

benefits of living together successfully. But it is very difficult to find the journalists who can manage this type of work

Media can present the experience of autonomy in other countries, both positive and negative. Media should highlight the deviation from expected standards in implementing decentralization in Indonesia. "The pendulum is swinging from one extreme to the other" said a participant.

Canadian Experience

The 200 year Canadian experiment in confederal/federal system building still faces many challenges, but the complexity of Indonesia's new system appears to be of an order of magnitude greater than that of the Canadian system. Nevertheless, the structured tension between municipal, aboriginal, provincial, territorial, and federal governments – and the Canadian ways of dealing with those tensions -- are not irrelevant in this context.

But a caution arises in the minds of the older Indonesian generation who saw the Dutch experimenting with federalism in order to keep maintain a foothold in the final years of colonialism. This experience is more recent in eastern Indonesia, where some people wonder if the new talk of 'federalism' is intended simply to keep Indonesia together. These are the people thinking about autonomy and then separation. So there is a parallel experience in Canada.

Canada has tried a number of tools and built a number of models. It is not a pure system; it is a mixture of a federal "unity" model and a confederal "autonomy" model. It has an evolving approach, involving endless negotiation. "We will never remove the tension from the system, it has been there for 200 years."

As in Canada, federalism and decentralization have acquired alternate meanings in different regions of Indonesia.