

# Islamic Da'awah And Its Role In International Relations

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**Abstrak:** Islamic Da'wah memiliki peran strategis dalam membentuk hubungan internasional melalui dialog antarbudaya, promosi perdamaian, dan penguatan hubungan diplomatik antarbangsa. Masalah yang diangkat dalam kajian ini adalah bagaimana Da'wah Islam dapat berkontribusi secara efektif terhadap dinamika hubungan internasional di tengah tantangan global seperti konflik ideologis, manipulasi politik, dan misrepresentasi media. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis peran Da'wah Islam sebagai instrumen diplomasi budaya dan kemanusiaan dalam membangun tatanan dunia yang adil dan damai. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi kualitatif dengan pendekatan historis-normatif yang menelaah kontribusi Da'wah dari masa klasik hingga kontemporer dalam konteks peradaban, perdagangan, dan diplomasi. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa Da'wah Islam, yang berlandaskan pada prinsip hikmah dan maw'idhah hasanah, telah berperan dalam menyebarkan nilai-nilai keadilan ('adl), martabat manusia (karamah insaniyyah), dan pelayanan kemanusiaan (khidmat al-insaniyyah). Inisiatif Da'wah melalui dialog lintas agama, kegiatan kemanusiaan, dan kerja sama pendidikan terbukti memperkuat hubungan antarbangsa dan meredam ekstremisme. Kontribusi utama kajian ini adalah menawarkan perspektif bahwa Da'wah bukan hanya aktivitas keagamaan, tetapi juga strategi soft diplomacy yang mampu menjembatani perbedaan dan membangun kerja sama global yang beretika.

**Kata Kunci :** Islamic Da'wah, international relations, soft diplomacy

*Abstract:* Islamic Da'wah plays a strategic role in shaping international relations through intercultural dialogue, the promotion of peace, and the strengthening of diplomatic ties among nations. This study addresses the problem of how Islamic Da'wah can effectively contribute to global diplomacy amidst challenges such as ideological conflicts, political manipulation, and media misrepresentation. The purpose of this research is to analyze Islamic Da'wah as an instrument of cultural and humanitarian diplomacy in building a just and peaceful global order. Using a qualitative method with a historical-normative approach, this study examines the contributions of Da'wah from classical to contemporary periods in the context of civilization, trade, and diplomacy. The findings reveal that Islamic Da'wah, grounded in the principles of wisdom (hikmah) and good counsel (maw'idhah hasanah), promotes justice ('adl), human dignity (karāmah insāniyyah), and humanitarian service (khidmat al-insāniyyah). Initiatives such as interfaith dialogue, humanitarian aid, and academic cooperation have proven effective in strengthening international relations and countering extremism. The key contribution of this study is to reframe Da'wah not merely as a religious endeavor, but as a form of soft diplomacy capable of bridging differences and fostering ethical global cooperation.

*Keywords:* Islamic Da'wah, international relations, soft diplomacy

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## Introduction

Islamic Da'wah, fundamentally defined as the invitation to Islam, is rooted in the principles of wisdom (hikmah), good counsel (maw'izah), and respectful dialogue (mujadalah). While traditionally associated with individual spiritual transformation, the scope of Da'wah extends beyond personal piety into societal and global dimensions. It encompasses efforts to promote understanding, ethical conduct, and moral guidance across diverse communities. As globalization intensifies interconnectivity among nations, the relevance of Da'wah in the sphere of international relations becomes increasingly significant.

In the context of international relations, Islamic Da'wah serves as a moral and cultural force aimed at fostering global harmony, promoting peace, and encouraging cooperation among diverse nations. The Qur'anic command to "invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction" (Qur'an 16:125) reflects the essence of Da'wah as a constructive and inclusive dialogue rather than confrontation. This approach underlines Da'wah's potential to address global challenges, facilitate intercultural understanding, and build diplomatic bridges based on justice, human dignity, and shared values.

The life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) offers foundational examples of Da'wah in international engagement. His diplomatic missions to non-Muslim rulers and treaties with various tribes and nations illustrate the integration of Da'wah with peaceful negotiation and alliance-building. Similarly, historical experiences such as the role of Muslim merchants in spreading Islam through trade and the diplomatic strategies of the Ottoman Empire demonstrate how Da'wah has long served as a means of cultivating intercultural relations and peaceful coexistence. Even in the modern era, institutions like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) reflect the continuity of this legacy in addressing global issues and unifying Muslim voices through Da'wah-oriented principles.

Given this historical and doctrinal background, this study aims to explore the role of Islamic Da'wah in fostering international relations and to analyze its potential in peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and the promotion of ethical global governance. By highlighting both classical and contemporary practices, this research seeks to provide strategic recommendations for integrating Da'wah into modern diplomatic efforts. In doing so, it underscores Da'wah not merely as a religious duty but as a vital component of soft diplomacy in shaping a more just, peaceful, and cooperative world.

### **Method**

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a historical-normative method to examine the role of Islamic Da'wah in international relations. Data is collected through literature review, including primary sources such as the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as secondary sources like academic journals, historical records, and contemporary reports from Islamic organizations. The historical analysis traces the evolution of Da'wah practices from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to the present, while the normative aspect explores the ethical and theological foundations of Da'wah in the context of diplomacy and global cooperation. The research further incorporates case studies of Islamic diplomatic efforts and Da'wah-based initiatives to highlight their contributions to peacebuilding, intercultural dialogue, and international policy.

### **Result and Discussion**

Islamic Da'wah plays an increasingly influential role in contemporary international relations by advancing global peacebuilding efforts. The Qur'anic emphasis on resolving conflicts through dialogue and negotiation (Qur'an 49:9) underscores the relevance of Da'wah in fostering reconciliation and diplomacy. By encouraging peaceful settlement of disputes, Da'wah serves as a religiously grounded strategy for conflict resolution that aligns with international norms

and humanitarian values. Through this moral framework, Islamic Da'wah contributes to global stability and mutual trust among nations.

In addition to peacebuilding, Da'wah is a powerful mechanism for interfaith dialogue and cultural diplomacy. It promotes shared ethical values such as compassion, justice, and tolerance—principles that resonate across religious boundaries. Islamic teachings encourage respectful engagement with people of other faiths, paving the way for collaboration on common global challenges such as poverty, inequality, and climate change. Da'wah initiatives that prioritize interfaith understanding can play a crucial role in reducing religious tensions and promoting global harmony.

Islamic humanitarian organizations also integrate Da'wah values into their missions. Groups like Islamic Relief and the Red Crescent exemplify how faith-based humanitarian work contributes to international goodwill and cooperation. By delivering aid to disaster-affected or conflict-ridden regions, these organizations project Islam's ethical emphasis on *khidmat al-insaniyyah* (service to humanity). Such acts of compassion not only alleviate suffering but also serve as a form of practical Da'wah that transcends cultural and national boundaries.

However, the effectiveness of Da'wah in the international sphere is often undermined by widespread misconceptions about Islam. Islamophobia, fueled by media misrepresentation and political rhetoric, distorts public perceptions of Islamic teachings. In this context, Da'wah becomes essential in promoting a more accurate understanding of Islam as a religion of peace, dialogue, and justice. By engaging in proactive media outreach and public diplomacy, Da'wah efforts can counter stereotypes and build bridges of mutual respect.

Despite its promise, Da'wah faces several challenges in international relations. The politicization of religion by state and non-state actors can corrupt the spiritual integrity of Da'wah, turning it into a tool of ideological conflict. Extremist groups, in particular, have misused Islamic symbols and rhetoric to justify violence, undermining the peaceful essence of Da'wah. Moreover, global

power dynamics, dominated by secular ideologies, often marginalize religious narratives and reduce Da'wah's influence in policy-making arenas.

Cultural and linguistic differences further complicate the dissemination of Da'wah in diverse global contexts. Miscommunication and cultural insensitivity can lead to misunderstandings or resistance, especially in pluralistic societies. To address these barriers, Da'wah efforts must be contextualized and inclusive, incorporating intercultural competence and localized strategies. Utilizing digital media and translation tools can also help in overcoming such obstacles and amplifying Da'wah messages worldwide.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) plays a central role in institutionalizing Da'wah principles in international diplomacy. With 57 member states, the OIC engages in various initiatives to promote peace, development, and Islamic solidarity. Through specialized institutions such as the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and ICESCO, the OIC contributes to education, economic growth, and humanitarian aid. Its efforts to mediate in conflicts, advocate for Muslim minorities, and fight Islamophobia illustrate how Da'wah values can be operationalized in political and diplomatic affairs.

To enhance the global impact of Da'wah, several strategies are recommended. First, formal institutions should be established to represent Islamic values in international platforms. Leadership development programs can prepare Da'wah-oriented diplomats and scholars for global engagement. Collaborative partnerships with non-Muslim organizations and academic institutions can foster mutual understanding and joint action. Moreover, investment in media outreach and research on Da'wah's international role will provide the intellectual and communicative tools necessary to promote an inclusive and ethical global order.

This study contributes to the academic discourse on Islamic Da'wah by expanding its scope beyond religious propagation to include its role in diplomacy, peacebuilding, and international cooperation. It highlights how Da'wah, rooted in Qur'anic and Prophetic teachings, can serve as a moral

compass in global affairs by promoting dialogue, justice, and ethical engagement across nations. By exploring historical and contemporary examples, the research provides a nuanced understanding of Da'wah as a multidimensional force in shaping international relations.

Practically, this research offers insights for policymakers, religious scholars, and international organizations on how Islamic values can be integrated into global diplomatic strategies. It underscores the importance of using Da'wah not only for spiritual guidance but also as a tool for humanitarian aid, interfaith dialogue, and conflict mediation. The study's recommendations—such as institutionalizing Da'wah efforts, enhancing interfaith cooperation, and leveraging digital platforms—can guide real-world initiatives aimed at fostering global peace and mutual respect.

Furthermore, the study serves as a valuable reference for future research by bridging Islamic theology and international relations. It opens avenues for interdisciplinary collaboration between religious studies, political science, and global diplomacy, encouraging scholars to explore how faith-based principles can contribute to solving contemporary global challenges. By demonstrating the relevance of Da'wah in modern contexts, this study reaffirms the enduring significance of Islamic teachings in promoting a just, inclusive, and harmonious international order.

## **Conclusion**

Islamic Da'wah, traditionally viewed as a means of spiritual outreach, holds significant potential as a tool for fostering international relations, peacebuilding, and global cooperation. Grounded in Qur'anic principles such as wisdom (hikmah), good counsel (maw'izah hasanah), and respectful dialogue (mujadalah), Da'wah extends its influence into political, humanitarian, and diplomatic domains. Historical examples—from the diplomatic missions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to the role of Islamic traders and scholars—demonstrate how Da'wah has long served as a bridge between cultures and civilizations.

In today's complex international environment, Da'wah continues to promote interfaith understanding, humanitarian assistance, and ethical governance. Organizations like the OIC and Islamic relief agencies apply Da'wah values in addressing global crises and advancing justice and human dignity. Despite challenges such as extremism, political misuse, and global power imbalances, Da'wah remains a vital force for encouraging peaceful coexistence and countering misconceptions about Islam in international forums.

This study affirms that with strategic support—through education, digital outreach, leadership development, and institutional collaboration—Islamic Da'wah can play a transformative role in shaping a more ethical and inclusive global order. Its emphasis on justice, compassion, and moral responsibility aligns with universal values and can contribute meaningfully to solving shared global challenges. Ultimately, Da'wah is not only a spiritual mission but also a path to building a world rooted in peace, mutual respect, and human solidarity.

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