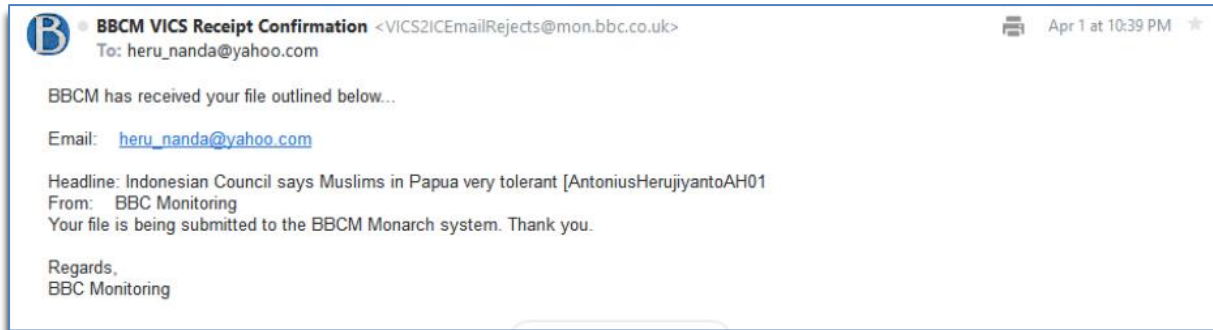


Indonesian Council Says Muslims in Papua Very Tolerant



[Antonius Herujianto AH01_010418]

The chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council or MUI Papua, cleric Saiful Isam Al Payage, has said that the minority Muslims in Papua have tried their best to maintain the interfaith tolerance and peaceful atmosphere in the Indonesian Christian province. He said Tuesday (on 27 March) that he would keep making sure to prevent Muslims from conducting intolerance acts.

The cleric's statement was made during a regional friendly meeting forum or Forkoimda held by the Papua provincial police in Jayapura on Tuesday (on 27 March). The theme of the forum was 'Strengthening the unity and togetherness and maintaining interfaith tolerance in the land of Papua.'

According to the cleric, Muslims in Papua and in Indonesia in general have been long maintaining the harmonically interfaith relation.

Mentioning the inappropriate interfaith relation taking place outside Papua, cleric Saiful said that it should not be imported to Papua. On the other hand, Papua would not spread up the possible unexpected things taking place in the province. It would be, indeed, the best dream that Papua could set a good example of living in harmony and peace to outside province and even the world.

He also said that the negative issue of the ongoing construction of Al Aqsa Mosque with its towers in Sentani, Jayapura, had been peacefully handled by MUI Papua. It was very unfortunate, however, that the case had been too fast to spread up on the social media nationwide.

[It was reported earlier that the Communion of Churches in Jayapura regency or PGGJ had sent a list of requirements to MUI Papua, demanding, among others, that the height of Al Aqsha Mosque with its towers not to exceed the height of the existing church in the Jayapura and that adzan or the Islamic call for prayers that voiced through the loud speaker should be directed into the mosque.]

Explaining that a special team has been set up to handle the problems of the mosque's towers, he demanded that all parties and institutions be patient and wise in regarding the very case.

In the meantime, the management of the Mosque, Nurdin, has said that all co-ordinating steps taken have produced best understanding among the interfaith followers in Jayapura, Papua.

Source: Ameera, arrahmah/2018/03/30/mui-umat-islam-di-papua-sudah-sangat-toleran/, "MUI: Umat Islam di Papua Sudah Sangat Toleran (MUI: Muslims in Papua very tolerant)", in *Indonesian*, 30 March 18.

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