Negotiating Guided Democracy: Institutional Deliberation and Political Adaptation at Nahdlatul Ulama's Twenty-Second Congress, Jakarta, 1959

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Abstract

Nahdlatul Ulama's Twenty-Second Congress, held in Jakarta on 13–18 December 1959, convened at the moment when Indonesia's parliamentary order was giving way to President Sukarno's Guided Democracy. Histories of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) have generally explained the party's accommodation of the new regime through elite pragmatism or Sunni political jurisprudence. Drawing on the congress proceedings, seven plenary minutes, speeches, circulars, policy memoranda, and the published decisions preserved in the PBNU Library, this article instead reconstructs accommodation as an institutional process. It argues that the congress did not simply ratify an elite compact with Sukarno. Central leaders, regional branches, the *Syuriyah* and *Tanfidziyah*, and NU's women's organisations disputed the distribution of authority, the meaning of political participation, and the balance between parliamentary representation and social-religious work. Their deliberations produced a conditional acceptance of Guided Democracy: leadership was legitimate only when governed by wise consultation, while continued participation in state institutions was justified as a means of protecting Muslim interests and limiting greater harm. The congress also exposed the costs of that strategy, including centralisation, uneven centre–region relations, and anxiety that political office had displaced education, preaching, and welfare. By treating the congress as an arena of institutional bargaining rather than a ceremonial endorsement, the article identifies a neglected moment in NU's political adaptation and an early, though still ambiguous, articulation of the impulse later associated with a "return to the 1926 *khittah*."

Keywords: Nahdlatul Ulama; Guided Democracy; Muktamar; Islamic political thought; organisational history; Indonesia; 1959

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Introduction

The transformation of Indonesia's postcolonial political order forced religious associations to decide how far their social authority could, and should, be converted into state power. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), founded in Surabaya in 1926 and sustained by networks of *kiai*, pesantren, and local congregations, embodied this dilemma with unusual intensity. It began as a *jam'iyyah diniyyah ijtima'iyyah* concerned with religious learning, education, and communal welfare, entered the Masyumi federation during the revolutionary period, and declared itself an independent political party at its Nineteenth Congress in Palembang in 1952. Its unexpectedly strong performance in the 1955 election made NU one of the principal parties of the parliamentary era and placed its ulama, administrators, and regional branches inside an increasingly unstable national political system.[1]

The political environment in which NU acquired this influence was rapidly deteriorating. Repeated cabinet crises, regional rebellions, emergency rule, and the Constituent Assembly's failure to agree on a permanent constitutional basis weakened parliamentary government. President Sukarno increasingly presented Guided Democracy as an answer to party conflict and administrative paralysis. The Presidential Decree of 5 July 1959 dissolved the Constituent Assembly, restored the 1945 Constitution, and accelerated the concentration of authority around the president, the armed forces, and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Yet December 1959 remained an unsettled beginning rather than a fully consolidated authoritarian order: institutions were still being designed, party recognition was being regulated, and actors could not know the regime's later trajectory.[2]

NU therefore faced more than a binary choice between resistance and collaboration. Refusal to cooperate risked exclusion from the cabinet and new representative bodies, endangered the party under the emerging rules on party recognition, and could leave the "religious" position within Sukarno's Nationalism–Religion–Communism formulation (*Nasakom*) to weaker actors. Cooperation, however, threatened to associate NU with presidential centralisation and obliged it to operate beside a communist party it regarded as an ideological adversary. The party also had to reconcile participation in government with the authority of its ulama, the autonomy of its branches, and the educational and welfare work from

[1] Choirul Anam, *Pertumbuhan dan Perkembangan Nahdlatul Ulama* (Surabaya: Duta Aksara Mulia, 2010), 194–213; Greg Fealy, *Ijtihad Politik Ulama: Sejarah NU 1952–1967*, trans. Farid Wajidi and Mulni Adelina Bachtar (Yogyakarta: LKiS and The Asia Foundation, 2003), 120–62; Martin van Bruinessen, *NU: Tradisi, Relasi-relasi Kuasa, Pencarian Wacana Baru*, trans. Farid Wajidi (Yogyakarta: LKiS in cooperation with Pustaka Pelajar, 1994), 65–80.

[2] Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962), 487–556; Daniel S. Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957–1959* (Jakarta: Equinox Publishing, 2009), 253–320; Adnan Buyung Nasution, *Aspirasi Pemerintahan Konstitusional di Indonesia: Studi Sosio-Legal atas Konstituante 1956–1959*, trans. Sylvia Tiwon (Jakarta: Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1995).

which its social legitimacy derived. These pressures converged at the Twenty-Second Congress in Jakarta from 13 to 18 December 1959.[3]

Existing scholarship has made NU's political flexibility intelligible but has rarely reconstructed this congress as a decision-making event. Fealy's influential account interprets NU politics between 1952 and 1967 as the collective *ijtihad* of ulama whose Sunni jurisprudence favoured attainable benefit and the avoidance of greater injury. Feillard and van Bruinessen emphasise the organisation's changing relationship with the state, the interaction of formal offices with clerical authority, and the networks through which power circulated. Studies by Asep Achmad Hidayat and colleagues, Andri Nurjaman and colleagues, Muhammad Rijal Fadli, and Rina Andriani Hidayat explain why NU accepted or survived Guided Democracy, usually by focusing on socio-political necessity, theological legitimation, moderation, or comparison with Masyumi.[4]

That literature operates mainly at the scale of regimes, elite strategies, or long-term ideological change. It consequently tends to treat the congress as evidence for an accommodation already explained elsewhere. The proceedings reveal a different problem. How was accommodation made binding within a party whose authority was distributed between the religious *Syuriyah*, the executive *Tanfidziyah*, national politicians, regional branches, and affiliated bodies? What did delegates accept, contest, and redefine when the constitutional language of democracy itself was changing? And how did the congress connect political survival to NU's non-political institutions? These questions shift attention from the motives of a few leaders to the procedures through which a national organisation authorised, limited, and criticised their choices.

This article argues that the Twenty-Second Congress converted elite adaptation into a conditional organisational settlement. It neither rejected Guided Democracy nor endorsed presidential power without qualification. Through plenary reports, branch interventions, commissions, votes, and acclamation, the congress redefined Guided Democracy as leadership governed by "the wisdom of deliberation," retained the Jakarta Charter as an unrealised political claim, and legitimated participation in government as a strategy for preserving Muslim representation. At the same time, delegates demanded more accountable central

[3] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, *Buku Kenang-kenangan Mu'tamar ke-XXII Partai Nahdlatul-'Ulama di Djakarta, 13–18 Desember 1959* (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1960); Fealy, *Ijtihad Politik Ulama*, 171–90.

[4] Andrée Feillard, *NU vis-à-vis Negara: Pencarian Isi, Bentuk dan Makna* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1999), 15–41; Asep Achmad Hidayat, Andri Nurjaman, Jafar Ahmad, Doli Witro, and Raid Alghani, "Nahdlatul Ulama in Facing the Guided Democracy 1959–1965: An Overview of Social and Political Factors," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 20, no. 2 (2022): 567–98, https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v20i2.1069; Andri Nurjaman, Arzam, Muhamad Yusuf, Doli Witro, and Anwar Musadad, "Nahdlatul Ulama Theological Basis in Accepting the Concept of Guided Democracy 1959–1965," *FITRAH: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu-ilmu Keislaman* 8, no. 2 (2022): 345–62, https://doi.org/10.24952/fitrah.v8i2.5964; Muhammad Rijal Fadli, "Pergumulan Partai Politik Islam pada Masa Demokrasi Terpimpin: Masyumi Tumbang, NU Melenggang, PSII Bimbang," *JUSPI: Jurnal Sejarah Peradaban Islam* 4, no. 1 (2020): 34–49, https://doi.org/10.30829/juspi.v4i1.7927; Rina Andriani Hidayat, "The Existence of the Nahdlatul Ulama Party in the Guided Democracy Era," *Journal of Nahdlatul Ulama Studies* 3, no. 1 (2022): 1–21.

leadership, stronger provincial and branch services, and renewed attention to education, preaching, welfare, and economic organisation. A dispute over the *formateur* system concentrated authority at the centre, but the recorded vote and the reintegration of defeated candidates also demonstrate that centralisation had to be institutionally negotiated.

The article's contribution is therefore twofold. Empirically, it offers a close reconstruction of the congress from its internal documents, distinguishing speeches and proposals from enacted decisions and identifying discrepancies within the official record. Historiographically, it places NU's accommodation within the institutional history of deliberation. This perspective complicates both an opportunist interpretation, which reduces cooperation to offices and access, and a purely doctrinal interpretation, which treats jurisprudential maxims as sufficient causes. Jurisprudence supplied a language of justification, but the settlement acquired authority because branches debated it, attached organisational demands to it, and accepted it through procedures they recognised as legitimate. The Mojokerto branch's call to "return to 1926" further reveals an early dissatisfaction with the displacement of social-religious work by individualised political careers. It should not be anachronistically equated with NU's formal withdrawal from practical politics in 1984, but it marks an important prehistory of the later *khittah* debate.[5]

Method

This study employs the four stages of the historical method: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. The heuristic stage was conducted through the search for and collection of sources at the PBNU Library, the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia, the Batu Api Library, and the West Java Provincial Library and Archives Agency. The principal corpus consists of the minutes of Plenary Sessions I–VII, held on 13–17 December 1959; the opening address of Rais Aam K. H. Abdul Wahab Chasbullah; Sukarno's address to the congress reception on 17 December; Idham Chalid's speech for NU's thirty-fourth anniversary; PBNU Circular VII of 1 July 1957, Circular XX of 1 April 1959, Circular XXI of 1 September 1959, and PBNU's statement of 20 February 1959; the party constitution and bylaws promulgated on 17 August 1958; and the congress decisions. These internal records are supplemented by contemporary legal instruments and the secondary literature listed in the bibliography.[6]

External criticism assessed provenance, date, organisational letterhead, document numbering, stamps and signatures reproduced on the surviving copies, physical form, and period orthography. The plenary records and speeches are paper copies in the PBNU Library rather than archival originals, but their administrative attributes, internal dating, and consistent 1950s spelling support their use as

[5] Ikmal Fawaid, "Dinamika NU Pasca Kemerdekaan Menuju Ditetapkannya Khittah NU sebagai Keputusan Muktamar Situbondo 1945–1984," *El Tarikh: Journal of History, Culture and Islamic Civilization* 3, no. 2 (2022): 119–34, https://doi.org/10.24042/jhcc.v3i2.9267; Kacung Marijan, *Quo Vadis NU: Setelah Kembali ke Khittah 1926* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 1992), 112–18.

[6] Kuntowijoyo, *Metodologi Sejarah*, 2nd ed. (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2013), 89–130; Sulasman, *Metodologi Penelitian Sejarah* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2014), 93.

contemporary institutional records. Internal criticism considered authorship, purpose, proximity to the event, and the likelihood of institutional bias. The minutes were produced to document official business and are generally strongest on agendas, named speakers, motions, and formal outcomes. They are less complete as verbatim records of controversy: interventions are unevenly summarised, while leaders' responses often appear at greater length. Speeches disclose the positions that Wahab Chasbullah and Sukarno wished to establish before an audience; they are not, by themselves, resolutions of the congress. Proposed programmes by Zainul Arifin and Saifuddin Zuhri are likewise distinguished from texts subsequently adopted by the plenary.[7]

Cross-reading exposes several inconsistencies that prohibit false precision. Plenary III recorded 150 branches in attendance, yet only 123 votes—84 for the *formateur* system and 39 for direct election—appear in the relevant ballot. The election narrative gives Idham Chalid 179 votes in one place, whereas the adjacent tabulation gives him 139 out of 178. Participation also varies by session: the opening minutes record 164 official branch delegates, Plenary II and VII each record 169 branches, and the printed final decision states that the congress as a whole included 18 regional delegations, 178 branches, and 1,017 persons. The last figure is used for the aggregate congress because it appears in the enacted decision; the session-specific figures are retained for the sessions to which they belong. Where the documents do not resolve a contradiction, this article reports the contradiction rather than harmonising it by conjecture.[8]

The interpretation is conducted by considering chronological aspects, the institutional context, and the perspective of *fiqh siyasah*. This approach is employed to analyze institutional developments as well as the relationship between religious activities and socio-political dynamics within the subject of the study. Principles of consultation (*shūrā*), public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*), justice, and the avoidance of greater harm illuminate the vocabulary through which NU leaders explained political adjustment. They are treated as historically deployed arguments, not as timeless causes that automatically determined conduct. The final historiographical stage integrates verified evidence and interpretation into a chronological-analytical account, preserving the distinction between what participants said, what the congress enacted, and what later scholarship has inferred.[9]

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[7] Helius Sjamsuddin, *Metodologi Sejarah* (Yogyakarta: Ombak, 2012), 131–32; Louis Gottschalk, *Mengerti Sejarah*, trans. Nugroho Notosusanto (Jakarta: UI Press, 1986), 45–49.

[8] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-I Tanggal 13 Desember 1959 Malam" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959), 1; Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-III Tanggal 14 Desember 1959 Malam" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-VII Tanggal 17 Desember 1959 Pagi" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Keputusan Mu'tamar Partai N.U. ke-22 pada Tgl. 13 s/d 18 Des. 1959 di Djakarta" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959).

[9] Muhammad Iqbal, *Fiqih Siyasah: Kontekstualisasi Doktrin Politik Islam* (Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group, 2014), 3–15, 67–90, 145–68.

Results

From Pre-Congress Consolidation to the Opening

The congress's political settlement did not originate in six days of debate. PBNU had been constructing an organisational position since at least 1957. Circular VII, no. 421/Tanf/VII-57, issued on 1 July 1957 by Idham Chalid and Saifuddin Zuhri, transmitted the resolutions of a Party Council session held in Jakarta on 27–29 June. Eighty-two participants—central board members, regional chairs, and representatives selected at the ratio of one for every ten branches—had discussed the Djuanda "Working Cabinet" and the National Council. PBNU chose to retain NU figures in the cabinet and accepted the National Council only as a temporary advisory body that must not displace constitutional institutions. The circular also instructed all levels of the party and its affiliated organisations to treat disagreement in deliberation as legitimate but an adopted decision as binding. Political accommodation and organisational discipline were thus joined well before Sukarno's July 1959 decree.[10]

Idham Chalid's speech on NU's thirty-fourth anniversary, 30 January 1959, supplied a historical grammar for adaptation. He divided NU's development into an awakening phase (1926–1935), an ordering phase (1935–1945), and a post-independence phase of struggle. The periodisation made strategic change appear as continuity with an enduring religious and national mission. By recalling anti-colonial work, *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*, the four Sunni legal schools, and *Mabadi Khaira Ummah*, he presented politics as one field of service rather than an abandonment of NU's religious origins.[11]

Three further PBNU texts reveal a phased adjustment in 1959. The statement of 20 February insisted that constitutional change remain connected to representation and consultation. Circular XX, reporting the Third Party Council in Bogor on 26–28 March, accepted a possible return to the 1945 Constitution on conditions: the Jakarta Charter must animate it, Islam remained the party's foundation, and the Constituent Assembly's deliberations deserved respect. Circular XXI, no. 3369/Tanf/IX/59 of 1 September, addressed the situation after the Presidential Decree. It described PBNU's public "silence" not as passivity but as a deliberate effort to avoid escalation while communication and limited negotiation continued. The sequence moved from normative limits, to an institutional resolution, to tactical caution under a transformed regime.[12]

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[10] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, *Siaran Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama Nomor VII*, no. 421/Tanf/VII-57 (Djakarta, 1 July 1957); M. Ali Haidar, *Nahdlatul Ulama dan Islam di Indonesia: Pendekatan Fikih dalam Politik* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1994), 142–44.

[11] K. H. Idham Chalid, *Pidato pada Peringatan Ulang Tahun Partai N.U. ke-34* (Djakarta: P.B. Nahdlatul 'Ulama, 30 January 1959); Bahtiar Effendy, *Islam dan Negara: Transformasi Pemikiran dan Praktik Politik Islam di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1998), 184–89.

[12] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Keterangan Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama," 20 February 1959, appendix III in *Buku Kenang-kenangan Mu'tamar ke-XXII*; Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Siaran XX," 1 April 1959, in *Buku Kenang-kenangan Mu'tamar ke-XXII*; Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Siaran ke-XXI: Perkembangan Politik dalam 1 Kwartal," no. 3369/Tanf/IX/59, 1 September 1959.

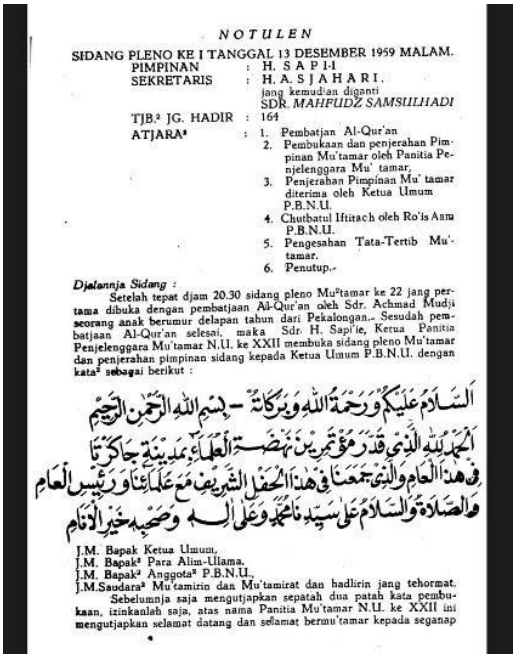
Table 1. Institutional formation of NU's congress position, 1957–1959

Date	Forum or document	Recorded function	Position carried into the congress
27–29 June 1957	Party Council, Jakarta	Consultation between centre and regions	Continued cabinet participation; National Council accepted only as temporary adviser
1 July 1957	PBNU Circular VII	Transmission and enforcement of council decisions	Disagreement permitted in deliberation; adopted policy binding across NU bodies
30 January 1959	Idham Chalid anniversary address	Historical and ideological legitimation	Political adaptation presented as continuity with NU's religious-national mission
20 February 1959	PBNU statement	Normative delimitation	Political change must preserve representation and consultation
26–28 March / 1 April 1959	Third Party Council / Circular XX	Formal policy before the decree	Conditional return to the 1945 Constitution; Jakarta Charter retained as claim
1 September 1959	Circular XXI	Post-decree tactical adjustment	Restrained public posture, selective negotiation, organisational preservation
13–18 December 1959	Twenty-Second Congress	Deliberation and organisational authorisation	Conditional acceptance of Guided Democracy and a new immediate programme

Jakarta's selection placed this national demonstration of organisational capacity near the presidency and the institutions of the new regime. A temporary Congress Organising Committee (*Panitia Penyelenggara Mu'tamar*, PPM), chaired by H. Sjafi'ie with H. A. Sjahri as general secretary and K. H. Musta'in as PBNU representative, regulated registration, security, accommodation, and access to the chamber. Delegations combined *Syuriyah* and *Tanfidziyah* representatives; the final decision also lists Muslimat, Fatayat, autonomous bodies, and family organisations. The surviving decision records 18 regional delegations, 178 branch delegations, and 1,017 participants from Aceh, Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Nusa Tenggara, Sulawesi, and Maluku. Whatever the exact distribution of voting credentials, this was not merely a meeting of Jakarta politicians.[13]

[13] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, *Buku Kenang-kenangan Mu'tamar ke-XXII*, 14; Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Keputusan Mu'tamar Partai N.U. ke-22."

The first plenary opened at 8:30 p.m. on 13 December under H. Sapi'i, with H. A. Sjahari as secretary, later replaced by Mahfudz Samsulhadi. Its six-item agenda moved from Qur'anic recitation and the organising committee's transfer of authority to the Chair of PBNU, through the Rais Aam's opening address and adoption of standing orders. The committee thanked the military and municipal authorities whose permissions and security reflected the continuing state of emergency. It also admitted that high costs and inadequate accommodation had placed some delegates in undesirable urban surroundings. Such practical details locate institutional deliberation within the material constraints of 1959 rather than an idealised scene of unencumbered consultation.[14]



NOTULEN

SIDANG PLENO KE I TANGGAL 13 DESEMBER 1959 MALAM.

PIMPINAN : H. S A P I-I
SEKRETARIS : H. A. S J A H A R I.
jang kemudian diganti
SDR. *MAHFUDZ SAMSULHADI*
TJB.[2] JG. HADIR : 164
ATJARA[3] : 1. Pembatjan Al-Qur'an
2. Pembukaan dan penjerahan Pimpinan Mu'tamar oleh Panitia Penjelenggara Mu' tamar.
3. Penjerahan Pimpinan Mu' tamar diterima oleh Ketua Umum P.B.N.U.
4. Chutbatul Iftitach oleh Ro'is Aam P.B.N.U.
5. Pengesahan Tata-Tertib Mu'tamar.
6. Penutup.

Djalannja Sidang :

Setelah tepat djam 20.30 sidang pleno Mu[2]tamar ke 22 jang pertama dibuka dengan pembatjaan Al-Qur'an oleh Sdr. Achmad Mudji seorang anak berumur delapan tahun dari Pekalongan.- Sesudah pembatjaan Al-Qur'an selesai, maka Sdr. H. Sapi'ie, Ketua Panitia Penjelenggara Mu'tamar N.U. ke XXII membuka sidang pleno Mu'tamar dan penjerahan pimpinan sidang kepada Ketua Umum P.B.N.U. dengan kata[2] sebagai berikut :

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ - بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ
اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ قَدَّرَ مُؤْتَمِرِيْنَ نَهْضَةَ الْعُلَمَاءِ بِمَدِيْنَةِ جَاكَرْتَا
فِيْ هٰذَا الْعَامِ وَالَّذِيْ جَمَعَنَا فِيْ هٰذَا الْحَفْلِ الشَّرِيْفِ مَعَ عُلَمَائِنَا وَرَئِيْسِ الْعَامِ
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى اٰلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ خَيْرِ الْاَنَامِ

J.M. Bapak Ketua Umum,
J.M. Bapak[2] Para Alim-Ulama,
J.M. Bapak[2] Anggota[2] P.B.N.U.,
J.M.Saudara[2] Mu'tamirin dan Mu'tamirat dan hadlirin jang tehormat.

Sebelumnja saja mengutjapkan sepatah dua patah kata pembukaan, izinkanlah saja, atas nama Panitia Mu'tamar N.U. ke XXII ini mengutjapkan selamat datang dan selamat bermu'tamar kepada seganap

Figure 1 First page of the minutes of Plenary Session I, 13 December 1959. The page identifies the chair, secretary, 164 recorded branch delegates, and the opening agenda.

Wahab Chasbullah's opening address framed the political questions without resolving them in advance. He condemned armed regional revolt for its deaths, destruction, inflationary costs, and damage to national order, yet invoked Qur'an 49:9 to require an attempt at peace and justice before coercion. He treated the return to the 1945 Constitution as a way out of deadlock while anticipating a future People's Consultative Assembly. Most importantly, he did not support Guided Democracy without terms. He called for a democracy founded upon deliberation among representatives, ulama, specialists, and trusted decision makers. The reference in the decree to the Jakarta Charter as animating the Constitution was welcomed, but he asked the congress to devise the means by which its aspirations

[14] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-I Tanggal 13 Desember 1959 Malam," 1–2; Republic of Indonesia, *Peraturan Pemerintah Pengganti Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 1959 tentang Keadaan Bahaya*, Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1959 Nomor 139.

might become effective. The address was an orientation from the Rais Aam, not an adopted resolution, and its normative claims had still to survive the plenaries.[15]

Sukarno's speech at the reception on 17 December demonstrated the other side of this relationship. The president described the gathering as a congress of Indonesian ulama and claimed that their presence enhanced the symbolic authority of his presidency. He praised Idham Chalid and Wahab Chasbullah for contributing to deliberations on emergency legislation and presented state attention to ulama as evidence of consultation. His metaphor of the independent state as a common "container" invited Muslims to fill the republic with moral content without contesting the national form. The speech sought religious legitimation for the new order; it also acknowledged that NU had become a political interlocutor whose cooperation could not be taken for granted.[16]

Accountability, Branch Criticism, and the Distribution of Authority

Plenary II on 14 December subjected the central board's 1956–1959 policy to congress review. K. H. M. Dachlan chaired the session, H. A. Sjahri served as secretary, and 169 branches were recorded. Saifuddin Zuhri reported on organisation; Idham Chalid addressed political and general policy. The organisational report described a party attempting to bureaucratise without dissolving its relational culture. The Party Council had become an intermediate consultative body; the bylaws were revised in 1957 and 1958; PBNU issued at least twenty-five circulars and twenty-nine instructions; and NU claimed nineteen regions and approximately 270 branches. Yet central communication remained incomplete, dues were irregular, and some branches did not answer requests for reports.[17]

The report's social data exposed why party politics could not be separated from associational work. Ma'arif listed three higher-education institutions—the Faculty of *Qadla* in Surabaya, the Faculty of Economics and Commerce in Bandung, and an academy for educational and religious studies in Malang—together with 1,834 elementary-level madrasas enrolling 287,927 pupils, eighty-five middle-level madrasas enrolling 7,413, and twenty-five teacher-training schools enrolling 1,961. These figures were evidence of reach, but the report itself acknowledged uneven quality, finance, staffing, and coordination. Organisational survival meant more than retaining ministerial posts; it required sustaining the institutions through which ordinary members encountered NU.[18]

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[15] K. H. Abdul Wahab Chasbullah, "Pidato Amanat jang Diutjapkan pada Sidang Pembukaan Mu'tamar Nahdlatul-'Ulama ke-XXII di Djakarta" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Miftakhul Arif and Ainur Rofiq Al Amin, "Pemikiran Kebangsaan KH A. Wahab Chasbullah: Perspektif Fikih," *Istinbáth: Jurnal Hukum dan Ekonomi Islam* 20, no. 1 (2021): 189–210.

[16] Sukarno, *Pidato P.J.M. Presiden Sukarno dalam Resepsi Mu'tamar ke-22 Partai Nahdlatul Ulama* (Djakarta, 17 December 1959); Feith, *Decline of Constitutional Democracy*, 520–23.

[17] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-II Tanggal 14 Desember 1959 Pagi: Laporan Kebidjaksanaan di Bidang Organisasi" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959).

[18] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-II Tanggal 14 Desember 1959 Pagi"; Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi tentang Pandangan Hidup Kiai* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2011), 111–34.

Idham Chalid defended PBNU's acceptance of the Djuanda cabinet, its willingness to return to the 1945 Constitution while preserving the Jakarta Charter's stated relation to it, and its refusal to oppose the Working Cabinet simply because ministers were no longer formal party representatives. His argument differed from Masyumi's increasingly confrontational posture: policies should be assessed by their consequences for the state and Muslim community, and access should not be relinquished merely because the new institutional form was imperfect. Congress ultimately accepted the 1956–1959 policy by acclamation, but the route to that decision was neither silent nor unanimous in reasoning.[19]

Branch interventions in Plenaries IV and V on 15–16 December transformed accountability from a central report into a negotiation. Sixty-eight delegates initially registered to speak, and Idham later referred to approximately sixty interventions. Mojokerto complained that ulama and party figures who entered state institutions had neglected work formerly carried out among communities and that functions belonging to the party were increasingly performed by individuals. Its appeal to "return to 1926" demanded revival of religious, educational, and social service. The minutes do not establish that the branch formally demanded immediate dissolution of the party; later memories of "return to the *khittah*" should therefore not be read back into the phrase without qualification.[20]

Other branches made the institutional content of that criticism explicit. Jember questioned whether political decisions on the PRRI rebellion, Guided Democracy, the 1945 Constitution, the Jakarta Charter, and the post-decree situation had been adequately discussed by both *Syuriyah* and *Tanfidziyah*. Banyuwangi criticised poor coordination; Gambir warned against reliance on the personal capacity of the general chairman. Padang asked for protection of NU communities affected by PRRI, while branches from Tapanuli Selatan, Amuntai, Pontianak, Indragiri, and Batang Hari demanded visits, educational assistance, regular instructions, and attention beyond Java. Sampang, Tuban, Brebes, Purworejo, Pare, and Kudus raised deficiencies in teachers, madrasa recognition, and preacher training. The debate's axis was therefore not simply "ulama" against "politicians." It joined centre–region inequality, collective versus personal authority, and the allocation of scarce organisational capacity between the state and society.[21]

PBNU responded by distinguishing the political line from defects in implementation. Wahab Chasbullah explained that the statement on PRRI had been issued rapidly in an emergency and subsequently referred to the Party Council.

[19] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-II Tanggal 14 Desember 1959 Pagi"; Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Siaran XX"; Deliar Noer, *Partai Islam di Pentas Nasional 1945–1965* (Jakarta: Grafiti Pers, 1987), 380–83.

[20] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang ke-IV Tanggal 15 Desember 1959 Pagi" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Fawaid, "Dinamika NU Pasca Kemerdekaan," 125–26.

[21] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang ke-IV Tanggal 15 Desember 1959 Pagi"; Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang ke-V Tanggal 15 December 1959 Malam: Chususi Tanfidziah" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-V Tanggal 16 Desember 1959 Pagi" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959).

Saifuddin Zuhri attributed partial attendance at central meetings to distance and urgent duties. Idham accepted the need to improve regional relations and renew the ethos of 1926, but insisted that the form of struggle had to answer the conditions of 1959. He classified branch responses as complete acceptance, acceptance with reservations, acceptance under emergency conditions, or acceptance because no preferable alternative appeared. Acclamation thus represented convergence on a policy after acknowledged disagreement, not the retrospective disappearance of dissent.[22]

The most visible procedural conflict concerned the election system. Plenary III on the evening of 14 December debated standing orders prepared by a commission representing the regions. Under the draft, each branch had one vote regardless of whether it sent both a *Syuriyah* and a *Tanfidziyah* delegate. Decisions were to be sought first by acclamation; open or roll-call votes were permissible when consensus failed, and secret ballots were required for personal matters. The chair could regulate speakers, and proceedings were confidential unless PBNU authorised publication. The design combined egalitarian branch voting, a preference for consensus, modern balloting, and considerable agenda control by the central leadership.[23]

The contested article provided for direct congress election of the Rais Aam and general chairman, after which the two would act as *formateurs*, assisted by three members, to compose the remaining daily board for plenary approval. Disagreement became sufficiently intense for the chair to suspend the session. After resumption, the *formateur* system prevailed by 84 votes to 39. Its supporters could expect a coherent leadership balancing religious authority, political competence, region, and collegial work; its critics could reasonably fear that branch sovereignty ended once the two principal officers were chosen. The vote formalised a trade-off between broad participation and executive integration.[24]

Plenary VII implemented the compromise on 17 December. Wahab Chasbullah returned the outgoing board's mandate to the congress; he was then the sole candidate for Rais Aam and was chosen by acclamation. Idham Chalid defeated K. H. Masjkur for general chairman, although the record's contradictory vote totals preclude a reliable exact margin. Wahab and Idham formed the new board with regional assistants. Masjkur, the defeated candidate, became First Chairman of the *Tanfidziyah*, and the complete slate was approved by acclamation. The procedure

[22] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-V Tanggal 16 Desember 1959 Pagi"; Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Keputusan Mu'tamar Partai N.U. ke-22."

[23] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Peraturan Tata Tertib Mu'tamar Nahdlatul Ulama, Bab I–VII," in "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-III Tanggal 14 Desember 1959 Malam."

[24] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-III Tanggal 14 Desember 1959 Malam"; Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Lanjutan Catatan Jalannya Sidang Pleno III: Pemungutan Suara Komisi Tata Tertib" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959).

concentrated compositional authority but reincorporated a rival, coupling continuity with elite inclusion.[25]

Decisions and Programmatic Settlement

The enacted programme retained the *Tafsir Asasi* adopted at the Twentieth Congress in Surabaya in 1954 as the party's broad line and added an Immediate Work Programme. Its five priorities were to implement Guided Democracy as consultation, make the spirit of the Jakarta Charter effective in state and society, build a *Djabhah Islamiyah* or Islamic front, revitalise *Mabadi Khaira Ummah*, and establish an Arabic-script printing press. Further resolutions addressed representative institutions, foreign policy, economic planning, food and clothing, agriculture, security, social guarantees, education, industry, distribution, and monetary policy. The breadth of the programme joined regime positioning to the organisational and material needs raised by branches.[26]

Its most consequential sentence defined Guided Democracy as "democracy led by the wisdom of deliberation" and rejected both leadership without democracy and democracy without leadership. The first rejection marked an explicit boundary against dictatorship; the second answered NU's diagnosis of parliamentary fragmentation. Acceptance therefore rested upon semantic appropriation. The party adopted the regime's name while assigning it a consultative meaning derived from the congress's own procedure and from Islamic political vocabulary.[27]

The Jakarta Charter resolution displayed the same conditionality. The decree's statement that the Charter inspired and formed a unity with the 1945 Constitution was not treated as fulfilment. The congress demanded that its spirit "be immediately felt and applied" in state and social life. The wording turned a presidential formula into a continuing claim rather than declaring the seven words of the Charter automatically operative law. Similarly, the proposed *Djabhah Islamiyah* expressed a desire to coordinate Muslim political strength precisely when Masyumi and NU were diverging sharply over cooperation with Sukarno. The congress could declare Islamic unity; it could not erase strategic division among Islamic parties.[28]

Economic resolutions similarly accepted official terminology while limiting its content. Zainul Arifin's proposal and the enacted formulations supported a guided economy under article 33 of the 1945 Constitution, a national plan, and state control of sectors essential to the public. They nevertheless preserved private enterprise and assigned cooperatives a central role. "Indonesian socialism" was differentiated from

[25] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-VII Tanggal 17 Desember 1959 Pagi"; Suryawan Abdian Alim, "Peran Politik Idham Chalid dalam Nahdlatul Ulama Tahun 1956–1984," *Jurnal Prodi Ilmu Sejarah* (2019): 2–8.

[26] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Partai dan Program Kerdja-Segera" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Keputusan Mu'tamar Partai N.U. ke-22."

[27] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Program Kerdja-Segera" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Nurjaman et al., "Nahdlatul Ulama Theological Basis," 345–62.

[28] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Program Kerdja-Segera"; Ahmad Syafii Maarif, *Islam dan Masalah Kenegaraan: Studi tentang Percaturan dalam Konstituante* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985), 145–47; Fadli, "Pergumulan Partai Politik Islam," 40–47.

Marxism–Leninism by belief in God, rejection of class war and proletarian dictatorship, recognition of socially obligated private property, and the principle of familial cooperation. Immediate priorities included employment, equitable distribution, clothing and food, agrarian reform, social welfare, education, and monetary supervision. The programme was neither laissez-faire nor comprehensive state ownership; it sought a religiously bounded mixed economy.[29]

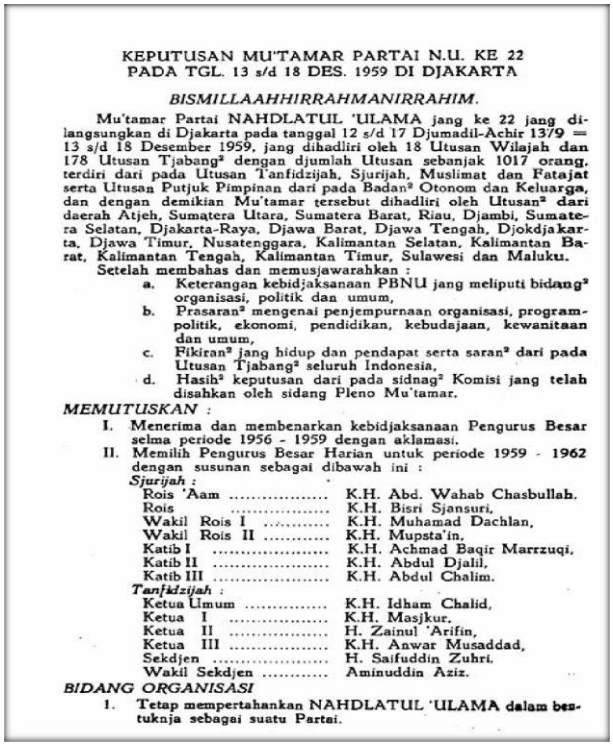
The organisational decisions resisted reducing NU to electoral machinery. Saifuddin Zuhri urged the party to remain political because its Islamic purposes concerned both political and non-political life, but he acknowledged that preaching, education, and welfare had lost priority. He proposed clearer cooperation between *Syuriyah* and *Tanfidziyah*, stronger Ma'arif, Dakwah, Mabarrot, finance, election, and conciliation bodies, better administration, and removal of a vertically organised Economic Section that might attract private profiteering. The enacted decisions retained NU as a party, strengthened collective *Syuriyah* work and its relation to the executive, and expanded specialist bodies. This was a programme for containing the organisational effects of politicisation without abandoning political participation.[30]

Women's organisations occupied a distinct but bounded place in the settlement. Muslimat accepted its outgoing leadership's policy, elected Ny. Machmudah as general chair, and adopted programmes in religious education, women's training, cooperatives, maternal and child welfare, care for orphaned girls, and maternity services. It called for Muslim marriage legislation, action against prostitution, support for kindergartens and marriage-advice bodies, and lower prices for necessities. Fatayat, by contrast, was still designated a "family body" under Muslimat, with programmes for young women's cadres, Arabic courses, madrasa improvement, and religious teaching; it would receive autonomous-body status only in 1962. These decisions expanded organised female activity while expressing it through the familial and moral vocabulary of 1959.[31]

[29] H. Zainul Arifin, "Sumbangan Fikiran tentang Sosialisme ala Indonesia dan Ekonomi Terpimpin" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Rumusan tentang Masjarakat jang Adil dan Makmur" and "Rumusan tentang Ekonomi-Terpimpin" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Farabi Fakih, *Authoritarian Modernization in Indonesia's Early Independence Period: The Foundation of the New Order State, 1950–1965* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 168–98.

[30] H. Saifuddin Zuhri, "Prasaran tentang Penjempurnaan Djalannja Organisasi Partai Nahdlatul-'Ulama" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang Pleno ke-VI Tanggal 16 Desember 1959 Malam" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959).

[31] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Keputusan Muslimat" and "Fatajat (Pemuda Puteri)" (Djakarta: Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, 1959); Lailatus Syukriyah, "Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama di Indonesia (1946–1955)," *Avatara: e-Journal Pendidikan Sejarah* 4, no. 3 (2016): 617–19; Monika Arnez, "Empowering Women through Islam: Fatayat NU between Tradition and Change," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 21, no. 1 (2010): 59–88, https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etp025.



KEPUTUSAN MU'TAMAR PARTAI N.U. KE 22
PADA TGL. 13 s/d 18 DES. 1959 DI DJAKARTA

BISMILLAAHHIRRAHMANIRRAHIM.

Mu'tamar Partai NAHDLATUL 'ULAMA jang ke 22 jang dilangsungkan di Djakarta pada tanggal 12 s/d 17 Djumadil-Achir 1379 = 13 s/d 18 Desember 1959, jang dihadliri oleh 18 Utusan Wilajah dan 178 Utusan Tjabang² dengan djumlah Utusan sebanjak 1017 orang, terdiri dari pada Utusan Tanfidzijah, Sjurijah, Muslimat dan Fatajat serta Utusan Putjuk Pimpinan dari pada Badan² Otonom dan Keluarga, dan dengan demikian Mu'tamar tersebut dihadliri oleh Utusan² dari daerah Atjeh, Sumatera Utara, Sumatera Barat, Riau, Djambi, Sumatera Selatan, Djakarta-Raya, Djawa Barat, Djawa Tengah, Djokdjakarta, Djawa Timur, Nusatenggara, Kalimantan Selatan, Kalimantan Barat, Kalimantan Tengah, Kalimantan Timur, Sulawesi dan Maluku.

Setelah membahas dan memusjawarahkan :

a. Keterangan kebidjaksanaan PBNU jang meliputi bidang² organisasi, politik dan umum,
b. Prasaran² mengenai penjempurnaan organisasi, program-politik, ekonomi, pendidikan, kebudajaan, kewanitaan dan umum,
c. Fikiran² jang hidup dan pendapat serta saran² dari pada Utusan Tjabang² seluruh Indonesia,
d. Hasil² keputusan dari pada sidnag² Komisi jang telah disahkan oleh sidang Pleno Mu'tamar.

MEMUTUSKAN :

I. Menerima dan membenarkan kebidjaksanaan Pengurus Besar selma periode 1956 - 1959 dengan aklamasi.
II. Memilih Pengurus Besar Harian untuk periode 1959 - 1962 dengan susunan sebagai dibawah ini :

Sjurijah :

Rois 'Aam	K.H. Abd. Wahab Chasbullah.
Rois	K.H. Bisri Sjansuri.
Wakil Rois I	K.H. Muhamad Dachlan.
Wakil Rois II	K.H. Mupsta'in.
Katib I	K.H. Achmad Baqir Marrzuqi.
Katib II	K.H. Abdul Djalil.
Katib III	K.H. Abdul Chalim.

Tanfidzijah :

Ketua Umum	K.H. Idham Chalid.
Ketua I	K.H. Masjkur.
Ketua II	H. Zainul 'Arifin.
Ketua III	K.H. Anwar Musaddad.
Sekdjen	H. Saifuddin Zuhri.
Wakil Sekdjen	Aminuddin Aziz.

BIDANG ORGANISASI

1. Tetap mempertahankan NAHDLATUL 'ULAMA dalam bentuknja sebagai suatu Partai.

Figure 2 First page of the enacted congress decisions. It records the dates, 18 regional delegations, 178 branches, 1,017 participants, acceptance of PBNU's 1956–1959 policy, and the principal officers for 1959–1962.

Discussion

Conditional Accommodation as Institutional Practice

The findings support the description of NU's strategy as accommodative, but they revise what accommodation meant. A simple pragmatist model starts with political access: by cooperating, NU retained posts, protected the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and avoided the exclusion that later overtook Masyumi. A doctrinal model starts with legal maxims: what cannot be obtained in full should not be wholly abandoned (*mā lā yudraku kulluhu lā yutraku kulluhu*); of two harms, the lesser should be chosen (*irtikāb akhaff al-ḍararayn*); and preventing injury takes priority over obtaining benefit (*dar' al-mafāsid muqaddam 'alā jalb al-maṣāliḥ*). Both explanations identify real features of NU politics, but the congress shows that neither access nor doctrine automatically produced an organisational decision.[32]

Institutional authorisation supplied the missing link. Circulars and Party Council meetings first translated strategic judgments into instructions; the congress then made the outgoing board answerable, allowed branches to attach criticisms to acceptance, assigned commissions to transform proposals into programmes, and used votes where consensus failed. The political theology of *maṣlaḥah* became effective because actors embedded it in procedures that joined clerical and

[32] Fealy, *Ijtihad Politik Ulama*, 69–87, 215–17, 283–84; Ahmad Syafii Maarif, *Islam dan Politik: Teori Belah Bambu Masa Demokrasi Terpimpin 1959–1965* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1996), 63–65; Fajrul Falaakh, "Nahdlatul Ulama dan Fiqh Siyasah dalam Konteks Negara Bangsa," *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik* 4, no. 1 (2000): 34–35.

administrative authority. Conversely, procedure acquired religious meaning because consultation was understood not merely as a technique for counting preferences but as a discipline of morally responsible judgment. The result was not liberal parliamentarism reproduced inside NU. Chairs controlled the floor, records were confidential, central speeches were preserved more fully, and the *formateur* system shifted discretion upward. It was nonetheless a consequential deliberative order in which leaders had to explain themselves and branches could define the terms of assent.

The phrase "democracy led by the wisdom of deliberation" condensed this practice into a political proposition. It did not preserve the institutions of the 1950 Constitution, which the presidential decree had already displaced. Nor did it provide an enforceable constitutional limit on Sukarno. It did, however, create an internal standard by which NU could claim that Guided Democracy ceased to be legitimate when "leadership" extinguished "democracy." The formulation was therefore both accommodative and oppositional: it permitted entry into the new order while reserving a vocabulary with which to criticise it. Its weakness lay in enforcement. Once representative institutions were appointed and presidential authority expanded, a party operating from within the system possessed limited means to compel compliance with its preferred definition.[33]

Sukarno's reception speech clarifies the reciprocity and asymmetry of the arrangement. The president publicly honoured the ulama and cited their contribution to state deliberation; NU obtained recognition as the principal Islamic interlocutor. Yet symbolic proximity also helped legitimise a regime moving beyond electoral accountability. NU could use access to influence policy, but the regime could use NU's presence to present centralisation as religiously and socially representative. Accommodation was thus a relationship of unequal exchange, not a unilateral concession by either side.

Continuity, Centralisation, and the Prehistory of Khittah

The congress joined continuity and change at several levels. The *Tafsir Asasi*, Islamic party identity, authority of the *Syuriyah*, and consultative idiom were retained. At the same time, the organisation accepted a constitutional order no longer grounded in the 1955 electoral settlement, normalised cabinet participation outside formal party representation, strengthened an intermediate Party Council, and used a *formateur* procedure to produce an integrated central board. The reelection of Wahab Chasbullah and Idham Chalid communicated stability at the threshold of Guided Democracy; Masjkur's appointment after defeat contained factional division. Continuity of personnel was itself a strategy of adaptation.

The branch criticism reveals the cost. Political advancement at the centre did not guarantee administrative service in the regions. PBNU's own account of unanswered circulars, weak dues, and uneven reporting mirrored branch complaints about absent visits, inadequate teachers, irregular preaching materials, and

[33] Lev, *Transition to Guided Democracy*, 253–320; Hidayat et al., "Nahdlatul Ulama in Facing Guided Democracy," 571–76.

insufficient attention beyond Java. The national party possessed a broad network, but not a uniformly penetrated bureaucracy. Its authority depended simultaneously on rules, charismatic clerical ties, and local institutions. Centralisation could make the leadership more effective in negotiating with the state while weakening the reciprocal work that made its national claim credible.[34]

Mojokerto's "return to 1926" belongs within this organisational contradiction. The intervention is associated with K. H. Achyat Chalimi and is understood as one of the early ideas regarding withdrawal from direct political engagement. The more detailed session analysis, however, reads the recorded words as a demand to renew religious, educational, and social service and to prevent political functions from becoming individual careers. Because the minutes summarise rather than transcribe the intervention, the strongest defensible conclusion lies between those readings. The episode demonstrates an articulated desire to re-centre NU's foundational work and a critique of excessive politicisation; it does not by itself prove that the congress faced a fully developed motion equivalent to the 1984 *khittah* settlement. Its novelty lies precisely in this ambiguity: the later return to *khittah* had a prehistory of institutional complaints before it became a doctrine of organisational disengagement from party politics.[35]

The economic and women's programmes further complicate a state-centred history. NU's response to Guided Democracy was not exhausted by *Nasakom*, the cabinet, or the Constitution. The congress reinterpreted "guided economy" and "Indonesian socialism," connected them to divine accountability and a mixed economy, and embedded them in demands for food, clothing, employment, education, agrarian improvement, and social security. Muslimat and Fatayat placed welfare, training, health, and household economy within the party's programme. These decisions show that NU attempted to translate national ideological terms into the social worlds of its membership. They also reveal limits: female public agency remained framed by domestic responsibility, and an ambitious welfare programme confronted acknowledged weaknesses in finance and coordination.

Historiographically, the congress therefore occupies a position between macro-political histories and later institutional memory. Fealy is correct that Sunni jurisprudential reasoning made flexibility principled rather than merely opportunistic. Feillard and van Bruinessen are correct that authority moved through formal structures and personal networks. Later studies are correct that social protection, fear of communist expansion, and organisational survival encouraged acceptance of Guided Democracy. The congress records add that this political line had to be produced through conflict over procedure, centre–region obligations, and the meaning of NU's own history. The most significant novelty is not a previously unknown resolution but a revised causal account: conditional accommodation became durable when a national congress joined jurisprudential reasoning, organisational bargaining, and programme formation.

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[34] M. Dawam Rahardjo, ed., *Pergulatan Dunia Pesantren: Membangun dari Bawah* (Jakarta: P3M, 1985), xi–xiii; van Bruinessen, *NU: Tradisi, Relasi-relasi Kuasa*, 15–18.

[35] Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, "Notulen Sidang ke-IV Tanggal 15 Desember 1959 Pagi"; Fawaid, "Dinamika NU Pasca Kemerdekaan," 119–34; Marijan, *Quo Vadis NU*, 112–18.

Conclusion

Nahdlatul Ulama's Twenty-Second Congress was a constitutive episode in the party's passage from parliamentary democracy into Guided Democracy. Its decisions were prepared through Party Council sessions, circulars, and policy statements; tested through reports, branch criticism, commission work, and votes; and consolidated in a programme that accepted the new political framework while assigning it NU's own consultative meaning. The congress endorsed continued engagement with government, retained the Jakarta Charter as an unfulfilled claim, called for an Islamic front, and re-elected a leadership capable of negotiating the new order. It did not grant unconditional approval to presidential power.

The proceedings also expose an internal politics obscured by accounts centred only on elite pragmatism. Branches demanded accountable leadership, balanced authority between *Syuriyah* and *Tanfidziyah*, more equitable centre–region relations, and renewed investment in education, preaching, welfare, and economic organisation. The contested *formateur* vote and subsequent inclusion of Masjkur demonstrate that centralisation was negotiated and reconciliatory, not merely imposed. Muslimat and Fatayat extended the settlement into welfare, education, and women's organisational activity, although within the gendered assumptions of the period.

The article's contribution is to identify the congress as the institutional mechanism that converted political adaptation into an authoritative yet conditional settlement. Its novelty lies in reconstructing the interaction of pre-congress policy formation, plenary procedure, branch agency, and enacted programme, while preserving contradictions in the official record. The Mojokerto intervention further marks an early and ambiguous critique of politicisation that should be treated as a prehistory—not a completed version—of the later "return to the 1926 *khittah*." NU's accommodation in 1959 was therefore neither surrender nor doctrinal reflex. It was a historically specific act of institutional *ijtihad* that protected political presence while revealing the organisational vulnerabilities that such presence created.

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