

Professional Code of Ethics for Managing Interreligious Cohesion in the Digital Era

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Abstract: A professional code of ethics is a written guideline that affirms values, norms, and professional conduct. It clarifies professional ethics, prevents bias, safeguards integrity, and builds public trust. Binding in nature, any violation is subject to sanctions and must be upheld by all members of the profession. Individuals in any vocational field, especially those engaged with religious affairs, are equally obliged to honor their professional code of ethics. On World Human Rights Day 2024, *Imparsial* observed that religious actors in Indonesia failed to strengthen social cohesion, while state apparatuses were permissive toward groups undermining religious freedom. This research aims to answer: What if the professional code of ethics were employed as a framework of managing interreligious social cohesion in Indonesia’s digital era? This qualitative and explanatory study positions *TAP MPR No. 6/2001 on the Ethics of Living as a Nation* as its material object, and Jimly Asshiddiqie’s concept of *the National Ethics Court (MEN)* as its formal object. In Indonesia’s digital era information unavoidably finds pathways into the public sphere regardless of boundaries or constraints. As corporeal and digital actions increasingly converge the digital realm paradoxically demands corporeal solutions, particularly in contexts where ethical integrity is essential. *TAP MPR No. 6/2001* encompasses socio-cultural ethics, political governance ethics, and fair legal enforcement ethics as a constitutional foundation for interreligious cohesion. Asshiddiqie envisions MEN as the culmination of Indonesia’s ethical judicial process, integrating institutional ethical systems. Guided by MEN’s framework, national ethics can reinforce the role of professional codes, offering more relevant and effective sanctions to guide religious-sector actors in upholding their ethical obligations and preserving interreligious social cohesion.

Keywords: Contemporary Religious Issues; Professional Code of Ethics; Ethics of Living as a Nation; Social Cohesion; Jimly Asshiddiqie.



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I. INTRODUCTION

Etymologically the term “professional code of ethics” consists of two components: “code of ethics” and “profession”. According to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), a code of ethics refers to “norms and principles accepted by a particular group as the foundation of conduct”¹ The term “profession” denotes either an occupation (a daily activity that engages an individual) or a vocation (a livelihood-oriented pursuit).² However in general only vocations are associated with a professional code of ethics. Therefore a professional code of ethics can be defined as a written guideline that affirms the values, norms, and standards of professional conduct. It clarifies professional ethics, prevents bias, safeguards integrity, and enhances public trust. Binding in nature, violations are subject to sanctions, and thus it must be observed and internalized by every member of the profession.³

The professional code of ethics in the religious domain may refer to the ethical guidelines governing vocations that directly engage with religious affairs (religious leaders, religious social activists, and religious educators). Meanwhile *Civil Servants* (ASN), legal and security apparatuses, or individuals in any vocation that intersects with religious matters may also be considered professionals in religion-related fields. Therefore anyone whose profession involves religious engagement, regardless of their vocational background, must adhere to their respective professional code of ethics. On Human Rights Day 2024, *Imparsial* highlighted the degrading state of religious freedom in Indonesia. Rather than strengthening social cohesion, religious actors have in some cases amplified intolerance and discrimination, undermining citizens’ rights to practice their beliefs peacefully. State apparatuses were also criticized for their permissiveness toward intolerant groups.⁴

A study conducted by Della Pebriani Simamora and colleagues in March 2025 examined the critical role of teachers in upholding human rights (HAM) through the implementation of professional codes of ethics. The research found that Indonesia’s teacher code of ethics explicitly mandates respect for students’ HAM, including the right to education, freedom from discrimination, and active participation. However its implementation continues to face challenges due to limited understanding, insufficient oversight, and the absence of a supportive school culture.⁵ Meanwhile a study by Christina Maya Indah Susilowati in April 2016 which examined the relationship between the constitution and religiously motivated violence as an indicator of weakening national cohesion, concluded that the constitution is

¹“Arti kata kode - KBBI Online,” 2025, <https://www.kbbi.web.id/kode>.

²Kees Bertens, *Etika Profesi* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit PT Kanisius, 2024), 2.

³M. Ridlwan Hambali dkk., *Etika Profesi*, ed. oleh M. Ivan Ariful Fathoni (Bojonegoro: Agrapana Media, 2021), 52–54.

⁴“Peringatan Hari HAM Sedunia, Imparsial Sebut Kebebasan Beragama di Indonesia Masih Buruk,” *Tempo.co*, 2024, <https://www.tempo.co/hukum/peringatan-hari-ham-sedunia-imparsial-sebut-kebebasan-beragama-di-indonesia-masih-buruk-1179287>.

⁵Della Pebriani Simamora dkk., “Kajian Tentang Kode Etik Guru Terkait Penghormatan Terhadap Hak Asasi Manusia,” *Dewantara : Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Humaniora* 4, no. 1 (Maret 2025): 217–25, <https://doi.org/10.30640/dewantara.v4i1.3958>.

sufficiently adequate to enhance a tolerant society and cultivate an inclusive constitutional culture provided that Pancasila, *the 1945 Constitution (UUD 1945)*, and national law are actualized as a *living constitution*, one that is responsive to social needs and guarantees human security.⁶ The research by Simamora and colleagues reveals that the implementation of the teacher's professional code of ethics which mandates respect for students' HAM remains hindered by limited understanding, weak oversight, and an unsupportive school culture. Meanwhile Susilowati's research underscores the importance of a responsive constitution (*a living constitution*) in addressing religiously motivated violence and the erosion of national cohesion.

This present research integrates the ethical approach exemplified by Simamora et al. and the constitutionalist perspective advanced by Susilowati, while further proposing the utilization of professional codes of ethics and the concept of a *National Ethics Court* (Mahkamah Etik Nasional, MEN) as institutional instruments for managing interreligious social cohesion. In this regard this research positions the professional code of ethics as a normative concept, operationalized through judicial mechanisms and systems of ethical accountability, embedded within the legal implications of a responsive constitution, and institutionalized in the model of a MEN to strengthen interreligious social cohesion in Indonesia's digital era.

II. METHODS

This qualitative research is explanatory in nature as it aims to test theoretical predictions or principles, develop theoretical explanations, and connect emerging issues with general principles to determine the most appropriate interpretation.⁷ Based on its data collection technique, the study is a literature review. It employs content analysis of relevant literature, focusing on the examination of messages embedded in texts. According to K.H. Krippendorff, content analysis is a valid and replicable technique of inference from text to its context.⁸ The material object of this study is *Decree of the People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6/2001 (TAP MPR No. 6/2001)*, while the formal object is Jimly Asshiddiqie's concept of MEN, as disseminated through various forms of communication (journal articles, conference proceedings, books, media coverage, and other sources).

III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

⁶Christina Maya Indah Susilowati, "Pancasila Sebagai Sumber Segala Sumber Hukum dan Kekerasan Atas Nama Agama di Indonesia," *Masalah-Masalah Hukum* 45, no. 2 (April 2016): 93–100, <https://doi.org/10.14710/mmh.45.2.2016.93-100>.

⁷William Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (London: Pearson Education, 2015), 22.

⁸Diane M. Badzinski, Robert H. Woods, dan Chad M. Nelson, "Content Analysis," dalam *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, 2 ed. (New York: Routledge, 2021), 109–10.

The following presents the researcher's findings on the relationship between *TAP MPR No. 6/2001* and MEN, the issues surrounding interreligious social cohesion in Indonesia, and the role of professional codes of ethics and MEN as institutional instruments for managing interreligious social cohesion.

TAP MPR NO. 6/2001 AND “MEN”

TAP MPR No. 6/2001 was formalized with a conscious recognition of the importance of respecting diversity as an existential reality that must be preserved and used as a foundation for navigating crises and the currents of globalization. This decree also served as a response to the multidimensional crisis that afflicted Indonesia following *the 1998 Reform era*, marked by moral decline, social conflict, and the weakening of national solidarity due to abuses of power and legal injustice. Amid a pluralistic society vulnerable to fragmentation, the decree sets forth a framework for national civic ethics grounded in the universal teachings of religions and noble cultural values, with Pancasila as its foundation. Its aim is to strengthen unity, cultivate citizens of integrity, and safeguard national identity in the face of contemporary challenges.

The ethics of living as a nation necessitate the reinforcement of interreligious character education as a strategic foundation for building long-term social cohesion. The early cultivation of values such as tolerance, empathy, and respect for religious diversity serves as a preventive measure against potential radicalism and sectarian conflict. *TAP MPR No. 6/2001* provides a normative basis for curriculum development that emphasizes not only intellectual competence but also the formation of attitudes and moral character, drawing upon religious teachings and cultural heritage as sources of value. In this context educational institutions -formal and informal- must function as healthy and constructive spaces for interreligious dialogue, enabling younger generations to grow into citizens capable of living harmoniously within a diverse society.

The ethics of living as a nation demand institutional realization through the strengthening of mediation and reconciliation bodies rooted in local values and religious teachings. In a pluralistic society, interreligious conflicts often arise from misunderstandings, stereotypes, or unresolved social tensions. This calls for ethical mechanisms that are responsive, just, and oriented toward the restoration of social relations. An ethics enforcement institution designed inclusively, engaging ethical thinkers and philosophers, and embracing interreligious participation, can serve as a deliberative forum for resolving ethical violations that threaten social cohesion. By prioritizing dialogue, acknowledgment of wrongdoing, and the restoration of dignity, such an institution holds the potential to reinforce national unity in the spirit of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity).

According to *TAP MPR No. 6/2001*, *the ethics of living as a nation* constitute a formulation of values derived from universal religious teachings and the nation's noble cultural heritage, grounded in Pancasila as a guiding framework for citizens' attitudes and behavior. This formulation aims to enhance awareness of the

importance of ethics and morality in preserving national unity and shaping Indonesian citizens who are faithful, devout, and morally upright.⁹ The decree encompasses *socio-cultural ethics*, *governmental political ethics*, and *ethics of equitable law enforcement*, each serving as a constitutive basis for interreligious social cohesion. Guided by the framework of MEN, these three ethical domains can reinforce the function of professional codes of ethics.

Socio-cultural ethics are rooted in a profound sense of humanity, expressed through the revitalization of attitudes such as honesty, mutual care, understanding, respect, compassion, and solidarity among fellow human beings and citizens. In line with this, it is essential to re-cultivate a sense of moral shame, namely the shame of committing wrongdoing or engaging in actions that contradict religious morals and the noble cultural values of the nation. Therefore the culture of exemplary conduct must also be revived and manifested in the behavior of both formal and informal leaders across all levels of society.¹⁰

Political ethics in governance prioritize the enforcement of human rights, equitable public service delivery, and conflict resolution through wise deliberation grounded in religious values and noble cultural traditions. State officials are expected to demonstrate civility, tolerance, and honesty, while refraining from reprehensible acts such as manipulation, public deception, and abuse of power. This ethical framework mandates the willingness to resign for officials who violate moral principles or fail to fulfill the public trust, in order to preserve social harmony and uphold the common good above personal or group interests.¹¹

The ethics of equitable law enforcement aim to cultivate awareness that social order and harmonious coexistence can only be achieved through adherence to laws that uphold justice. The supremacy and certainty of law must be aligned with the fulfillment of the sense of justice that lives within society. This ethical framework demands fair law enforcement, equal treatment of all citizens without discrimination, and the avoidance of using law as a tool of power or manipulation.¹²

The ethics of living as a nation relevant to managing interreligious social cohesion encompass socio-cultural ethics, political ethics in governance, and the ethics of equitable law enforcement as constitutive foundations of social cohesion. Socio-cultural ethics emphasize honesty, compassion, and exemplary conduct. Political ethics demand that public officials act justly, uphold integrity, and be willing to resign when violating public morality. Meanwhile legal ethics stress justice, equality, and the non-discriminatory supremacy of law. Together these ethical domains complement one another in shaping a harmonious and principled society that upholds the nation's noble values within a pluralistic civic life.

⁹Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat RI, "Ketetapan MPR Nomor VI/MPR/2001 Tentang Etika Kehidupan Berbangsa," 2001, I, number 1, 2, 3.

¹⁰Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat RI, "TAP MPR No. VI/2001," II, number 1.

¹¹Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat RI, "TAP MPR No. VI/2001," II, number 2.

¹²Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat RI, "TAP MPR No. VI/2001," II, number 4.

Proceeding to the genealogy of Asshiddiqie's concept of MEN, the idea of ethical regulation in Indonesia has evolved gradually since 2014 through the publication of *Ethical Regulation and Constitutional Ethics* (PEEK), which emphasized ethics as an integral part of constitutional practice. In 2015 the discourse expanded through *the Journal of Ethics & Elections* (JEP) published by *the Honorary Council of Election Organizers* (DKPP), followed by the book *Envisioning Ethical Regulation in Indonesia* (MPeDI) issued by *the Judicial Commission* (KY), which highlighted the need for an independent cross-professional ethics institution. In 2023 the concept gained academic legitimacy through an article in *the Journal of Constitution and Democracy University of Indonesia* (JKD-UI). After being disseminated through various public forums, the idea reached institutional momentum during *the National Seminar of the Honorary Council of the House of Representatives* (SNMKD-DPR) in 2024, which explicitly proposed the establishment of the MEN as the culmination of the ethical system for public officials.

Based on the final section of the book PEEK, the ideas surrounding constitutional law, constitutional ethics, and ethical regulation are grounded in the understanding that the constitution, beyond being the highest legal norm, also serves as a source of ethical values in civic life. *TAP MPR No. VI/2001* and *Ekaprasetya Pancakarsa "P4"* (the One Sacred Vow of the Five Initiative) affirm that Pancasila is the foundation of national ethics, and that constitutional ethics constitute the moral basis for the exercise of power. Institutionally Indonesia has demonstrated pioneering leadership through the establishment of its first ethics court: DKPP, which plays a vital role in safeguarding electoral integrity and the credibility of public officials. Anchored in the principles of open justice and a distinctive model of *electoral integrity*, DKPP stands as a concrete example of a state ethics system rooted in constitutional values and public morality.¹³

Through the publication of the JEP by DKPP, the concept of ethical regulation was contextualized within the framework of the electoral code of ethics. This idea materialized through the establishment of the electoral code of ethics and the institutionalization of DKPP as an ethics court tasked with safeguarding the integrity, independence, and credibility of election organizers.¹⁴ Meanwhile the book MPeDI linked the concept of ethical regulation to the context of modernity: toward the formation of a modern ethics court. This concept is grounded in the awareness that ethics are universal and broader than law, functioning as a preliminary corrective before legal enforcement. The "outside-inside" approach -law as the external layer, ethics-religion as the internal core- is considered more relevant for maintaining public integrity. DKPP is again recognized as a pioneer of open ethical regulation in

¹³Jimly Asshiddiqie, *Peradilan Etik dan Etika Konstitusi: perspektif baru tentang Rule of Law, Rule of Ethics, Constitutional Law, dan Constitutional Ethics* (Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2022), 223–90.

¹⁴Jimly Asshiddiqie, "Dasar Konstitusional Peradilan Etik," *Jurnal Etika dan Pemilu* 1, no. 1 (Juni 2015): 101–6, <https://journal.dkpp.go.id/index.php/etikapemilu/issue/view/3>.

Indonesia, aligning with the *United Nations'* call since 1996 to build public ethics infrastructure.¹⁵

Through the publication of the JKDUI, the concept of ethical regulation has been examined through research, revealing that ethical practices are now globally favored over legal approaches, which often fail to sustain public trust. Consequently the cultivation of public officials' conduct should begin with an ethical system; constitutional ethics must be placed on equal footing with constitutional law and developed through open and professional ethical regulation, in line with the principles of legal justice. Both material and formal ethics are taught in law faculties as part of an applied ethics system that supports national integrity.¹⁶ Meanwhile through SNMKD-DPR the concept of ethical regulation gained momentum, particularly in the aftermath of the 2024 presidential election, which was marked by public unrest, concerns over civic ethics, and dynastic politics. This momentum should serve as a foundation for structurally reforming the national ethics system. The proposal to establish MEN is now being urged for realization through formal regulation and institutionalization, in pursuit of a more transparent and orderly public ethics framework.¹⁷

As a continuation of the 2024 momentum, Asshiddiqie proposed the establishment of an integrated ethical system culminating in MEN by expanding the authority of KY as its administrative body (DKPP online discussion, 11 June 2025).¹⁸ Therefore MEN is designed as the culmination of the ethical regulation system to strengthen the integrity of public officials, consolidate ethical governance, and replace the currently fragmented framework. MEN expands KY's supervisory function, provides independent and transparent ethical sanctions for officials and professionals, and offers an avenue for ethical appeals. Its administration is managed through KY, resembling the cassation mechanism of *the Supreme Court* (MA), and its establishment is envisioned through statutory legislation or constitutional amendment to *UUD 1945*. In other words MEN is positioned as the highest institution guided by Indonesia's public ethics system, aimed at reinforcing cross-professional code of ethics oversight and providing an appellate forum for other ethics bodies and professional associations.

¹⁵Jimly Asshiddiqie, "Menggagas Peradilan Etik di Indonesia," dalam *Menggagas Peradilan Etik di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pusat Analisis dan Layanan Informasi Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2015), 29–37.

¹⁶Jimly Asshiddiqie, "Memperkenalkan Peradilan Etika," *Jurnal Konstitusi dan Demokrasi* 1, no. 1 (Juni 2021), <https://doi.org/10.7454/JKD.v1i1.1101>.

¹⁷Jimly Asshiddiqie, "Momentum Penataan Sistem Etika Berbangsa-Bernegara dan Pembentukan Mahkamah Etika Nasional Berdasarkan Pancasila dan UUD NRIT 1945," conf. paper presented pada Seminar Nasional Momentum Penataan Sistem Peradilan Etika Berbangsa dan Bernegara berdasarkan Pancasila dan UUD NRI Tahun 1945, Mahkamah Kehormatan DPR-RI, 16 Mei 2024, <https://berkas.dpr.go.id/akd/dokumen/mkd-53-5264cf2155c003e50df3dca26b9b7cc3.pdf>.

¹⁸"Jimly Asshiddiqie Usul Bentuk Mahkamah Etika Nasional Agar Komisi Yudisial Lebih Berguna," *Tribunnews.com*, 2025, <https://www.tribunnews.com/nasional/2025/06/11/jimly-asshiddiqie-usul-bentuk-mahkamah-etika-nasional-agar-komisi-yudisial-lebih-berguna>.

The concept of MEN stems from the idea that public ethics must become a constitutive and integrated system within state governance. MEN is designed as the culmination of an ethical regulation system that is cross-professional, independent, and transparent, with its primary function being to uphold the integrity of public officials through ethical mechanisms that go beyond positive law. Ethics are positioned as an initial corrective to behaviors that undermine public trust, employing an “outside-inside” approach that integrates legal norms, religious values, and moral principles. MEN also provides a forum for ethical appeals and expands the authority of KY as its administrative body, thereby replacing the previously fragmented ethics oversight system. If grounded in Pancasila, MEN holds the potential to become a constitutional instrument for systematically structuring national ethics and preserving social cohesion within a pluralistic society.

Therefore the relationship between *TAP MPR No. 6/2001* and MEN can now be clearly articulated. MEN is conceived not merely as an ethics regulation body, but as *a central node in the effort to strengthen the integrity of public officials and professionals*, while structuring a comprehensive national ethics system. Its establishment reflects a spirit aligned with the moral direction of the nation as outlined in *TAP MPR on the Ethics of Living as a Nation*: positioning religious values, noble cultural traditions, and Pancasila as the foundation of a living and functional ethical framework. *This alignment is evident in its normative objectives, foundational values, strategic role guided by the national ethics architecture, and its corrective and preventive functions in relation to public conduct.* In this context the expansion of KY mandate will clearly accelerate the realization of MEN as a transparent and independent cross-professional ethics cassation institution.

In other words if MEN is envisioned as a strategic node guided by the architecture of national ethics and as an instrument for strengthening the integrity of public officials and professionals across sectors, one can imagine ethical sanctions such as permanent dismissal for violations of professional codes of ethics that undermine the ethical foundations of civic life. A pertinent example is the dismissal of the Chair of *the General Elections Commission (KPU)* Hasyim Asy’ari in 2024 by DKPP, due to abuse of power and misuse of state facilities for personal gain. The act was deemed to have damaged public ethics and institutional integrity, warranting sanctions against the head of a strategic body responsible for shaping the direction of national elections and the future of Indonesia’s political system and civic life.

Likewise if MEN as aligned with *TAP MPR No. 6/2001* adopts religious values, noble cultural traditions, and Pancasila as the foundation of public ethics, and promotes the expansion of KY mandate as a transparent and independent ethics cassation institution, then ethical regulation for serious violations that harm the nation’s ethical life becomes a necessity. For instance the case involving the dissolution of a Christian student retreat in Sukabumi (discussed in detail in the following subsection) where *the Cidahu Police Chief* was reported to *the National Police’s Professional and Security Division (Propam Mabes Polri)* for alleged bias

and inciting public anger through his statement that “the retreat site had been used by *parties outside our religion*.” Should this case proceed to cassation at the MEN level, ethical regulation could impose sanctions on those who violate the fundamental values of public ethics in such contexts.

INTERRELIGIOUS PROBLEMS IN INDONESIA’S DIGITAL ERA

Social cohesion is generally understood as a condition in which individuals and groups from diverse cultural backgrounds, values, beliefs, lifestyles, and socio-economic resources are able to interact and collaborate for the common good. According to James Laurence et al. cohesion emerges when diversity at the micro, meso, and macro levels enjoys equal access to various domains of life. *The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD) emphasizes that social cohesion is achieved when social systems and structures are integrated to promote collective well-being, without exclusion or marginalization, and ensure fair social mobility. For this reason social cohesion is often closely associated with social inclusion.¹⁹

Digital traces of representative cases reflecting current challenges and disruptions to interreligious social cohesion in Indonesia throughout 2024–2025 are readily accessible. Various regions have experienced fractures in interreligious relations, weakening religious social solidarity as a tangible consequence of deteriorating cohesion. Prominent cases that surfaced in this context include the mass gathering of the *Ahmadiyah Muslim Community* (JAI) in Kuningan, the construction of the *Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal Mosque* (MIAH) in Bogor, a student retreat in Sukabumi, and *Christian Religious Education* (PAK) for children in Padang. Meanwhile *Setara Institute* and *Imparsial* have provided comprehensive documentation of interreligious tensions and patterns of violations against *Freedom of Religion and Belief* (KBB), which have significantly undermined social cohesion.

Case: JAI Grand Gathering, Kuningan, December 2024. Actors: Acting Regent and security forces. *Problem:* Six thousand JAI members from outside Java were denied entry to Manislor Village Kuningan to attend the JAI grand gathering. The Acting Regent of Kuningan prohibited the event, while security forces claimed they were merely safeguarding the congregation. However according to JAI’s account they were subjected to intimidation by the authorities. *Impact:* A crisis of trust in the political and legal system, human rights violations, psychological distress, and disruption of interreligious social cohesion.²⁰

Case: Construction of MIAH, June 2025. Actors: Bogor City Government and Regional Leadership Coordination Forum (Forkopimda). *Problem:* The Bogor City

¹⁹Mahmudin dkk., “Kohesi Sosial Dan Keberagaman Agama: Studi Perbandingan Modal Sosial Sunda Wiwitan Kuningan Dan Cimahi, Jawa Barat,” *Penamas* 34, no. 2 (Desember 2021): 181–202, <https://doi.org/10.31330/penamas.v34i2.518>.

²⁰Tim Peneliti Imparsial, *Laporan Tahunan Situasi Kebebasan Beragama Atau Berkeyakinan (KBB) di Indonesia (Desember 2024 - Juli 2025)* (Imparsial - The Indonesian Human Rights Monitor, 2025), <https://imparsial.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Annual-Report-Kebebasan-Beragama-dan-Berkeyakinan-Desember-2024-Juli-2025.pdf>.

Government and Forkopimda declared a “city-scale conflict status” in response to opposition against the construction of MIAH in Tanah Baru Subdistrict North Bogor. Security concerns cannot serve as a legitimate justification for rejecting the mosque’s construction, instead social cohesion must be preserved by guaranteeing freedom of belief for all individuals. *Impact*: A crisis of trust in the political and legal system, human rights violations, psychological distress, and disruption of interreligious social cohesion.²¹

Case: Religious Retreat Incident in Sukabumi, June 2025. Actors: Local residents, *Subdistrict Leadership Coordination Forum (Forkopimcam)*, *Special Staff to the Minister of Human Rights*, *Cidahu Police Chief*. *Problem*: A retreat involving 30 children in Cidahu escalated into intimidation, vandalism, and desecration of the Cross, severely damaging interreligious social cohesion.²² Religious freedom was disregarded, *Forkopimcam* failed to fulfill its educational role and *the Special Staff to the Minister of Human Rights* mistakenly supported the release of perpetrators of violence.²³ The Police Chief’s religiously biased statement further inflamed the situation.²⁴ This incident highlights the fragility of social cohesion when law enforcement and public officials neglect justice, tolerance, and the protection of constitutional rights. *Impact*: Material losses, psychological trauma among children, a crisis of trust in the political and legal system, human rights violations, religious desecration, and disruption of interreligious social cohesion.

Case: PAK for Children in Padang, July 2025. Actors: Local residents, neighborhood leaders (RT-RW), *Deputy Mayor*, security forces. *Problem*: Twenty children receiving PAK due to the absence of PAK teachers in their respective schools were facilitated by *the Indonesian Faithful Christian Church (GKSI)*. During their learning activities, they experienced intimidation and the destruction of their study venue.²⁵ Security forces were absent during the incident, while RT-RW leaders were reportedly involved in pressuring and supporting the crowd. The Mayor described the event as a mere miscommunication and failed to recognize it as a serious violation of social cohesion, which should be safeguarded through the

²¹“Pemkot Bogor Tetapkan Status Keadaan Konflik Skala Kota Terkait Pembangunan Masjid Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal,” MAHATVA, 17 Juni 2025, <https://www.mahatva.id/pemkot-bogor-tetapkan-status-keadaan-konflik-skala-kota-terkait-pembangunan-masjid-imam-ahmad-bin-hanbal>.

²²“Viral Kegiatan Ibadah Dibubarkan Warga di Sukabumi, Bangunan Dirusak,” Detik.com, 29 Juli 2025, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-7987948/viral-kegiatan-ibadah-dibubarkan-warga-di-sukabumi-bangunan-dirusak>.

²³“KemenHAM Minta Penahanan 7 Tersangka Perusak Retret Ibadah Sukabumi Ditanggguhkan,” Kumparan.com, 4 Juli 2025, <https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/kemenham-minta-penahanan-7-tersangka-perusak-retret-ibadah-sukabumi-ditanggguhkan-25OPRNJsRxL>.

²⁴“Polda Jabar Evaluasi Kapolsek Cidahu usai Pernyataan Viral soal Rumah Retret di Sukabumi,” Sukabumi update, 15 Juli 2025, <https://www.sukabumiupdate.com/jawa-barat/160947/polda-jabar-evaluasi-kapolsek-cidahu-usai-pernyataan-viral-soal-rumah-retret-di-sukabumi>.

²⁵“Duduk Perkara Perusakan Rumah Doa dan Pendidikan Agama Siswa Kristen di Padang,” KOMPAS.com, 28 Juli 2025, <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2025/07/28/060000178/duduk-perkara-perusakan-rumah-doa-dan-pendidikan-agama-siswa-kristen-di>.

guarantee of freedom of belief for all citizens.²⁶ *Impact:* Material losses, psychological trauma among children, a crisis of trust in the legal system, human rights violations, and disruption of interreligious social cohesion.

Setara Institute Report 2024-2025. Actors: State and non-state actors *Problem:* *Setara Institute* recorded 260 incidents and 402 actions violating KBB throughout 2024. *Impact:* Discriminatory and inhumane treatment. Six types of KBB violations by state actors include religiously motivated business prohibitions (52 cases), discrimination (50), discriminatory policies and arrests (10 each), as well as prosecution and criminalization of alleged blasphemy (7 each). Meanwhile non-state actors most frequently committed acts of intolerance (73 cases), blasphemy accusations (29), rejection of religious sermons (20), obstruction of worship facility construction (16), and prohibition of worship and religious-based businesses (13 each).²⁷

According to *Setara Institute*, throughout 2024 there were 159 recorded violations of KBB committed by state actors. The majority of these violations originated from local governments (50 cases), followed by the police (30 cases), municipal civil service police units (21 cases), and 10 cases each involving the *Indonesian National Armed Forces* (TNI) and the Prosecutor's Office, as well as 6 cases involving Forkopimda. The overall distribution pattern of these violations remained relatively unchanged compared to the previous year. However there was a notable surge in violations involving the Prosecutor's Office, which rose to 10 cases. This increase is closely correlated with the rise in blasphemy accusations, which frequently targeted public figures such as celebrities, religious leaders, specific faith communities, and political actors.²⁸

According to *Setara Institute* violations of KBB by non-state actors throughout 2024 showed a troubling trend, dominated by religious mass organizations (49 actions), community groups (40), individual citizens (28), *the Indonesian Ulama Council* (MUI) (21), general organizations and individuals (11 each), and public figures (10). Compared to the previous year the significant increase in violations by religious organizations reflects the growing influence of conservatism and the mobilization of exclusive religious sentiment, particularly among conservative Islamic groups. This phenomenon was evident in the rejection of Sherly Tjondoa's candidacy in North Maluku, which was based on her gender, religion, and ethnicity as a non-Muslim woman of Chinese descent. This situation underscores that threats to KBB do not only originate from the state but also from society, revealing a weak grassroots commitment to tolerance. Without serious responses through

²⁶"Usut tuntas pembubaran dan perusakan Rumah Doa di Padang," *Amnesty International Indonesia*, 28 Juli 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/usut-tuntas-pembubaran-dan-perusakan-rumah-doa-di-padang/07/2025/>.

²⁷Setara Institute, *Kondisi Kebebasan Beragama Berkeyakinan (KBB) 2024 - Regresi Di Tengah Transisi* (Setara - Institute for Democracy and Peace, 2025), <https://kbb.id/2025/05/23/indeks-kota-toleran-2024-setara-institute/>.

²⁸Setara Institute, *Kondisi KBB 2024*.

law enforcement and tolerance education, the social ecosystem that safeguards religious freedom risks further erosion, hindering the protection of vulnerable groups in Indonesia's democratization process.²⁹

Imparsial Report 2024–2025. Actors: State and non-state actors. *Problem:* *Imparsial* recorded 13 KBB related cases between December 2024 and July 2025 based on their media monitoring. *Impact:* Discriminatory and inhumane treatment. Regarding KBB violations committed by state and societal elements, *Imparsial's* research found that state actors were more dominant, with seven cases involving local governments, formal institutions such as MUI, and religion-based organizations. Meanwhile the remaining six cases involved non-state actors, including citizens, religious figures, community organizations, and private entities, as seen in the rejection of prayer facility construction in Summarecon Bekasi, or the abuse of a child by other children of different religions in Indragiri Hulu, Riau.³⁰

According to *Imparsial* in many cases involving KBB, the state has failed to fulfill its role as the protector of citizens' constitutional rights. Local governments often side with majority groups under the pretext of maintaining stability, thereby reinforcing favoritism and narrowing the space for minority expression. This phenomenon is reflected in various discriminatory policies that blur the line between religion and politics. The lack of political will further escalates the situation, as political actors tend to prioritize majority support in electoral contests. As a result the voices of vulnerable groups are frequently ignored, and the restoration of rights for victims of religious freedom violations has yet to become a state priority.³¹

According to *Imparsial* cases such as the prohibition of JAI activities in Kuningan and Banjar, as well as the suspension of mosque permits in Bogor, reflect the legitimization of discrimination by state actors. Incidents of persecution in Sukabumi and Padang have even drifted into extremism, while government responses tend to downplay the substantive nature of the problem. Incomplete law enforcement aggravates discrimination and creates space for repeated violations. The state is constitutionally obligated to ensure the restoration of victims' rights, yet weak commitment and local political pressure often hinder this process. Without concrete measures and inclusive policies, violations of religious freedom risk becoming more widespread and pose a serious threat to the nation's social cohesion.³²

Problems surrounding interreligious social cohesion in Indonesia as detected through its digital traces between December 2024 and July 2025 reveal a series of violations against freedom of religion and belief, involving both state and non-state actors. Cases such as the prohibition of JAI activities, the rejection of Mosque construction, and the intimidation of Christian children highlight the weak protection of constitutional rights and the fragility of social cohesion. Non-state actors typically

²⁹Setara Institute, *Kondisi KBB 2024*.

³⁰Tim Peneliti Imparsial, *Situasi KBB di Indonesia 2024-2025*.

³¹Tim Peneliti Imparsial, *Situasi KBB di Indonesia 2024-2025*.

³²Tim Peneliti Imparsial, *Situasi KBB di Indonesia 2024-2025*.

refer to individuals or groups acting in the name of the religious majority, with minor exceptions such as the rejection of a prayer facility in Summarecon. Meanwhile security forces and public officials have frequently failed to fulfill their educational and protective roles, as well as to uphold professional ethical standards. These failures have contributed to a crisis of trust in the legal and political system, triggered a range of multidimensional negative impacts, and enabled the spread of discriminatory practices.

PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS, “MEN”, AND SOCIAL COHESION

In Indonesia’s constitutional system, various institutions have evolved to enforce codes of ethics across both public and professional sectors. In the judicial domain KY and *the Honorary Council of Judges* operate within MA and MK. In the legislative branch DPR and *the Regional Representative Council* (DPD) maintain ethical oversight through *the Honorary Court and the Ethics Council*. In the press sector *the Press Council* performs a similar function, while the medical profession is regulated by *the Indonesian Medical Council* (IDI). professional organizations, political parties, and civil society groups have also established internal ethical systems. Ethical enforcement mechanisms have been institutionalized guided by the bureaucracy through *the National Commission* (Komnas) HAM and other state commissions. Law enforcement-related institutions likewise maintain their own codes of ethics and honorary councils, including professional advocate associations (such as *Peradi*), *Propam Mabes Polri*, *the National Police Commission* (Kompolnas), *Honorary Council of the TNI*, and *the Indonesian Notary Association*.

On the other hand *the professional code of ethics in religious contexts* serves as a binding written guideline that affirms professional values and conduct, and must be observed by every vocational actor engaging within religious spheres. Therefore executive, legislative, and judicial officials are expected to possess ethical documents relevant to religious domains. *The Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Civil Servants* (UU No. 20/2023) article 4(d), states that one of the core values of civil servants is to act harmoniously, with mutual care and respect for differences, and to treat all individuals equally regardless of background.³³ *The Police Professional Code of Ethics* (Perpol No. 7/2022) article 7(g), requires every officer of *the Indonesian National Police* (Polri) in the realm of societal ethics to practice religious moderation, defined as a moderate, tolerant, and respectful approach to religious diversity that consistently promotes collective well-being.³⁴ *The Prosecutor’s Code of Conduct* (Perjagung No. 14/2012) prohibits prosecutors from engaging in

³³“Undang-Undang RI Nomor 20/2023 Tentang Aparatur Sipil Negara,” 2023.

³⁴“Peraturan Kepolisian Negara RI Nomor 7/2022 Tentang Kode Etik dan Komisi Kode Etik Kepolisian Negara RI,” 2022.

discriminatory behavior based on ethnicity, religion, race, gender, social class, or political affiliation in the execution of their professional duties.³⁵

At present there is still *no nationally recognized written code of ethics for religious leaders in Indonesia*, whether specific to a particular religious tradition or applicable across traditions. Ideally there should be a written code of ethics that is inclusive, grounded in constitutional values and human rights, and institutionalized through judicial mechanisms and systems of accountability to strengthen interreligious social cohesion in the digital era. A continual challenge issue arising from this absence is the assumption that behavior not regulated by law is ethically permissible. Nevertheless one example of a relevant ethical document remains: *the code of ethics for civil servants within the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag). The Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Civil Servants at Kemenag (Permenag No. 12/2019) article 6 clauses d–i*, outlines the following obligations: to carry out humanitarian duties; to enhance mutual respect and cooperation among adherents of different religions; to promote religious harmony; to avoid from discriminatory actions; to avoid imposing any religion on others; and to embody moderation in religious practice as a form of understanding and commitment to communal unity.³⁶

The presence and absence of written codes of ethics reveal a regulatory imbalance in the governance of professional ethics related to religious practice in Indonesia. On one hand, state officials such as ASN and Law Enforcement Officers (APK) -including judges, prosecutors, and police officers- are guided by codes of ethics that explicitly emphasize religious moderation, respect for diversity, and the prohibition of identity-based discrimination. On the other hand, religious leaders lack a standardized and binding national code of ethics, leaving a grey area in terms of moral and professional accountability. This absence risks undermining ethical accountability in religious practice, particularly when religious leaders assume significant public roles. Moreover although ethical guidelines exist within the Kemenag, their scope is limited to public officials within the ministry's institutional framework.

Therefore *the relational flow between professional codes of ethics and interreligious social cohesion* can be outlined as follows: (1) *TAP MPR No. 6/2001 on the ethics of living as a nation* serves as an ethical foundation for all professions and institutions in managing social and religious interactions; (2) Professional codes of ethics for vocations operating within religious domains when available will synergize with *the Ethics of Living as a Nation*. However in cases where certain professions lack written ethical documents, *the Ethics of Living as a Nation* will serve as a foundational framework to fill that constitutional gap; (3) MEN as the

³⁵H. M. Prasetyo, "Penegakan Etik Bagi Jaksa," dalam *Menggagas Peradilan Etik di Indonesia*, ed. oleh Hermansyah dkk. (Jakarta: Pusat Analisis dan Layanan Informasi Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2015), 256.

³⁶"Peraturan Menteri Agama RI Nomor 12/2019 Tentang Kode Etik dan Kode Perilaku ASN Kementerian Agama," 2019.

institutional body for ethical regulation will act as a central node in strengthening the integrity of public officials and professionals, structuring a comprehensive ethical system, and serving as a transparent and independent cross-professional ethics cassation institution; (4) Interreligious social cohesion which currently faces destructive challenges marked by multidimensional impacts and widespread discriminatory behavior is expected to be better managed, particularly through ethical regulation and effective sanctions aimed at guiding actors engaged in the religious sector.

Since the late 20th century, the idea of establishing ethics enforcement bodies in public sectors requiring high levels of trust has gained traction. In many U.S. states ethics commissions have been formed to address violations within executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Institutions such as ethics commissions and honorary councils are tasked with processing reports and imposing sanctions, yet their mechanisms often remain closed due to the perception that they involve private matters. This stage of ethical enforcement unintegrated into a transparent and institutionally accountable judicial system, and lacking public trust, is commonly referred to as the *closed functional* phase of ethics. Similar practices are prevalent in Indonesia, where the opacity of ethical enforcement mechanisms hinders public accountability and reinforces the tendency of professional bodies to protect their members rather than uphold ethical standards.³⁷

The culture of *ewuh-pekewuh* -a reluctance to confront or criticize others- undermines institutional responses to ethical violations, preventing professional ethics from evolving in step with rising public expectations and service demands. Institutions such as medical honor councils, accounting organizations, and lawyer associations often prioritize protecting their members over ensuring justice. When ethical mechanisms fail to operate transparently and credibly, the public is increasingly inclined to criminalize professional misconduct.³⁸ As long as ethics enforcement institutions remain formalistic and inaccessible, their effectiveness and public accountability will remain less than ideal. Therefore an ethics judicial process is needed one that upholds the principles of transparency, independence, and impartiality, so that the enforcement of law and ethics can proceed in side by side through both *the Court of Law* and *the Court of Ethics*.³⁹

The Fulfillment of Professional Codes of Ethics and the Role of MEN. The concept of MEN as a Court of Ethics plays a pivotal role in strengthening the fulfillment of professional codes of ethics by formulating a national ethical framework that integrates universal principles such as integrity, justice, and social responsibility. This framework helps prevent the fragmentation of standards across professions which can confuse the public and undermine accountability. As an external oversight body, MEN evaluates ethical violations objectively and

³⁷ Asshiddiqie, "Menggagas Peradilan Etik di Indonesia," 16–18.

³⁸ Asshiddiqie, "Menggagas Peradilan Etik di Indonesia," 18–19.

³⁹ Asshiddiqie, "Memperkenalkan Peradilan Etika."

transparently, addressing potential conflicts of interest in internal enforcement by professional associations and reinforcing the legitimacy of ethical sanctions. In the context of restoring public trust, MEN serves as a forum for moral recovery, demonstrating that *ethical breaches are treated seriously and fairly, especially in cases that compromise professional integrity*. Through educational rulings and moral precedents, MEN also promotes the early internalization of ethical values in professional formation, while expanding the meaning of ethics as a tangible contribution to collective well-being and happiness beyond mere formal compliance.

The rise in violations of professional codes of ethics and the weakening of interreligious social cohesion in Indonesia between December 2024 and July 2025 underscore the urgency of implementing the MEN concept as an external oversight body in ethical governance. When security forces and public officials fail to fulfill their educational and protective roles, and neglect ethical principles such as justice and social responsibility, public trust in the legal and political systems erodes. In this context MEN holds strategic potential to formulate a national ethical framework that prevents the fragmentation of standards across professions, evaluates violations objectively, and reinforces the legitimacy of ethical sanctions. Through educational rulings and moral precedents, MEN can enhance early internalization of ethical values, restore professional integrity, and strengthen the foundations of social cohesion in a sustainable manner.

Court of Ethics is also related to the issue of democracy, and democracy serves as the foundation of social inclusion, which is synonymous with social cohesion. According to Zulfikri Suleman the establishment of a Court of Ethics for state officials is an urgent necessity within the context of contemporary democracy in Indonesia. First, democracy acknowledges the possibility of error by every individual, making oversight mechanisms for state officials crucial to protect the fundamental rights of citizens. Second, the moral crisis affecting modern society demands the strengthening of ethical dimensions in state governance through the enforcement of the rule of ethics as a complement to the rule of law. Third, in Indonesia's democratization process, various negative tendencies in state practices highlight the urgency of implementing a Court of Ethics to build a future national life grounded in greater integrity and justice.⁴⁰

Setara Institute's seven policy recommendations regarding the handling of KBB violations in 2024–2025 reflect the ongoing challenges to social cohesion and underscore the urgency of strengthening governance based on inclusive ethical values. These recommendations highlight the importance of institutionalizing ethical principles in public policy, as well as establishing mechanisms and institutions for ethical enforcement that systematically ensure justice, participation, and the protection of diversity. *The President* is urged to accelerate inclusive governance policies so that both central and local governments can effectively address KBB

⁴⁰Zulfikri Suleman, "Mahkamah Etika Penyelenggara Negara di Negara Demokrasi," *Jurnal Etika dan Pemilu* 1, no. 1 (Juni 2015), <https://journal.dkpp.go.id/index.php/etikapemilu/issue/view/3>.

related issues, particularly those involving blasphemy and disruptions to places of worship. *The central government* must improve the handling of discriminatory policies and fulfill the mandate of *UU No. 15/2019*. *The Minister of Religious Affairs* should evaluate *the Religious Moderation Program* to prevent it from triggering conflict. *The Minister of Home Affairs* must promote inclusive governance at the regional level. The agenda of tolerance and social inclusion should be integrated into national development planning.

MEN and the Management of Interreligious Social Cohesion. As an ethical enforcement institution, MEN plays a strategic role in managing interreligious social cohesion by upholding universal moral principles such as honesty, justice, and respect for human dignity, values that resonate with the core teachings of all religions. This approach enhances a shared ethical space that transcends sectarian boundaries. *Through regulation of socially impactful ethical violations*, including hate speech and religion-based discrimination, MEN serves as a moral safeguard against radicalism and intolerance that threaten social harmony. As a forum for moral restoration, MEN strengthens intercommunity trust through transparent and fair ethical rulings, helping to prevent cycles of social discord. Its contribution to public education on interreligious ethics further promotes religious moderation and appreciation of diversity as a source of strength. By revitalizing the spirit of Pancasila in social practice, MEN positions ethics as a bridge between personal belief and collective responsibility in national life.

The situation of KBB violations in Indonesia between December 2024 and July 2025 implicating both state and non-state actors, underscores the critical need for MEN as a mechanism for managing interreligious social cohesion. When public authorities fail to fulfill their educational and protective functions and neglect professional ethical principles, MEN can serve as a moral safeguard against intolerance and radicalism by upholding universal values such as justice and respect for human dignity. Through ethical regulation of discriminatory acts and hate speech, and by educating the public on interreligious ethics, MEN strengthens trust between communities and helps prevent cycles of social discord. In this context, MEN functions not only as a forum for moral restoration but also as a bridge between personal belief and collective responsibility in national life.

The denial of professional ethical standards has proven to pose a serious threat to social cohesion, as seen in the political contestation surrounding the 2024 presidential election. Noncompliance with ethical norms by public officials - particularly in the conduct and outcome of the election- has triggered widespread public outrage. Practices perceived as violating the ethics of state governance have sparked waves of protest from intellectuals, national figures, former officials, and pro-democracy activists. Two major issues have emerged: the erosion of state ethics and the rise of dynastic politics and nepotism, which evoke public memories of the crisis preceding the 1998 reform era. Ethical violations that are not addressed transparently and accountably risk undermining social cohesion. Therefore

consistent enforcement of professional codes of ethics is a critical prerequisite for democratic stability and national integrity.⁴¹

The Assistant Chief of the Indonesian National Police for Human Resources (AsSDM Kapolri) Inspector General Anwar stated, that several police personnel are facing issues related to intolerance, radicalism, and “LGBT” concerns. This statement was delivered during a seminar titled “*Reconstructing National Identity: Weaving the Archipelago to Realize a Conscious and Character-Driven Police Force*” held on September 15th 2025.⁴² A survey conducted by *the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM)* at *the State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta* revealed that 63.07% of respondents showed implicit intolerance and 56.90% showed explicit intolerance toward followers of other religions. Notably 56% of teachers rejected the establishment of non-Muslim religious schools in their communities. The high prevalence of intolerant views among educators poses a gateway for the development of radical attitudes and behaviors that threaten social cohesion.⁴³ These two records related to professional ethics clearly have the potential to generate issues that undermine interreligious social cohesion.

Two out of five recommendations issued by *Imparsial* regarding the handling of KBB violations in 2024–2025 reflect the challenges of social cohesion and underscore the urgency of enforcing public officials’ codes of ethics based on inclusive ethical values. These recommendations emphasize the importance of fulfilling ethical standards among public officials to ensure the protection of HAM and KBB, issues that are central to managing interreligious social cohesion. Political parties, regional leaders, and legislators are urged to mainstream the principles of religious freedom in political practices and local governance. *The Ministry of Home Affairs* must monitor and take firm action against local governments that issue discriminatory regulations. The capacity of APH -police, prosecutors, and the judges- must be strengthened to become more inclusive and rights-based. The government also needs to enhance the competencies of civil servants to ensure that public services respect the rights of religious and belief minorities. *The Indonesian National Police* is obliged to enforce discipline and ethical codes in accordance with *Police Regulation (Perkap) No. 7/2006* in addressing discrimination and persecution, and to implement human rights principles and standards as stipulated in *Perkap No. 8/2009*.⁴⁴

The Fulfillment of Professional Ethics and the Management of Interreligious Social Cohesion. The fulfillment of professional codes of ethics directly contributes

⁴¹ Asshiddiqie, “Momentum Penataan Sistem Etika Berbangsa-Bernegara dan Pembentukan Mahkamah Etika Nasional Berdasarkan Pancasila dan UUD NRIT 1945.”

⁴² “Polisi Cari Alat Pendeteksi LGBT, Cegah Anggota Terpapar,” *Kumparan*, 27 Oktober 2025, <https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/polisi-cari-alat-pendeteksi-lgbt-cegah-anggota-terpapar-26821q34meg>.

⁴³ Hamid Nasuhi dan Abdallah, ed., *Pelita Yang Meredup: Keberagamaan Guru Sekolah/ Madrasah Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: PPIM UIN Jakarta, 2020), vi, 42, 155.

⁴⁴ Tim Peneliti Imparsial, *Situasi KBB di Indonesia 2024-2025*, 18.

to the management of interreligious social cohesion by ensuring that every professional act reflects integrity, justice, and respect for the diversity of values. When professions that intersect with the religious sector -whether in law, politics, health, education, or media- uphold universal ethical standards, they help shape an inclusive social space free from religion-based discrimination. *Consistent ethical enforcement prevents abuse of authority that could trigger sectarian conflict, while strengthening intercommunity trust through fair and transparent practices.* Thus professional ethics serve not merely as technical guidelines, but as strategic instruments for enhancing social cohesion amid a plurality of beliefs.

KBB violations that occurred in Indonesia between December 2024 and July 2025, committed by both state and non-state actors, reveal the fragility of interreligious social cohesion which ought to be safeguarded through the fulfillment of professional codes of ethics. When security forces and public officials fail to uphold principles of integrity, justice, and respect for diversity, the social -corporeal and digital- space becomes vulnerable to discrimination and sectarian conflict. The solution lies not in regulation within the digital sphere but in the strengthening of corporeal instruments. Professional ethics must be embodied through tangible institutional mechanisms, such as ethics courts that provide oversight and ensure accountability. These physical instruments guarantee that ethical principles do not remain at the level of abstract formulation but are concretely implemented in everyday practice. In this way interreligious cohesion is reinforced through direct engagement, embodied responsibility, and the active presence of institutions in the public sphere.

Governing the State Ethically. In discussing the importance of ethical governance Frans Magnis-Suseno emphasizes the requirements for reforming power structures -political, economic, social, and cultural- as well as the integrity of individuals in public office. Democracy fails not because of religious radicalism, but when the majority of citizens lose hope. Radicalism thrives when the state fails to guarantee justice, religious freedom, and protection for minorities. Therefore the state must reorganize its organizational and ideological structures, ensure honesty, reject pragmatism that sacrifices the vulnerable, and cultivate a collective commitment to inclusive and civilized national ideals.⁴⁵ Citizens -and netizen- who experience discriminatory treatment may also benefit -economically and/or politically- from power structures that oppress the majority into despair. However pragmatism that sacrifices religious minorities as the vulnerable must also be brought to an end. In this context the existence of MEN holds potential to contribute to the reform of power structures -both organizationally and ideologically- for a more ethical approach to state governance.

⁴⁵Franz Magnis-Suseno, "Mengelola Negara Secara Etis," dalam *Menggagas Peradilan Etik di Indonesia*, ed. oleh Hermansyah, Imran, dan Tri Purno Utomo (Jakarta: Pusat Analisis dan Layanan Informasi Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2015), 43–59.

Bridging National Mottos to Policy Agendas. In his research on “*Religion and Social Cohesion: experiences and challenges*” Taufik Abdullah explains, that religion as a social subsystem, interacts closely with political and economic domains, and therefore public policy must take its structural context into account. When sacred values are disrupted, identity and social cohesion are placed at risk. Equitable democratization of politics and the economy is a prerequisite for religion to function as a social adhesive. In an open system religion can voice ethical concerns constructively, whereas structural inequality tends to fuel radicalization and challenges to the social order.⁴⁶ Citizens -and netizen- who experience discriminatory and multidimensional impacts deserve more democratic and inclusive treatment from fellow citizens. In this context, the existence of MEN holds potential to translate the national motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* which embodies the ethics of national life into a concrete policy agenda through ethical regulation of socially impactful violations.

The Constitution must not be interpreted solely through a *grammatical reading*, but also through *moral and philosophical approaches*.⁴⁷ In a pluralistic national life, ethics is not merely a technical norm, but a moral foundation that safeguards dignity, justice, and solidarity. Professional codes of ethics that intersect with the religious sector should serve as behavioral compasses for vocational actors, yet they have not been fully institutionalized at the national level. In this context MEN offers a source of hope: not merely as a custodian of justice, but as a guardian of public conscience. MEN revitalizes the spirit of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, bridging personal belief with collective responsibility. Through fair and transparent ethical enforcement, MEN supports all citizens and their respective professions in nurturing social cohesion, preventing radicalism, and restructuring power relations to be more humane and civilized.

The fulfillment of professional codes of ethics within the religious sector and through MEN serves as a tool of managing interreligious cohesion in Indonesia's digital era. In Indonesia's digital era -whose informational dynamics evoke the liquidity of natural systems- information unavoidably finds pathways into the public sphere regardless of boundaries or constraints. This condition is shaped by the persistent dominance of fragmentation and globalization, which redefine modes of interaction and the circulation of meaning. As corporeal and digital actions increasingly converge the digital realm paradoxically demands corporeal solutions, particularly in contexts where ethical integrity is essential. Within the religious sector the fulfillment of professional codes of ethics emerges as a necessary corporeal response to sustain interreligious cohesion and to navigate the ethical challenges posed by digital mediation.

⁴⁶Taufik Abdullah, *Di Sekitar Masalah Agama dan Kohesi Sosial: pengalaman dan tantangan*, 11, no. 1 (2009).

⁴⁷Asshiddiqie, “Vol 1 No 1 (2015).”

IV. CONCLUSION

In Indonesia's fluid digital era, ethical governance demands more than technical compliance, it requires interpreting the Constitution through moral approaches, enforcing inclusive professional codes, and bridging national mottos to policy agendas. Especially within religious vocations, consistent ethical enforcement and regulation of socially impactful violations enhance interreligious cohesion, prevent sectarian conflict, and restore public trust. Where written codes are absent the Ethics of Living as a Nation provides a foundational framework to uphold integrity and democratic civility. TAP MPR No. 6/2001 encompasses socio-cultural ethics, political governance ethics, and fair legal enforcement ethics as a constitutional foundation for interreligious cohesion. Asshiddiqie envisions MEN as the culmination of Indonesia's ethical judicial process, integrating institutional ethical systems. Guided by MEN's framework, national ethics can reinforce the role of professional codes, offering more relevant and effective sanctions to guide religious-sector actors in upholding their ethical obligations and preserving interreligious social cohesion.

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