

Abdul Ghafur discussed the ending of the unlawful foreign military intervention in Afghanistan. He criticised the illegality of the US invasion in 2001 as a violation of international law. The Afghanistan invasion has taken a big toll in terms of duration, cost and casualties, while the clear losers of this conflict are both the Afghan people and the American taxpayers. Therefore, the US must be held accountable for the war crimes committed during the occupation on top of the *ex gratia* compensation paid to the Afghans. Najibah explored the paradigm shifts from cultural to legal rights in protecting women rights and also stressed the importance for the legal interpretation to pay focus on the context as well as avoiding the pitfalls of the protective mind that resulted in too many restrictions on women.

To conclude the discussion, Kamali emphasised the need to revisit the implementation of shariah based on the contemporary context of Afghanistan while observing the principles of *siyasah shar'iyah* and *wasatiyyah* in the governance.

Virtual Conference: KL Conference on Afghanistan: Re-Emergence of a Nation

Session 2: 'Cautious Optimism of the Future of Afghanistan' (26 September 2021)

Muhamad Sayuti Mansor

The KL Conference on Afghanistan: Re-Emergence of A Nation was held on 26 September 2021, by Global Peace Malaysia and ABIM, with IAIS Malaysia as one of the partners. Session 2 was moderated by Associate Professor Dr Zulkifli Hasan and featured three distinguished panel members: Professor Dato' Dr Mohammad Hashim Kamali (IAIS Malaysia), Dr Roy Anthony Rogers (University of Malaya), and Dr Abdul Razak Ahmad (*Bait al-Amanah*). Its sub-theme was 'Cautious Optimism of the Future of Afghanistan.' This discussion revolved on how the international community and Muslim nations, including Malaysia, should respond to the current developments in Afghanistan.

Kamali emphasised in his presentation the prevalent mood of cautious optimism during the early weeks of the Taliban's return as a consequence of the relatively peaceful takeover of Kabul and their pledges of general amnesty, inclusivity, and human rights protection. Given the Taliban's legacy of death, brutality, and terrorism, Afghanistan's future remains uncertain. Apart from the rising concern on human rights, women's rights, and inclusivity, there is also the possibility that the Taliban would become too dogmatic in their

interpretation of shariah. Another biggest challenge is the economic crisis. All of these difficulties and obstacles, Kamali concluded, must be addressed in order for the new Taliban government to gain support and credibility.

The second panellist, Dr. Roy Anthony Rogers, began his presentation by highlighting the new Taliban government's advances and adjustments, which appear to be more realistic. Cooperation with the Taliban, who is currently the country's *de facto* government, is the best strategy for the international world. Malaysian NGOs can play a track two diplomacy role to help the Afghans. Malaysia may fully utilise its multilateral links to bring the Afghanistan's issues to the global attention. Rogers emphasised Afghanistan's potential of achieving peace and stability, noting the success of other war-torn countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

The last panellist, Abdul Razak Ahmad, argued that there is a lack of understanding and contact between the international world and the Taliban, which has frequently resulted in mistrust and misunderstanding. Another concern is the Taliban's connections to terrorism, notably al-Qaeda. According to Dr Razak, the Taliban would use this as political leverage. The possibility of a civil war in Afghanistan remains if the Taliban fail to stabilise the country. As a result, he emphasised the importance of Malaysia considering its strategic regional interests and actively participating in the crisis' resolution. Malaysia could assist Afghanistan by focusing on humanitarian and capacity-building issues and collaborating with more experienced nations such as Pakistan and Iran.

**Webinar: Forum: 'Learning Loss' di Malaysia: Memahami Isu
dan Mencari Solusi
(Learning Loss in Malaysia: Understanding Issues and
Finding Solutions)
(30 September 2021)**

Nurul Ain Norman

Following the Education Ministry's plan to reopen schools nationwide after months of being under the Movement Control Order, IAIS Malaysia, in collaboration with the National Council of Professors Malaysia, held a virtual forum to discuss problems and solutions pertaining to Malaysia's learning loss issue. The forum featured Professor Datuk Dr Raduan Che Ros, President of the National Council of Professors Malaysia; Mrs Nor Hainei Abu Bakar, Malaysia National Teacher Icon 2020; Associate Professor Dr Muhammad