

Faith-Based Humanitarian Diplomacy for Palestine: A *Siyāsah Khārijiyyah* Perspective

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This research examines how Indonesian civil society organizations—Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, together with the non-governmental organization Komite Nasional Rakyat Palestina (KNRP; National Committee for Palestinian People)—engage in humanitarian diplomacy in support of the Palestinian people's struggle. Using an empirical qualitative approach based on interviews and document analysis, it examines these organizations' roles in fundraising and the distribution of officially licensed public funds. The results show similarities in fundraising orientation and strategy, but differences in aid-distribution approaches shaped by networks, access, and licensing. Ideological factors play an important role in building public trust in humanitarian fund management. From the perspective of *siyāsah khārījīyyah*, the humanitarian activities undertaken by these organizations represent a form of people-centered diplomacy that complements Indonesia's official foreign policy toward Palestine. Their initiatives embody Islamic legal and ethical principles, including justice (*al-'adl*), mutual assistance (*ta'āwun*), human dignity (*karāmah al-insān*), and the protection of human life (*hifẓ al-nafs*). More broadly, faith-based humanitarian diplomacy functions not only as a mechanism for delivering humanitarian assistance but also as an expression of Islamic engagement in foreign affairs, grounded in moral responsibility and global solidarity. Accordingly, this research contributes theoretically to the study of humanitarian diplomacy, Islamic civil society, and *siyāsah khārījīyyah*, demonstrating how religious values are translated into transnational humanitarian action for Palestine.

Penelitian ini mengkaji pola organisasi masyarakat sipil Indonesia dalam diplomasi kemanusiaan untuk Palestina, dengan fokus pada Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) dan Muhammadiyah, serta Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat Komite Nasional Rakyat Palestina (KNRP) dalam mendukung perjuangan kemanusiaan rakyat Palestina. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif empiris melalui wawancara dan analisis dokumen, penelitian ini menyoroti peran organisasi-organisasi ini dalam penggalangan dana dan distribusi dana publik berlisensi resmi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun ada kesamaan orientasi dan strategi dalam penggalangan dana, namun ada perbedaan pendekatan penyaluran bantuan, yang dipengaruhi oleh jaringan, akses, dan perizinan. Faktor ideologis memainkan peran penting dalam membangun kepercayaan publik dalam pengelolaan dana kemanusiaan. Dari perspektif *siyāsah khārījīyyah*, kegiatan kemanusiaan yang dilakukan oleh organisasi-organisasi ini merupakan bentuk diplomasi yang berpusat pada rakyat yang melengkapi kebijakan luar negeri resmi Indonesia terhadap Palestina. Inisiatif mereka mewujudkan prinsip-prinsip hukum dan etika Islam, termasuk keadilan (*al-'adl*), saling membantu (*ta'āwun*), martabat manusia (*karāmah al-insān*), dan perlindungan kehidupan manusia (*hifẓ al-nafs*). Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa diplomasi kemanusiaan berbasis agama tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai mekanisme untuk memberikan bantuan kemanusiaan tetapi juga sebagai manifestasi keterlibatan politik luar negeri Islam yang didasarkan pada tanggung jawab moral dan solidaritas global. Implikasinya, penelitian menawarkan kontribusi teoritis dalam pengembangan diplomasi kemanusiaan, masyarakat sipil Islam, dan *siyāsah khārījīyyah* yang menunjukkan bahwa nilai-nilai agama dapat diterjemahkan ke dalam aksi kemanusiaan transnasional untuk Palestina.

Keywords: *humanitarian diplomacy; Indonesian civil society; Indonesia's foreign policy for Palestine; siyāsah khārījīyyah.*

Introduction

The global solidarity response to the genocide in Gaza reflects what Ulrich Beck calls society's reaction to "irrational events": Beck argues that humanity faces an uncertain future in which the Anthropocene could give rise to social, political, and climate disasters (Beck, 2021). The European Union has likewise pursued mitigation strategies through humanitarian aid policies (Akgül-Açıkmeşe & Özel, 2024). None of these measures, however, have been sufficient to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Palestine, given the EU's intra-regional sensitivities, differences, and violent clashes, as well as Israel's occupation of Palestinian land under the protection of the United States (Akgül-Açıkmeşe & Özel, 2024).

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict significantly shapes public opinion both in Indonesia and worldwide (Qorib et al., 2025; Samudra, Zaman and Mukti, 2024). Extensive media coverage of the suffering in Palestine often triggers strong emotional reactions among Indonesians, shaping how they perceive the conflict (Setiawati, 2024). Data show that most Indonesians sympathize with the Palestinian people and condemn Israel's actions in the conflict (Sualman et al., 2024), a sentiment reflected in the demonstrations and solidarity campaigns across Indonesia that support Palestinian rights and call for a peaceful resolution (Kaslam, 2024). More broadly, Palestinian humanitarian diplomacy operates within a complex web of international relations in which aid and diplomacy are closely intertwined with wider geopolitical concerns. The Palestinian case shows how regimes of war and violence can be reproduced through institutions and practices nominally aimed at achieving "stability" and "peace" (AlAqra', 2026), underscoring the need for a nuanced understanding of humanitarian diplomacy in conflict-affected areas—one that accounts for complex political landscapes and develops flexible strategies to improve aid access and strengthen humanitarian intervention (Bhungalia, 2015).

Diplomacy takes many forms, including humanitarian diplomacy, in which the Indonesian people work hand in hand with the Palestinian people toward their hope of living normally as citizens of the country they love. Humanitarian aid—cash, food, clothing, medical treatment, and infrastructure development such as hospitals and schools—continues to flow uninterrupted from the Indonesian people to the Palestinian people (Asi, 2020). The Palestinian issue has long been a matter of enduring concern for Indonesia, which

has consistently supported Palestine across politics, economics, social affairs, technology, culture, and human rights (Masyrofah, 2023).

Research on Palestine and humanitarian diplomacy has long attracted scholarly attention. Hamka et al. (2024), for instance, examine the strategic role of non-state actors—particularly Muhammadiyah—in Indonesia's humanitarian diplomacy and how this role contributes to global peace efforts and Indonesia's foreign policy objectives. Amal and Olifiani (2023) examine Muhammadiyah activists who support Palestine across four dimensions: providing humanitarian aid, framing the defense of Palestine as part of Islamic activism, raising humanitarian funds, advocating for Palestinian independence, and raising awareness among the Indonesian public about the Palestinian issue. Geremedhn and Gebrihet (2024) similarly emphasize the necessity of humanitarian diplomacy that accounts for complex political landscapes in conflict-affected regions, develops flexible strategies to improve aid access, and strengthens humanitarian interventions.

Shafi and Malik (2024) find that the international community's failure to implement the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine effectively reflects underlying political obstacles to humanitarian diplomacy. Politicized by the power interests of institutions such as the UN, R2P has produced a response that has not been enough to prevent gross violations of human rights or meet humanitarian needs in Gaza. Ben Saad and Dergaa (2023) similarly found that humanitarian diplomacy has played an important role in addressing the ongoing crisis in Palestine, particularly in the Gaza Strip: the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict has produced a dire humanitarian situation, placing enormous strain on the healthcare system and causing great hardship for civilians, especially children, and humanitarian diplomacy efforts in this context have focused on negotiating ceasefires, protecting civilians, and facilitating the delivery of essential aid.

This research addresses the issue of Palestine, which has long concerned the global community, including the Indonesian public. The situation of the Palestinian people has grown increasingly dire under Israeli occupation and the colonization of Palestinian territory, especially since October 7, 2023: Israeli attacks have destroyed nearly 90% of Gaza's infrastructure, causing the Palestinian people to suffer endlessly amid uncertainty about the future of peace in Palestine and requiring humanitarian assistance from countries

around the world, including Indonesia (Planasari, 2025). Public diplomacy theory holds that the public can actively participate in supporting the Palestinian people, with conflict resolution and peacebuilding serving as key tools in this process (Budd et al., 2020).

Within Islamic political thought, *siyāsah khārijīyyah* refers to the principles governing external relations aimed at achieving *maslahah ‘ammah* (public good), *‘adl* (justice), *sulh* (peace), and *hifẓ al-nafs* (protection of human life) (Bahar et al., 2025; Jafar, 2018). Although *siyāsah khārijīyyah* has traditionally been associated with state actors, contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes that non-state actors—particularly faith-based civil society organizations—have become important agents of this framework through humanitarian diplomacy (Afifi, 2024). Most studies, however, focus solely on philanthropy, Islamic solidarity, or humanitarian aid; few have linked the practice of humanitarian diplomacy by Muslim civil society to *siyāsah khārijīyyah* as an ethical framework for Islamic foreign policy, and its application to the management of humanitarian aid in Palestine remains limited.

Building on this gap, this research examines in detail the roles and positions of NU, Muhammadiyah, and KNRP on the Palestinian issue—their approaches, strategies, and oversight of humanitarian diplomacy at the local, regional, and global levels. It also considers the roles of NU Care-LAZISNU, Muhammadiyah Aid Lazismu, and KNRP in collecting and distributing humanitarian aid for Palestine, as well as their synergy and coordination with the government—specifically, Indonesia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Social Affairs.

Method

This was empirical research employing a qualitative design, an approach well-suited to a wide range of disciplines and contexts (Senanayake & Dean, 2025). The main focus was to analyze the humanitarian diplomacy patterns of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and the National Committee for Palestinian People (KNRP/Komite Nasional Rakyat Palestina) in supporting Palestine. This approach also examined the role and strategies of Islamic organizations and NGOs in Indonesia as the center of Asia-Pacific diplomacy for Palestine. The data were analyzed using the *siyāsah khārijīyyah* framework, which serves as a normative tool for assessing the compatibility of public diplomacy with the ethical

principles of Islamic foreign policy. This research was empirical in its data collection and interpretive-normative in its analysis (Alcívar Espín & Alcívar Espín, 2019), aiming to deepen understanding of the relationship between public diplomacy and Islamic foreign policy. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis (Fearnley, 2022; Saglam, 2024). Primary data were obtained from three informants selected for their direct involvement in humanitarian assistance missions in Indonesia: a representative of the Palestinian government, an administrator of an Islamic community organization, and an administrator of an NGO. Secondary data comprised literature on Palestinian issues—particularly humanitarian diplomacy, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution—along with other relevant material from print and online journals and news media. The analysis involved several stages: data reduction, display, editing, and conclusion, which systematically and meaningfully organized the field data to answer the research questions. Data reduction selected core information; data display presented information through narrative description; data editing ensured the validity and coherence of the dataset; and conclusions were drawn by synthesizing the evidence from the field (Darmalaksana, 2022).

This research used public diplomacy theory as an analytical framework to examine public diplomacy in print and online news articles, and also drew on *siyāsah khārijīyyah* theory. Public diplomacy, as a soft power tool, aims to shape an external environment that supports a country's foreign policy; this is achieved by providing accurate information and influencing the international public (Ratajczak & Broś, 2023). Communication is central to this process: intercultural communication and dialogue are essential components of public diplomacy (Biletska et al., 2021; Pavón-Guinea, 2024), and understanding such communication and competencies is crucial for humanitarian diplomacy (Leonard et al., 2002). This process enabled the researcher to identify, both theoretically and empirically, the links between humanitarian diplomacy for Palestine and the relevant ethical principles of Islamic foreign policy.

Humanitarian diplomacy and *siyāsah khārijīyyah*

Siyāsah khārijīyyah historically revolves around governance principles aimed at justice, welfare, and the protection of the Muslim community through foreign relations that balance

ethical commitments with political realism (Khallaf, 2015). Classical Islamic texts such as *Nizām al-Mulk* and Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah* have long informed diplomatic practice by emphasizing justice, social solidarity, and the protection of vulnerable populations (Abd. Rahim et al., 2023; Darke, 2012). From this perspective, humanitarian diplomacy aligns with the Islamic principle of *maslahah* (public interest), ensuring that foreign policy serves both ethical and political ends (Fuadi, 2024).

Modern research on humanitarian diplomacy shows that states such as Tanzania and Nigeria strategically deploy humanitarian diplomacy to advance national and regional objectives while adhering to normative commitments rooted in solidarity and human rights, echoing *siyāsah khārijīyyah*'s emphasis on connecting morality and statecraft (Khallaf, 2015). Tanzania's humanitarian diplomacy, for example, integrates Pan-African values with security cooperation, balancing moral commitments against the realpolitik constraints of resource dependency and political centralization (Kajerero & Nguyahambi, 2026). Similarly, Nigeria's humanitarian efforts in the Sahel illustrate the interplay between national interest, humanitarian principles, and regional security, showing how diplomacy can serve peacebuilding and resilience in conflict-affected areas (Liadi, 2024).

Humanitarian diplomacy within the *siyāsah khārijīyyah* framework can be seen as an extension of Islamic ethical foreign policy, which historically sought to protect oppressed groups and promote justice beyond borders, sometimes through intervention and diplomatic engagement (Ivonina, 2023). Similarly, in contemporary diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy is conceptualized as a modality involving negotiation, advocacy, and partnership with multiple state and non-state actors—including NGOs and international organizations—to address humanitarian crises while advancing foreign policy goals (Bogatyreva, 2022; Turunen, 2020). This approach reflects *siyāsah khārijīyyah*'s emphasis on inclusive and pragmatic governance in external affairs.

Humanitarian diplomacy remains an important tool for addressing the Palestinian crisis, but various factors limit its efficacy (AlAqra', 2026; Gunawan et al., 2025). The EU's efforts, for example, have been constrained by multipolar competition, regional fragmentation, and internal contestation (Akgül-Açıkmeşe & Özel, 2024). Despite these challenges, humanitarian diplomacy continues to play a vital role in facilitating aid operations, saving lives

during critical periods, and advocating for compliance with international law (Geremedhn & Gebrihet, 2024). To achieve a lasting impact, however, humanitarian diplomacy must navigate a complex political landscape and develop flexible strategies that increase access to aid while addressing the root causes of conflict—and the conflict will continue to shape how freedom of expression can be exercised in Palestine (Manitra & Prabandari, 2026).

As the concept of international relations has evolved—from relations between states to relations across the global community—the concept of diplomacy has developed alongside it (Lehrs, 2021). Diplomatic activity is now carried out not only by state officials and professional diplomats but also by international organizations, civil society organizations, and the media (Bakry, 2017). Many countries now promote this form of public diplomacy to disseminate information about their policies, enabling direct communication with foreign publics on various issues, particularly education and culture (Abdillah & Masyrofah, 2024).

From the perspective of *fiqh al-siyāsah*, diplomacy (*mujāmalah dawliyyah*) is part of Islamic teachings, as stated in QS Al-Hujurat: 13: humans were created into different tribes and nations so that they may come to know one another (*ta'aruf*) (Iqbal, 2007). In coming to know one another, they acknowledge the existence of other nations and countries—the foundation for working together to build a peaceful and prosperous world. This spirit of mutual acquaintance cannot be realized through rudeness and arrogance; it must instead be pursued through wise and gracious words (*man'izah hasanah*), in accordance with QS Al-Nahl: 125. The Prophet's letters to kings and dignitaries outside Medina—such as the letter to Heraclius—were likewise delivered with tact and subtlety (Abdillah & Masyrofah, 2024). Sardar Ali's (2016) broader account of what constitutes Islamic law in the contemporary world lends further support to this framing. These principles also align with the five objectives of *maqasid al-shariah*, which emphasize the protection of human rights within a foreign policy oriented toward humanity and world peace (Zaenurrosyid et al., 2024; Itmam et al., 2025).

Siyāsah khārijīyyah is the branch of *fiqh al-siyāsah* (Islamic political jurisprudence) that governs the foreign relations of a Muslim polity (Khallaf, 2015; Hariyanto, Mukhlis and Rismana, 2025). It encompasses several aspects: building relations between nations (*ta'aruf*), diplomatic conduct (*mujāmalah*), conflict resolution and peacemaking, the protection of

human rights and human dignity, and upholding justice while preventing oppression (*ẓulm*) (Bhatnagar & Kazi, 2025). The classical foundations of *siyāsah khārijīyyah* draw on QS Al-Hujurat: 13, which holds that humans and nations were created to know one another (*ta'aruf*)—implying that the Palestinian people hold the same right to live in freedom and peace as any other people (Iqbal, 2007). Yet oppression and genocide continue in Gaza, and Israel has blocked humanitarian aid from Rafah (Gunawan et al., 2025; Suraningsih et al., 2024); the Palestinian people need global solidarity from around the world, including Indonesia, to help break the siege. QS Al-Nahl: 125 states that diplomacy must be grounded in wisdom, good counsel, and respectful dialogue. Public diplomacy, reinforced by global public pressure, can influence Israeli policy toward opening the Rafah border, allowing humanitarian aid into Gaza and helping save millions of lives threatened by starvation under Israel's blockade (AlAqra', 2026; Lehrs, 2021). Among the principles of *siyāsah khārijīyyah* is people-centered diplomacy: Islamic diplomacy does not limit international engagement to rulers alone; scholars (*ulama*), civil society, merchants, and communities have historically played roles in cross-border relations (Ayoub, 2023), and modern public diplomacy mirrors this by allowing NGOs, religious organizations, and citizens to represent moral and humanitarian values across borders.

Humanitarian diplomacy refers to the efforts of state and non-state actors to mobilize resources, influence policy, and build international solidarity in order to protect vulnerable populations and alleviate human suffering through non-coercive means (Muratoglu & Wassar, 2024). While traditionally associated with states and international organizations, contemporary humanitarian diplomacy increasingly involves civil society organizations, particularly faith-based actors, whose moral legitimacy and grassroots networks enable effective public engagement and have positioned them as important agents of *siyāsah khārijīyyah* through humanitarian diplomacy (Suraningsih et al., 2024).

Within the *siyāsah khārijīyyah* framework, humanitarian diplomacy can be regarded as a continuation of Islamic ethical foreign policy. Historically, this approach aimed to safeguard oppressed communities and advocate for justice across borders, occasionally involving intervention and diplomatic efforts (Ivonina, 2023). Similarly, in contemporary diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy is conceptualized as a modality that involves negotiation,

advocacy, and partnership with multiple state and non-state actors, including NGOs and international organizations, to address humanitarian crises while advancing foreign policy goals (Bogatyreva, 2022; Turunen, 2020). This approach reflects the *siyāsah kbārijīyyah*'s emphasis on inclusive and pragmatic governance in external affairs.

NU Care-LAZISNU has long been involved in social work in Palestine. Several years ago, PBNU provided generators and scholarships, and UNUSIA will soon offer scholarships for Palestinians to study Islam Nusantara, with the aim of introducing them to an understanding of Islam deeply rooted in local wisdom. NU Care-LAZISNU has also provided health assistance to the poor and is currently collaborating with relevant Indonesian institutions to build a hospital in Hebron, near the Al-Aqsa Mosque (Triono, 2021).

As a form of concern for the Palestinian people, NU Care-LAZISNU collaborated with a charity organization in Jordan, the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO), by sending an ambulance unit to Palestinians in Gaza City. The handover was officially carried out by NU Care-LAZISNU in Jordan to JHCO, witnessed by the Indonesian Embassy in Amman and volunteers among Indonesian students in Jordan (Muhammad Faizin, 2022). NU Care-LAZISNU has also actively provided humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people, including medicine and medical equipment: one form of this aid took the shape of family kits distributed to Palestinians in Gaza and Jerusalem, alongside medicines and medical equipment distributed at the Jabalia Medical Center, 4 km north of Gaza City, through the Women Center Althoury (AWC).

Humanitarian donations from the Indonesian people for Palestine are then distributed through the Women Center Althoury (AWC) Silwan, a women's foundation that helps survivors and victims of conflict in Palestine, confirming that aid has reached the affected residents. NU Care-LAZISNU is also targeting IDR 20 billion in donations for Palestine (Noerhadi, 2021). Its assistance has also included an ambulance—a 2021 Hyundai H1 MPV assembled in Jordan—intended for operation at a Jordanian government field hospital in Gaza. NU Care-LAZISNU has additionally been assisting with the construction of a health clinic in the Zarqa refugee camp for Palestinians in Zarqa, Jordan. This assistance is part of the Nahdlatul Ulama Cares for Palestine program, initiated by NU Care-LAZISNU in 2021 with a budget of approximately \$66,000; NU Care-LAZISNU DKI Jakarta, PCNU Klaten,

and PCNU Lasem also supported this ambulance procurement program (Faizin, 2022).

According to LAZISNU, the government should regulate fundraising activities for Palestine to ensure ethical and responsible campaigns. Rather than relying on overly emotional or exaggerated narratives, fundraising should focus on humanitarian values and hope. LAZISNU also suggests that the Palestinian Embassy in Jakarta play a greater role by recommending trusted organizations and facilitating coordination for aid distribution to Palestine (Tuharie, 2022).

NU Care-LAZISNU's humanitarian aid was delivered directly to Palestinians through the Amman border in Jordan, in coordination with the Palestinian Embassy. NU Care-LAZISNU also coordinated with Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Religious Affairs, though not with the Ministry of Social Affairs. In distributing humanitarian aid to Palestine through PCNU in Jordan, NU Care-LAZISNU has consistently used the Jordanian border route, given its ease of access and PCNU Jordan's larger presence, which facilitates aid distribution, including the provision of fast, safe ambulances (Cholil, 2022).

Data on the continuity of NU Care-LAZISNU's assistance to Palestine show that funds collected from the community are distributed in cooperation with trusted and reliable partners, ensuring that the benefits are felt directly by the Palestinian people. This reflects NU's collaboration with international networks in distributing humanitarian aid (Cholil, 2022; Tuharie, 2022).

NU's humanitarian diplomacy is deeply embedded in its ideological commitment to Islam Nusantara, moderation (*wasatiyyah*), and social harmony. In supporting Palestine, NU emphasizes three things. First, institutional legitimacy through formal humanitarian licenses and partnerships with internationally recognized organizations—evidenced by the establishment of NU Care-LAZISNU not only in Asia but also in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Second, soft diplomacy through religious narratives that frame Palestinian solidarity as a moral and humanitarian obligation rather than a confrontational political stance, in line with Indonesia's official designation as the Asia-Pacific headquarters of the Global Coalition for Al-Quds and Palestine (GCQP). Third, distribution mechanisms that prioritize legality, access, and diplomatic acceptability, often channeled through trusted international intermediaries: NU Care-LAZISNU distributes aid to Palestine through a

network of credible global partners, such as Gazze Destek Dernegi (GDD), the Waqfiyat Al-Mustafa Foundation, and representatives of the Special Branch Executive Board (PCI) of Nahdlatul Ulama in the Middle East, including Egypt and Jordan. From a *siyāsah khārījīyyah* perspective, NU represents a prudential model of Islamic foreign engagement, prioritizing stability (*dar' al-mafāsīd*) and long-term trust-building over ideological confrontation.

In distributing these funds to Palestine, Lazismu collaborates carefully with its trusted partners. To raise funds for Palestine, PAN donated IDR 25 billion, distributed through Muhammadiyah Aid in stages; separately, IDR 35 billion was channeled from the Directorate General of Higher Education to universities. Lazismu also collaborates with NGOs in Palestine to distribute aid in the form of ambulances funded by Lazismu and purchased locally in Palestine. In 2022, Lazismu was also engaged in constructing a refugee camp for Palestinians in Beirut, and sent winter-season aid—including blankets and basic food supplies—in collaboration with the NGO IESCO (Lazismu Jawa Timur, 2019).

According to Rini, Lazismu did not encounter any significant internal obstacles, since it operates as a well-organized community institution working with NGOs; its management structure consists of a Supervisory Board, a Management Board, Muhammadiyah Aid, and the Muhammadiyah Higher Education Council. Based on Lazismu data, the highest funds raised for Palestine in 2021 came from East Java (IDR 5 billion) and Central Java (IDR 1.5 billion); in 2022, East Java raised IDR 3 billion and Central Java raised IDR 1.9 billion, both through regional fundraising campaigns (Rini, 2022). Funds raised for Palestine through Lazis Muhammadiyah (Lazismu) in East Java alone amounted to IDR 9.5 billion, bringing the national total to IDR 32.5 billion; these donations have since been allocated to various Lazismu programs in Palestine (Lazismu Jawa Timur, 2021).

Lazismu's Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) chapter handed over donations for Palestine totaling IDR 3,540,034,659 at the One Day with Lazismu event via Zoom. The donations were collected within a month of the donation drive, which began on May 15, 2021, drawing on collections made by Lazismu across five districts and cities within the DIY region. Bantul Regency collected the most, totaling IDR 1,057,197,622, followed by Sleman Regency (IDR 836,968,300), Gunung Kidul Regency (IDR 499,175,500), Yogyakarta City (IDR 444,352,690), Kulonprogo Regency (IDR 409,370,000), and the regional Lazismu

DIY office (IDR 292,957,968). According to Cahyono, chairman of the Lazismu DIY Management Board, the IDR 3.5 billion collected by Lazismu throughout DIY would be handed over to Muhammadiyah Aid through Lazismu Central and implemented through several programs for the Palestinian people (Lazismu Pusat, 2025).

Lazismu in areas such as Ponorogo and Madiun are actively involved in raising funds for Palestine, organizing fundraising campaigns in collaboration with schools and mosques as target locations. Funds collected are earmarked specifically for Palestine and are not mixed with funds raised for other causes; once collected, they are deposited with regional or district administrators, who manage distribution under a regionally issued decree (Tony, 2022).

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) are groups formed around shared beliefs, conventionally understood as religious bodies that aim to fulfill the spiritual, social, and cultural needs of their members. As an FBO, Muhammadiyah is a religious organization whose programs provide material and moral assistance at both local and international scales (Amal & Olifiani, 2023).

Muhammadiyah's approach is characterized by modern organizational governance, professionalism, and a reformist Islamic ethos (*tajdid*). Its humanitarian engagement with Palestine reflects three emphases. First, a strong emphasis on transparent fundraising and accountability, which enhances donor confidence. Second, technocratic humanitarian diplomacy, relying on needs assessment, medical aid, and structured emergency response. Third, strategic use of global humanitarian norms, aligning Islamic ethics with international humanitarian law. In terms of *siyāsah khārijīyyah*, Muhammadiyah exemplifies a rational-ethical model in which Islamic principles are operationalized through modern management practices—an approach that strengthens Indonesia's image as a credible and responsible humanitarian actor on the global stage.

The KNRP (National Committee for Palestinian People) is an Indonesian non-profit, non-partisan humanitarian NGO dedicated exclusively to supporting the Palestinian cause. Operating across most Indonesian provinces, KNRP focuses on advocating for Palestinian independence and defending Al-Aqsa Mosque, which it considers a defining element that distinguishes the Palestinian issue from other humanitarian causes. According

to Muqaddam Cholil, KNRP was established to fill this gap by providing an institution specifically dedicated to supporting Palestine (Cholil, 2022).

According to Muqaddam, the Palestinian people suffer more than most other nations. Unlike other colonized peoples, however, the Jewish people of Israel regard Palestine as a stateless territory, even though Palestinians already lived there; they expelled the Palestinian people from their homeland and have not allowed them to return, as Zionist Israel took over their land. Consequently, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria still hold the keys to homes in Palestine that no longer exist for them there. Twenty Palestinian prisoners, for instance, were not permitted to return to Palestine even after their release, and ended up living in Sudan, Afghanistan, and other countries (Cholil, 2022).

Millions of Palestinians live as refugees outside Palestine and often face discrimination, particularly in employment, in countries such as Lebanon; NGOs help address these hardships. According to Ambassador Zuhair Al-Shun, peace efforts in Palestine remain unsuccessful because Israel continues actions that undermine stability, while international support for Israel has contributed to the conflict's prolongation (Al-Shun, 2022).

The KNRP maintains formal coordination with Indonesia's Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs, and Religious Affairs, as well as law enforcement and immigration authorities, to ensure that its activities are legal and accountable. As a state-recognized NGO, KNRP regularly reports on its programs and obtains permits for Palestinian aid projects. It has built strong relationships with government institutions, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and has participated in official government activities related to Palestine. However, KNRP distributes aid directly to Palestinians through partner NGOs rather than through the Palestinian Embassy, emphasizing a people-to-people humanitarian approach.

Effective coordination among the parties involved has helped facilitate KNRP's range of activities (Suhartono, 2022). So far, KNRP has distributed aid directly to the Palestinian people, since the mandate given by the Indonesian public can be delivered straight to recipients in Palestine, who have responded positively to the aid. By contrast, aid distributed through the Palestinian Embassy does not generate the same direct feedback or photographic evidence of receipt—one reason KNRP has favored direct distribution over the Embassy channel, in order to maintain public trust. Fundraising for Palestine increases sharply during

Ramadan: KNRP invites Palestinian sheikhs to give lectures during Ramadan Safari events at mosques, conveying the current situation of the Palestinian people, and the community has responded enthusiastically by donating to KNRP for Palestine. KNRP covers the visiting sheikh's expenses during his stay in Indonesia, including tickets, accommodation, and other costs, which have totaled a considerable amount; once funds are collected, they are entrusted to the sheikh before his return, for distribution to Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, and elsewhere. Beyond Ramadan, fundraising also increases sharply whenever Israel attacks the Palestinian people, with the community donating large sums through KNRP. There are, in short, three key moments for Palestinian fundraising: the month of Ramadan, periods of escalating conflict, and the broader, growing public awareness of the need to help Palestine.

KNRP differs from NU and Muhammadiyah in its more explicitly advocacy-oriented and ideological orientation. Its humanitarian diplomacy is marked by three features. First, strong grassroots mobilization, leveraging emotive narratives of oppression, resistance, and Islamic solidarity (*ukhuwwah islāmiyyah*). Second, more direct engagement with Palestinian actors, shaped by access and by geopolitical and political sensitivities. Third, public trust rooted less in institutional moderation and more in ideological alignment with the Palestinian cause. Within *siyāsah khārijīyyah*, KNRP represents a normative-mobilizational model, emphasizing moral clarity and solidarity. Although this approach can face diplomatic and regulatory challenges, it plays a crucial role in sustaining public awareness and long-term commitment.

The faith-based organizations and NGOs for Palestinian humanitarian diplomacy

The presence of Islamic community organizations and non-governmental organizations has become central to the continuity of humanitarian action—not only within Indonesia, but as a form of global solidarity in humanitarian missions consistent with the diplomatic values of *siyāsah khārijīyyah*. Indonesia, a Muslim-majority country committed to supporting Palestinian independence, has channeled these efforts through public diplomacy in its humanitarian missions for Palestine. Aqsha Tasgheer, for instance, emphasizes the importance of Islamic diplomacy in conflict resolution (Tasgheer, 2022). Nahdlatul Ulama's

(NU) approach to Islamic diplomacy is a soft-power, citizen-diplomacy approach grounded in the Islamic values of moderation (*tawassuṭ*), tolerance (*tasāmuḥ*), and balance (*tawāzun*). This Islamic mass organization plays an active role in promoting world peace, intercultural dialogue, and bridging international conflict.

Humanitarian diplomacy is understood as non-coercive, value-driven international engagement conducted by civil society to influence humanitarian outcomes, mobilize solidarity, and shape international perceptions. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and the National Committee for Palestinian People (KNRP/Komite Nasional Rakyat Palestina) function as para-diplomatic actors, complementing Indonesia's official foreign policy while operating within Islamic and humanitarian frameworks. Humanitarian diplomacy refers to efforts by state and non-state actors to mobilize resources, influence policy, and build international solidarity to protect vulnerable populations and alleviate human suffering through non-coercive means. While traditionally associated with states and international organizations, contemporary humanitarian diplomacy increasingly involves civil society organizations, particularly faith-based actors, whose moral legitimacy and grassroots networks enable effective public engagement in humanitarian crises.

In Indonesia, Muslim civil society organizations function as key humanitarian diplomatic actors, transforming public empathy for Palestine into organized fundraising, aid distribution, and international advocacy. Fundraising governance—defined as the transparent, accountable, and lawful management of public donations—serves as a critical bridge between domestic solidarity and cross-border humanitarian engagement. This reflects a broader pattern of multi-actor engagement: the Prophet's own diplomatic practice involved delegations of companions, envoys, and community leaders, a pattern that today translates into faith-based organizations (NU, Muhammadiyah), NGOs (such as KNRP), academic institutions, and others, all engaging in humanitarian missions abroad. The role of Islamic diplomacy played by Muslim countries such as Indonesia, through NU Care-LAZISNU and Lazismu, has become a symbol of Indonesian solidarity with Palestine and of Islamic diplomatic ethics in practice (Abdillah & Masyrofah, 2024; Andriansyah, 2024). This aligns with the principle of *siyāsah kharijīyyah*, which plays an important role in shaping diplomatic relations in the distribution of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people.

Within Islamic political thought, *siyāsah khārijīyyah* governs relations with external entities based on the principles of justice (*‘adl*), public interest (*maslahah*), human dignity (*karāmah insāniyyah*), and peaceful coexistence (*ta’awun*). Although classically state-centered, *siyāsah khārijīyyah* provides a normative foundation for non-state humanitarian diplomacy, particularly where civil society actors align with Islamic ethics and international humanitarian law. Within this framework, humanitarian fundraising is not merely a technical activity but a moral trust (*amānah*) requiring accountability (*mas’ūliyyah*) and transparency (*shafāfiyyah*). Governance, in this sense, becomes the central mechanism through which *siyāsah khārijīyyah* is operationalized at the level of civil society.

NU and Muhammadiyah’s shared characteristics as Faith-Based Organizations—that is, as religious community organizations whose humanitarian diplomacy is grounded in faith—position their support for the Palestinian struggle as both a religious calling and a practical enactment of QS Al-Ma’idah: 2, *wa ta’āwanū ‘alā al-birri wa al-taqwā* (“cooperate in righteousness and piety”). This shared foundation of faith reinforces the consistent role both organizations play in Palestinian humanitarian missions. KNRP, by contrast, is a community movement that raises funds independently through its own institutional channels. The key difference is that NU and Muhammadiyah already command a mass Muslim base, being Indonesia’s two largest mass organizations, whereas KNRP emerged in direct response to the Indonesian public’s sympathy and active involvement in humanitarian missions for Palestine.

Indonesia is among the countries that have actively sent humanitarian aid to Palestine—alongside other Asian countries—from 2023 through 2025, following the events of October 7, 2023, and the ongoing genocide. Indonesia reaffirmed its position as a hub for humanitarian diplomacy in the Islamic world after successfully hosting the 2025 Asia-Pacific Conference for Palestine (APCP) in Jakarta on November 7–8, 2025. This conference resulted from a collaboration between the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI/Majelis Ulama Indonesia), the Global Coalition for Al-Quds and Palestine (GCQP), the Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation Agency (BKSAP/Badan Kerjasama Antar Parlemen) of the Indonesian House of Representatives, and a number of national philanthropic organizations (Quran, 2025).

The humanitarian aid provided is urgently needed by the Palestinian people to survive the Israeli genocide in the Gaza Strip. Basic needs are fundamental rights and form part of the enforcement of *maqasid al-shariah*, namely the preservation of life (*hiḡ al-nafs*) (Itmam et al., 2025). The Palestinian people remain heavily dependent on international humanitarian aid as a form of global solidarity, given the physical, psychological, and social suffering caused by this humanitarian crisis—compounded by Israel’s blockade of international aid to Gaza at the Rafah crossing on the Egyptian border (Farhat et al., 2023). This aid seeks to save human lives from starvation, as stated in QS Al-Ma’idah: 32, which holds that whoever saves one life is as if he had saved all of mankind. The Palestinian people must sometimes risk their lives to obtain aid by entering occupied territories under Israeli control—a dynamic that Lorenzo Veracini terms settler colonialism (Risheq et al., 2023; Veracini, 2010).

NU’s humanitarian diplomacy reflects a moderate and culturally grounded interpretation of *siyāsah khārijīyyah*. Its fundraising governance emphasizes institutional licensing and compliance with state regulations, religious legitimacy rooted in *fiqh sosial* and Islam Nusantara, indirect humanitarian channels to ensure access, and diplomatic prudence. Here, governance functions as a trust-building instrument, reinforcing NU’s role as a credible humanitarian diplomat whose fundraising practices align with Islamic ethics and international norms. Muhammadiyah, by contrast, operationalizes humanitarian diplomacy through modern organizational management and technocratic governance; its fundraising mechanisms are characterized by clear financial reporting and auditing systems, program-based allocation of funds (health, education, emergency relief), and the integration of Islamic moral objectives with global humanitarian standards. Within *siyāsah khārijīyyah*, Muhammadiyah represents a rational-ethical model, in which fundraising governance enhances diplomatic credibility and positions humanitarian action as a form of responsible Islamic international engagement. KNRP’s humanitarian diplomacy, finally, is rooted in ideological advocacy and grassroots mobilization; its fundraising governance relies heavily on strong emotional and moral narratives of solidarity (*ukhuwwah islāmiyyah*), direct public engagement, mass participation, and ideological trust rather than institutional moderation. Although this model may face greater regulatory and diplomatic constraints, it embodies

a normative interpretation of *siyāsah khārijīyyah* that prioritizes moral clarity and sustained public commitment to humanitarian causes.

Conclusion

NU, Muhammadiyah, and KNRP illustrate how Indonesian Muslim civil society translates Islamic foreign policy ethics into governed humanitarian fundraising, reinforcing humanitarian diplomacy as both a moral obligation and a strategic instrument. Through this lens, *siyāsah khārijīyyah* emerges as a living framework connecting faith, governance, and global humanitarian responsibility. NU Care-LAZISNU, Lazismu, and KNRP strengthen Indonesia's foreign policy position toward Palestine and demonstrate how major Islamic organizations and NGOs practice humanitarian diplomacy in the broader mission for world peace, grounded in the principles of *siyāsah khārijīyyah* and in global solidarity with Palestine. From the perspective of *siyāsah khārijīyyah*, public diplomacy is not merely a political tool but an ethical responsibility grounded in Islamic teachings. Through humanitarian engagement and people-to-people diplomacy, Islamic organizations in Indonesia embody the values of justice, mercy, and global solidarity. This study contributes to the development of *fiqh al-siyāsah* scholarship by advancing a peace-oriented *fiqh* framework that supports peacebuilding, humanitarian values, and international cooperation, while also enriching global academic discussions on Islamic perspectives in international relations and the promotion of peaceful coexistence among nations.

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