

**Official Event
Round Table**

**How the tolerance could contribute to
economic development, poverty
eradication and human rights
enforcements in Singkawang city**

**Sumastro
[Mayor, Singkawang]**

The presence of our delegation here from Singkawang City, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia is due to the achievement of Singkawang City as the most tolerant city in Indonesia in 2023. This achievement is based on the assessment of the Tolerance City Index (TCI) 2022 issued by the Setara Institute, which has been a national reference in recent years. Singkawang City has received this award not only this year but four times in the last six years. This year, the TCI score for Singkawang City is 6.583, which is higher than the previous year's score of 6.483.

Singkawang City, often referred to as "Little Indonesia," is notable for its remarkable diversity, being home to 17 distinct ethnic groups. What sets Singkawang apart is not just the diversity but its exceptional ability to manage and maintain tolerance among its people.

In Singkawang, diversity is not merely recognized but embraced and celebrated. This city exemplifies unity amidst differences, where residents actively engage in promoting mutual respect, understanding, and inclusivity. Through intercultural dialogues and community-driven initiatives, Singkawang's culture of tolerance thrives, turning diversity into a source of strength and shared prosperity.

However, diversity is not only a historical fact we must accept but also a challenge we must manage effectively, and it even becomes a crucial source of our collective progress. In our experience in Singkawang City, we have found a close connection between tolerance and economic growth, poverty alleviation, and the protection of human rights.

Economically, Singkawang City has reaped the benefits of its tolerance. Peaceful coexistence of various ethnic groups has attracted local and international visitors, significantly boosting the tourism sector. We believe that many people come to Singkawang City because it is safe, peaceful, and tolerant. Furthermore, tolerance in Singkawang City has had a positive impact in the form of increased investment. When a city is known for its tolerance and inclusivity, it becomes more attractive to investors. Businesses are more likely to invest in a place with a stable social environment, as it reduces the risk of conflict and disruption to their operations. This, in turn, can lead to job creation and economic growth. Additionally, tolerance can enable acculturation and assimilation, leading to the creation of new local products, such as Moon Cake with halal certification, the famous Halal Tionghoa Noodle,

Cheongsam Shirts adapted for Muslims, and Muslim's Cap with Dayak ornament. Tolerance fosters an environment where people from different backgrounds feel comfortable starting businesses, leading to innovation and a broader range of products and services, stimulating economic development.

In the fight against poverty, Singkawang City's commitment to tolerance has played a significant role. By providing equal opportunities to all residents, regardless of their background, in public services such as education, healthcare, and socio-economic activities, it is expected that social disparities can be reduced and the benefits of economic growth can be shared more equitably. In Singkawang, you will have no trouble finding Muslim women working in Local Tionghoa coffee shops, indicating that job opportunities in Singkawang City are fair and do not discriminate based on differences. Furthermore, the city's conducive environment inspires NGOs, philanthropists, and the community in general to contribute to the development of Singkawang City through social assistance and infrastructure projects in remote areas.

Regarding the protection of human rights, tolerance in Singkawang City plays a crucial role in safeguarding the rights of its residents, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, or cultural background. This commitment to human rights has created a safe and inclusive environment where everyone can enjoy their rights and freedoms without discrimination. Moreover, tolerance also enhances the awareness of the government and the community in Singkawang City to be more concerned about the protection of marginalized and vulnerable groups, including issues related to human trafficking.

The Singkawang City government has taken key steps to promote tolerance, including:

1. Commitment to prioritize tolerance and diversity as one of the top agenda priorities in the Singkawang City Government Development Plan.
2. Ensuring equality and justice policies.
3. Taking decisive measures to prevent discriminatory actions.
4. Encouraging inter-institutional collaboration and facilitating inter-group dialogues.
5. Promoting tolerance and human rights.

Despite achieving success, tolerance in Singkawang still faces challenges such as ignorance, prejudice, and discrimination. We need to continue building on our success and address these challenges together.

The lessons learned from Singkawang's success are hoped to inspire other cities worldwide to prioritize tolerance and embrace the many benefits it offers. By doing so, we can work together to create a fairer, more just, and harmonious world for all.

Join us in promoting diversity and tolerance in your community. Embrace differences and celebrate diversity, and work hard to create a more tolerant and harmonious society for all.