

SIGNIFICANT SPEECHES, EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

IAIS Malaysia Year Review in 2019

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IAIS Malaysia started the year by hosting an international seminar entitled ‘*The Role of Religion in the Quest for Peaceful Co-existence*’ on 15 January. This prestigious seminar primarily sought to promote interfaith dialogue between Islam, Judaism and Christianity on peaceful co-existence. Prominent participants included Dr Chandra Muzaffar (President, JUST), Dr Mahmoud Vaezi (Director, Center for Advanced Studies, University of Tehran, Iran), Assoc Prof Dr Sarjit Singh Gill (Dept. of Social and Development Science, Faculty of Human Ecology UPM), Mr Mohd. Azmi Abd. Hamid (President, MAPIM), Dr Imtiyaz Yusuf (ISTAC-IIUM), Rev. Dr Sivin Kit (Director, Center for Religion and Society, Seminar Theoloji Malaysia), and Mr Uthaya Sankar SB (prolific writer and interfaith activist).

On 19 January, the Institute, together with ARK (a halal certification company) and Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC), jointly organised a seminar entitled ‘*In-Depth Discussion on Indonesia's Mandatory Halal Law 2019*’. The seminar was an excellent platform for Malaysian businesses to enter the Indonesian halal market and understand its relevant laws. Prominent speakers were Prof Ir Dr Sukoso Msc. (Head of Halal Product Assurance Organising Agency, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Republic of Indonesia), and Mr Shafie Shamsuddin (President Director and CEO, PT Trans Retail Indonesia).

On 21 and 22 February, the Institute conducted a ‘*Research Camp for Academic and Policy Research*’ to assist post-graduate students and researchers in conducting quality research. The research camp was conducted by IAIS Malaysia staff Prof. Dr Mohammad Hashim Kamali, Assoc Prof Dr Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil, Dr Alexander Wain, Dr Mohammad Mahbubi Ali, Dr M. Rizky Prima Sakti, Dr Ahmad Badri Abdullah and Mohd. Fariz Zainal Abdullah.

On 25 March, IAIS Malaysia and the Department of English Language and Literature IIUM, in collaboration with the Secretariat of English Language and Literature (ELITS - IIUM), conducted a forum entitled ‘*Unlocking the Enigma of the Lord of the Rings*’. This event discussed the hidden symbolism behind

'*The Lord of the Rings*', adding new meaning to a much-loved story. Taking place in the Kulliyah of IRKHS, IIUM, the event featured Ms Buveneswary Vathemurthy (English Literature, UM), Dr David Tneh Cheng Eng (Dean, Faculty of Creative Industries, UTAR), and Dr Alexander Wain (Associate Research Fellow, IAIS Malaysia).

On 2 April, the Institute, in collaboration with MAPIM, JUST and Global Peace Malaysia (GPM), organised an important forum entitled '*Uyghur's Plight: Countering Extremism or Religious Discrimination?*' The event explored the worrisome developments in Xinjiang from several perspectives. The panellists included Mohd. Azmi Abd. Hamid (President, MAPIM), Dr Alexander Wain (Associate Research Fellow, IAIS Malaysia), Ahmad Fahmi Mohd Shamsudin (CEO, Global Peace Malaysia), and Hassanal Noor Rashid (Project Coordinator, JUST).

IAIS Malaysia held the '*Forum Peradaban dan Keamanan Sejagat: Konsep Keamanan dan Keadilan Sosial Menurut Shaykh Abdullah bin Bayyah*' on 30 April. Focused on Shaykh Abdullah bin Bayyah's thoughts on global peace and harmony, the event featured Nurul Izzah Anwar, MP, as keynote speaker. She also launched Shaykh Abdullah bin Bayyah's latest Malay-translated book, entitled '*Terorisme: Diagnosis dan Penyelesaian*'.

On 30 May, IAIS Malaysia organised a seminar entitled '*Meet the Scholars: The Need for a Fiqh for Muslims Minorities in Western Communities and Maqasid Narrative - Developments so Far*,' featuring IAIS Founding CEO, Prof Dr Mohammad Hashim Kamali, and Founder and Chairman of the Cordoba Initiative, Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf. Prof. Kamali delivered a talk on '*Maqasid Scholarship: Developments So Far*' while Imam Feisal presented on '*The Need for a Fiqh for Muslim Minorities in Western Communities*'.

On 16 August, IAIS Malaysia held a book launch and accompanying forum, '*Inaugural Book Discussion: An Intellectual Discourse on Islamic Law in Malaysia - Issues, Developments and Challenges*'. The book, edited by Assoc Prof Dr Azam and Prof Kamali, deals with aspects of Islamic law and practice concerning both Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia. Guest discussants were Emeritus Prof Datuk Dr Shad Saleem Faruqi (Holder of the Tunku Abdul Rahman Chair in the Law Faculty, UM), Prof Dato' Seri Dr Zaleha binti Kamaruddin (Professor, AIKOL IIUM) and Prof. Dato' Dr Ahmad Hidayat bin Buang (Professor, Department of Shariah and Law, APIUM).

On 26 August, IAIS Malaysia, in collaboration with Pertubuhan Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Pertubuhan Legasi Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (LEGASI), Fakultas Hukum Universitas Islam Malang (UNISMA) and INTAN Wilayah Tengah (INTENGAH), organised the '*Forum Bulan Kemerdekaan Malaysia dan Indonesia 2019*'. This event focused on the shared histories of Malaysia

and Indonesia. It included prominent figures from both countries, namely: Dato' Dr Mohd. Yusof Othman (Associate Principal Research Fellow, Institut Islam Hadhari, UKM), Mr Fahmi Amrullah Hadzik (grandchild of Hadrotussyaih KH. Hashim Asy'ari, founder of Nahdatul Ulama), Datuk Dr Ahmad Murad Merican (Professor, ISTAC-IIUM), and Dr Kiai Hj Muhammad Hasan (Deputy Rector, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Madura, Indonesia). The forum also saw the signing of a MoU between IAIS Malaysia and the Faculty of Law, Universitas Islam Malang (UNISMA), Indonesia.

From 27 to 29 September, IAIS Malaysia was among the 40 exhibitors at *Karnival Rahmah 2019*, held at Putrajaya Square. This mega-event was attended by approximately 100,000 visitors and was organised by the Prime Minister's Department, in collaboration with JAKIM and JAWI. It was officiated over by Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister, YAB Dato' Seri Dr Wan Azizah Dr Wan Ismail.

On 15 October, IAIS Malaysia, in collaboration with the High Commission of Pakistan in Kuala Lumpur, MAPIM, MANAR, SHURA and PCOM, organised '*The Palestine-Kashmir Forum: The Struggle for Freedom and Self-Determination*'. This international forum featured guests from various organisations, including Anna Baloch, Pakistan's High Commissioner to Malaysia, Ms. Baloch's deputy, Atif Sharif Mian, and the Director of the Palestine Cultural Organization Malaysia, Muslim Imran.

On 19 October, the Institute collaborated with Harmony Malaysia to organise '*The 5th Annual Conference and Workshop: Education and Culture in Promoting Harmony and National Integration*'. This conference was officiated over by YB Mujahid Yusof, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department. It featured distinguished panellists Prof Dato' Dr Teo Kok Seong (Institute of Ethnic Studies UKM), Dr Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj (Chairperson, Parti Sosialis Malaysia), and Mr Anas Zubedy (Managing Director/Founder, Zubedy Sdn. Bhd.).

On 24 October, the Institute collaborated with Alliance Francaise Kuala Lumpur to organise '*French Talk: In Conversation with Abdennour Bidar - Multi-Religious Societies in the 21st Century*'. This international event featured the French philosopher and writer, Abdennour Bidar, who discussed the various challenges and opportunities facing a multi-religious society, with particular reference to the French and Southeast Asian experiences.

In November, IAIS conducted two Round Table Discussions (RTDs). The first, held in conjunction with a visit by Dr Adis Duderija and his students from Griffith University, Australia, was entitled '*How to Defeat the Clash of Extremisms: Civilisational Hybridity and Trust Building in the Multicultural West*' (15 November). The second was held in collaboration with UNICEF, and

entitled '*Designing Sadaqah Models for Child Grant Project in Malaysia*' (26 November).

In November, the Institute also held its annual Islam and science conference, this year entitled '*Islam and Ecological Sustainability 2019*'. This international event focused on the vast potential Islamic civilisation has to cultivate and enhance green practices in society, especially relating to water. The event was intended to spark collaborative partnerships between key stakeholders in the field. Its keynote address was delivered by YB Minister Mujahid Yusof Rawa and featured S.S. Dato' Seri Dr Zulkifli bin Mohamad al-Bakri (Mufti of the Federal Territories), Prof. Dato' Seri Ir. Dr Zaini Ujang (Tokoh Maal Hijrah Kebangsaan 2019/UTM Chair Professor on Environmental Sustainability), Mr Fazlun Khalid (Founder & Director, Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences, UK) and Dr Kalithasan Kailasam (Manager of River Care Programme, Global Environment Centre – GEC).

IAIS Malaysia's final event for 2019 was a book discussion entitled '*Myth of 'Free Media' and Fake News in the Post-Truth Era*,' jointly organised with JUST on 7 December. The guest speaker was Dr Kalinga Seneviratne, a Sri Lankan-born journalist based in Singapore. The book examined how traditional news media battles for relevance in the internet age.

Over the course of the year, IAIS Malaysia also conducted two internal Research Fellow Seminars (RFS). The first, held in June, featured Dr Shahino Mah and Dr Ahmad Badri Abdullah speaking about '*Embracing Intelligent Technology the Right Way*', and '*The Many Challenges to the Nascent Halal Vaccine Initiative*' respectively. The second, held in October, saw Dr Daud Batchelor speak on '*Exploring the Significance of Cultural and Religious Factors in Domestic Violence and Divorce for Muslim Immigrant Australians*'.

In 2019, IAIS Malaysia also organised three events under its Islamic Finance Talk Series (IFTS). The first, '*Bringing Vision and Strategy to Life: Malaysia's Sustainable and Responsible Investment Growth Story*', was presented by Mohd. Razuan Tajuddin, an Islamic Finance Consultant for ZICO Shariah (20 August). The second, '*Islamic Economics as a School of Economics*', was delivered by Assoc Prof Dr Ugi Suharto from the University of Buraimi, Oman (5 September). The last, by Mohammad Ridzuan Abdul Aziz, President of the Fintech Association of Malaysia, was on '*Transitioning Islamic Economy via Technology and Innovation: Key Elements and Impacts*' (4 November).

In terms of publications, throughout 2019 IAIS Malaysia has produced four titles for its Policy Paper Series, one Occasional Paper, and four Research Briefs, all on a variety of topical subjects. Two issues of our journal, *Islam and Civilisational Renewal*, were also published (in June and December), in addition to six IAIS bulletins throughout the year. There were also 26 titles published by

IAIS Malaysia staff and research fellows in our regular NST column.

Overall, 2019 has seen IAIS Malaysia thrive in its mission to educate and supply the public with reliable Islamic research on various aspects of civilisational renewal. In sum, the Institute successfully conducted two international seminars, one local seminar, two public lectures, two roundtable discussions, nine public forums, two research fellow seminars, two public events, three Islamic finance series talks, and one training session, making a total of 24 events.