



PRESS RELEASE

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Netherlands-Indonesian *Costly Tolerance Conference* 9-12 March 2015 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Around 15 Christian and Muslim scholars and practitioners from the Netherlands will join an interfaith conference called *Costly Tolerance*, held at the Muslim university UIN Sunan Kalijaga in Yogyakarta from 9-12 March 2015. Dutch and Indonesian participants will share reflections and actions in order to foster tolerance and counter polarization and radicalization in the Netherlands and Indonesia.

The program is organized by the *Netherlands-Indonesia Consortium for Muslim-Christian Relations*, which was founded to enable exchanges beyond national and religious borders. 'Islam', 'the West', 'Imperialism' or any other notion are being explored together, taking into account the different perspectives. The exchange between the Netherlands, the former colonizer of the archipelago, and Indonesia, the country with the highest amount of Muslims in the world and at the same time a democracy, has appeared to be challenging and renewing.

Participants of the *Costly Tolerance* conference pay ample attention to the meanings of 'tolerance'. Bible and Quran scholars will share their respective interpretations of the holy scriptures, educators and peace activists show some of their work among women and youth, etc. Interaction is facilitated between Indonesian and Dutch participants, between scholars and practitioners, between Muslims and Christians. A representative of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, Prof. Machasin, will be one of the keynote speakers.

The Consortium started in 2010, as an initiative of the Duta Wacana Christian University and Kerk in Actie (Protestant Church in the Netherlands), and has developed into a network of Christian and Muslim scholars, religious leaders and practitioners. In 2014 a book was published as a result of common research, called *Muslim-Christian Relations Observed. Comparative Studies from Indonesia and the Netherlands*. Eds. Volker Kuester and Robert Setio. This book will be presented at the conference in March, as well as a new website.

Institutes and organizations involved in the Consortium are CIT (Centre for Islamic Theology Amsterdam), CMO (Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid), IAIN Ambon (Muslim State University), Kerk in Actie (of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands), Persetia (umbrella organization for theological institutes in Indonesia), PGI (Indonesian Council of Churches), PThU (Protestant Theological University in NL), RUN-NIM / RUN-SWIR (Radboud University Nijmegen), STT-Jakarta (Theological Seminary), UGM/CRCS (Centre for Religious and Cultural Studies Yogyakarta), UIN Sunan Kalijaga (Muslim State University Yogyakarta), UKAW/ UKDW/ UKIM (theological institutes in Kupang, Yogyakarta and Ambon), VU (Free University Amsterdam).