

**Meet the Scholars - The Need for the Fiqh of Muslim Minorities in
the West and the *Maqasid* Narrative
(IAIS Malaysia, 30 May 2019)**

Ahmad Badri Abdullah

On 30 May 2019, IAIS organised a public talk and forum under the heading: ‘Meet the Scholars’. The event featured two Islamic scholars, Prof. Mohammad Hashim Kamali, founding CEO of IAIS Malaysia, and Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, chairman of the Cordoba Initiative, New York. Prof. Kamali in his talk narrated the developmental phases of *maqasid* scholarship, from its formative period to the present and comprising five different levels. These levels include the explanatory and historical period, the methodological construction period, a period whereby *maqasid* became a yardstick to existing shariah interpretations, a phase where *maqasid* entered more practice-oriented fields (like the Islamic banking industry), and finally the current stage, which is marked by excessive referencing to *maqasid*. Prof. Kamali also proposed that a well-developed *maqasid* methodology is key to unravelling that current hurdles that may inhibit its full potential. In the same vein, Imam Feisal in his session also highlighted the critical importance of *maqasid*, particularly when addressing pressing issues faced by Muslim minorities in the West. He also argued that it is crucial to develop a *maqasid*-based jurisprudence of minorities (*fiqh al-aqalliyat*), which should become the guiding path for Western Muslims when playing active roles as citizens in their societies while staying committed to their religious principles and practices.

**Book Discussion: An Intellectual Discourse on “Islamic Law in
Malaysia: Issues, Developments and Challenges” by Eds. Mohamed
Azam Mohamed Adil and Mohammad Hashim Kamali
(IAIS Malaysia, 6 August 2019)**

Wan Naim Wan Mansor

Organised by IAIS Malaysia and Current Law Journal (CLJ) Malaysia, this book discussion event marked a significant milestone towards increasing the general public’s understanding of recurrent issues involving Islamic law in Malaysia. The book “Islamic Law in Malaysia: Issues, Developments, and Challenges” is edited by IAIS Deputy CEO, Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil, and IAIS

Founding CEO, Mohammad Hashim Kamali. The book featured contributions from prominent scholars and figures in Malaysian law, writing on topics as diverse as the jurisdictional conflict between the civil and shariah courts, issues in interfaith marriages, apostasy, as well as Islamic finance. The publication has received accolades from the recently retired Chief Justice of Malaysia, Richard Malanjum.

The book discussion began with a brief presentation by IAIS Deputy CEO Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil on the general themes of the book. Featured guest discussants were renowned law professor and constitutional expert, Shad Saleem Faruqi; law professor of IIUM, Zaleha Kamaruddin; and shariah and law professor of UM, Ahmad Hidayat Buang. Shad Saleem Faruqi recalled the peaceful transition of the 1980s Islamisation movement and encouraged law practitioners to revisit the concepts of *taqlid* and *ijtihad* when facing contemporary challenges in law. He also criticised the common misinterpretation of Article 3 (1) by certain quarters, which would undermine other aspects of the constitution. Zaleha Kamaruddin navigated her discussion towards family law, with a special emphasis on the conversion of minors in an interfaith marriage, as well as the complexities surrounding jurisdictional conflicts. Lastly, Hidayat Buang highlighted the role of *maqasid al-shari'ah* in expanding the Islamic law discourse beyond the letter of the law. The event brought together around 100 participants and ended with an engaging question and answer session.

**'Forum Kebangsaan' in Conjunction with the Independence of
Malaysia and Indonesia
(IAIS Malaysia, 26 August 2019)**

Mohammad Mahbubi Ali

Malaysia and Indonesia have established a long history of diplomatic relations. On top of their close geographical proximity in the Archipelago, the two countries share many similarities in terms of language, culture, customs and civilisation. The two countries even celebrate their independence in the same month, on 31 August (1957) and 17 August (1945), respectively.

Recognising this fact, the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) Malaysia, in collaboration with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi Legacy (LEGASI), the Islamic University of Malang (UNISMA) and the INTAN Regional Center (INTENGAH), organised the 2019 Forum on the Independence of Malaysia and Indonesia.