both countries are key players in the OIC. Their participation in the OIC allows them to bring regional concerns to a larger international stage, where they advocate for the rights of Muslim communities, promote interfaith dialogue, and support humanitarian efforts. Within ASEAN, their leadership in the OIC helps bridge the interests of Muslim-majority countries with the broader goals of the Southeast Asian region, strengthening ASEAN's external relations and fostering greater collaboration with the Muslim world. However, while Indonesia and Malaysia's Islamic identity contributes positively to their diplomatic roles in ASEAN, it also presents challenges. Both countries must navigate their domestic Islamic politics, which can sometimes conflict with their regional diplomatic strategies. For instance, the rise of political Islam in Indonesia has led to debates about the country's role in promoting moderate Islam abroad while balancing domestic calls for a more conservative Islamic stance. Similarly, Malaysia's political landscape, shaped by both ethnic and religious factors, influences its diplomatic priorities within ASEAN (Anwar, 2021).

Despite these challenges, Indonesia and Malaysia continue to leverage their Islamic identity as a source of soft power within ASEAN. Their leadership in promoting moderation, tolerance, and Islamic cultural diplomacy not only strengthens their roles within the organization but also helps maintain stability and cohesion in the broader Southeast Asian region. As ASEAN continues to navigate complex global issues such as extremism, migration, and economic inequality, Indonesia and Malaysia's shared Islamic values provide a moral and ethical framework that enhances their regional leadership.

The Islamic identity of Indonesia and Malaysia plays a significant role in shaping their diplomatic strategies within ASEAN. Through their promotion of moderate Islam, economic cooperation based on Islamic principles, cultural diplomacy, and peacebuilding efforts, both countries have strengthened their influence within the region. While challenges remain, their ability to balance domestic Islamic politics with regional diplomatic priorities ensures that they remain key players in ASEAN's continued development and integration.

### **The Future of Indonesia-Malaysia Relations: Harnessing Shared Islamic Heritage in Global Affairs**

Indonesia and Malaysia, as the two largest Muslim-majority nations in Southeast Asia, share a deep Islamic heritage that has the potential to be a powerful force in shaping their future relations, both regionally and globally. This shared heritage, rooted in centuries of religious, cultural, and historical

connections, provides a strong foundation for enhancing cooperation on the international stage. As global dynamics shift and the role of Islamic countries in world affairs becomes more prominent, Indonesia and Malaysia are uniquely positioned to leverage their Islamic identity to promote peace, stability, and prosperity.

One of the primary ways Indonesia and Malaysia can harness their shared Islamic heritage is by collaborating on global peacebuilding initiatives. Both countries have a strong track record of promoting moderate Islamic values, which emphasize tolerance, coexistence, and peaceful conflict resolution. By working together, they can present a united front in advocating for the peaceful resolution of conflicts in Muslim-majority regions, such as the Middle East and Africa. Their joint leadership in platforms like the OIC could play a key role in mediating disputes and facilitating dialogue between conflicting parties (Noor, 2021).

Another significant area where Indonesia and Malaysia can strengthen their cooperation is in the promotion of Islamic finance and economic development. Both countries have been at the forefront of the Islamic finance industry, which has seen substantial growth in recent years. By working together to standardize Islamic financial regulations and promote ethical investment practices, they can help position Southeast Asia as a global hub for Islamic finance. This collaboration can extend to joint initiatives in infrastructure development, poverty reduction, and sustainable development, all framed within the context of Islamic economic principles. In addition to economic collaboration, Indonesia and Malaysia can use their shared Islamic heritage to promote interfaith dialogue and cultural diplomacy on the global stage. Both nations have a long history of peaceful coexistence between different religious and ethnic groups, a message that is increasingly important in a world marked by rising tensions and intolerance. Through cultural exchanges, educational programs, and joint initiatives at international forums, Indonesia and Malaysia can present Islam as a religion of peace, tolerance, and compassion, countering negative stereotypes and promoting a more inclusive global narrative (Sukma, 2019).

Moreover, Indonesia and Malaysia can play a significant role in shaping global discourse on environmental sustainability through the lens of Islamic teachings. Islamic principles emphasize the stewardship of the Earth (*Khalifah*) and the importance of protecting natural resources for future generations. By integrating these values into international environmental agreements and initiatives, Indonesia and Malaysia can advocate for sustainable development practices that align with both Islamic teachings and global sustainability goals. This could include joint leadership in international environmental forums, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (Nasrullah, 2021). The shared Islamic heritage of Indonesia and Malaysia also provides a strong platform for collaboration in addressing humanitarian crises, particularly in Muslim-majority regions. Both countries have been active in providing humanitarian assistance to conflict zones, including Palestine, Syria, and Rohingya refugees. By combining their efforts and resources, Indonesia and Malaysia can have a greater impact on global humanitarian initiatives, advocating for the rights and dignity of displaced Muslim populations and contributing to global stability.

Education is another critical area where Indonesia and Malaysia can strengthen their collaboration. Both countries have developed robust Islamic education systems, which could be further enhanced through joint initiatives. By fostering academic exchanges, research collaborations, and the development of joint curricula, Indonesia and Malaysia can contribute to the global advancement of Islamic knowledge and thought. This collaboration could also extend to capacity-building programs for Muslim-majority countries in areas such as governance, social development, and technology. Lastly, Indonesia and Malaysia's shared Islamic heritage can also serve as a means of strengthening their political and diplomatic ties in multilateral forums. Both nations have consistently advocated for the protection of Muslim minorities and the promotion of Islamic values within international organizations. By coordinating their efforts in global forums such as the United Nations, the OIC, and ASEAN, they can amplify their voices on issues of mutual concern, from human rights to economic cooperation. This partnership could enhance their influence in shaping global norms and policies that align with Islamic principles and values (Noor, 2022).

Ultimately, Indonesia and Malaysia are well-positioned to harness their shared Islamic heritage to strengthen their international cooperation in the future. By focusing on peacebuilding, economic development, cultural diplomacy, environmental sustainability, humanitarian efforts, education, and political coordination, these two nations can continue to play a significant role on the global stage. Their

collaboration, rooted in Islamic values of moderation, tolerance, and justice, will not only enhance their bilateral relations but also contribute to global peace and stability.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Islam, migration, and diaspora are key elements that underpin the close ties between Indonesia and Malaysia, two prominent Muslim-majority nations in Southeast Asia. Their shared Islamic heritage offers significant potential for strengthening bilateral relations and enhancing their influence in international affairs. Rooted in centuries of religious, cultural, and historical connections, this common foundation provides a unique platform for collaboration on global peacebuilding, Islamic economic development, and fostering interfaith dialogue. Additionally, the movement of people, particularly the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia, acts as a form of soft diplomacy, contributing to stronger socio-cultural ties and cooperation. Together, the shared Islamic values of moderation, tolerance, and justice can serve as tools to address critical global challenges, such as migration management, humanitarian crises, environmental sustainability, and education. By leveraging these shared traditions in multilateral platforms like the OIC, ASEAN, and the United Nations, Indonesia and Malaysia have the opportunity to enhance their roles as leaders in the Muslim world, promoting a narrative of peace and inclusivity in global affairs.

To maximize the impact of this shared heritage, Indonesia and Malaysia must prioritize key areas of cooperation that are rooted in both Islamic teachings and the dynamics of migration. Collaborative efforts in peacebuilding across Muslim-majority regions can help both nations serve as mediators through regional platforms like ASEAN and the OIC. Moreover, the expansion of Islamic economic cooperation, especially through the promotion of Islamic finance, can stimulate sustainable development that aligns with global goals. The diaspora communities, particularly Indonesian migrants in Malaysia, further enrich bilateral ties by acting as cultural bridges that enhance understanding and mutual support. Both nations should also focus on cultural and religious diplomacy, engaging in joint initiatives that promote Islam as a religion of peace, tolerance, and shared responsibility for humanity. In line with Islamic principles of stewardship (*Khalifah*), joint efforts in environmental sustainability and humanitarian diplomacy can provide moral leadership in international forums. Educational partnerships, facilitated through academic exchanges and shared programs, will be equally crucial in advancing Islamic thought and enhancing intellectual collaboration between the two nations.

By aligning their diplomatic efforts within multilateral organizations, such as ASEAN, the OIC, and the United Nations, Indonesia and Malaysia can strengthen their collective voice on issues that impact the broader Muslim world, especially regarding migration and diaspora communities. This coordinated approach will not only solidify their bilateral relationship but also elevate their influence in global affairs, promoting peace, stability, and sustainable development. Through the strategic harnessing of their shared Islamic heritage and the contributions of diaspora communities, both nations are well-positioned to play more significant roles on the international stage, benefiting both their domestic populations and the wider global community.

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**Short-bio (100-150 words) – registered presenters only**

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# CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

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