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Understanding the Aleppo Crisis
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Beyond the media frenzy covering the Syrian conflict—recently highlighted by the Aleppo situation—how can we better understand its dynamics and make better informed comments or decisions about it? What are the latest developments? Who are the local and international stakeholders? What are their key driving factors? Are there leverage points of de-escalation and roadmaps towards peace?

With the above questions in mind, IAIS Malaysia and JUST co-organised an intellectual forum under the banner “Understanding the Aleppo Crisis”. The forum, which began at 3pm and ended at 5.30pm, witnessed an almost full-seat attendance in the IAIS boardroom, with around 60 participants from various backgrounds turning out, including academicians, scholars, students, and activists. Some Syrian students studying in Malaysia also attended.

Prof Dr. Mohammad Hashim Kamali, Founding CEO of IAIS, delivered the opening remarks, followed by a brief introduction by forum moderator, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil, Deputy CEO of IAIS. Featured speakers were notable Malaysian scholar Dr Chandra Muzaffar from JUST, terrorism expert Ahmad el-Muhammady from IIUM, and political science professor, Dr. Abdullah al-Ahsan, from IIUM (and who shared his presentation with a Syrian student from IIUM). Another invited speaker, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hafidzi Mohd Noor, was unfortunately unable to attend due to a traffic accident. Overall, the diverse backgrounds of the speakers contributed towards an interactive and multi-spectrum discussion on the Syrian conflict, from the macro-level perspectives of geopolitics and superpower hegemonic theory, to the micro-level perspectives of terrorism, radicalism and local Syrian politics.

Owing to the complexity and sensitive nature of the Syrian conflict, the moderator concluded the forum by asking the attendees to make their own intellectual judgement on the matter based on the deliberations and facts presented in the discussion. The forum ended in a positive manner, despite polarised views and a dynamic exchange of ideas.