

**International Best Book of the Year Award
(Tehran, 7 February 2017)**

Muhammad Fakhrrurrazi Ahmad

The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah was named Best Book of the Year for 2016 at the 24th Iran International Book Festival. The distinguished author, Prof. Mohammad Hashim Kamali, received the prestigious award from President Hassan Rouhani in a special ceremony at Tehran's Vahdat Hall.

In his speech, President Rouhani emphasised that literature should not create conflict among ethnic groups or encourage religious extremism and violence. Rather, works of literature have a duty to promote peace and harmony. The eight award winners at the festival included authors from Malaysia, Iran, Turkey, Germany, Spain, Finland, Romania and England. As a prominent scholar, Prof. Kamali represented Malaysia in the Islamic studies category. A total of 2,500 books were evaluated for the contest.

In his book, published by Oxford University Press in 2015, Prof. Kamali illuminates the concept of moderation (*wasatiyyah*) and elaborates on the manifestations of *wasatiyyah* in the light of the Islamic tradition. In addition, he discusses its application for these pressing contemporary issues: social justice, women's rights, environmental balance, economic fairness and globalisation. Prof. Kamali was also invited to deliver lectures at Tehran University and Al-Mustafa International University of Iran. For more information, please visit www.iais.org.my.

**Melestarikan Integriti TN50 Berasaskan Nilai Pelbagai
Perayaan Agama Di Malaysia
(Kuala Lumpur, 2 March 2017)**

Ameen Misran

Across the borders of race and religion, each and every religious celebration in Malaysia teaches what Dr. Chandra Muzaffar terms “universal values.”

The above aptly summarises the academic discussion held under the banner “Melestarikan Integriti TN50 Berasaskan Nilai Pelbagai Perayaan Agama Di Malaysia” (Sustaining Integrity of TN50 on the Grounds of Religious Celebrations in Malaysia) on 2 March 2017 at INTEGRITI Hall. The discussion was organised by Institut Integriti Malaysia (INTEGRITI), Jabatan Perpaduan Negara dan

Intergrasi Nasional (JPNIN) and the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) Malaysia.

The discussion was organised as a platform for sharing and eliciting input on the universal values present across the many religious celebrations in multi-religious Malaysia. This was done in the context of legislating policies under the newly introduced Transformasi Negara 2050, also known as TN50. TN50 is an initiative for the future of Malaysia. Beginning with the vision of becoming a developed nation, TN50 will strive to make Malaysia one of the top countries in the world in not just economic terms, but also for citizen well-being and innovation. The discussion was officiated by Datuk Dr. Anis Yusal Yusoff, followed by a brief introduction to TN50 by Mr. Nor Kamarul bin Norzam, a representative from the Ministry of Youth and Sports (KBS). The event proceeded with a special address by Dr. Chandra Muzaffar.

Presentations included: “The religious authority of each religion shared values ingrained in their main celebrations, namely Eid-UI-Fitr and Eid-UI-Adha,” presented by SS Datuk Dr. Zulkifli Mohamad al Bakri; “Chinese New Year,” presented by Dr. Yam Kah Kean; “Deepavali” by Prof. Datuk Dr. N.S. Rajendran; “Wesak Day,” by Prof. Dr. Ong Puay Liu; “Christmas,” by Dato’ Anthony Reynold Peters; and “Vaisakhi,” by Assoc. Prof. Madya Dr. Sarjit Singh al-Darshan Singh.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Chandra added that we need to feel furious and ashamed of something that goes against our culture, as many civilisations have fallen due to the absence of integrity in their leadership. Living in multi-ethnic and multi-religious Malaysia, differences have to be understood and respected. Religious values are one of the keys to serving this purpose.

Reviving the Islamic Spirit (RIS) Malaysia Convention (Putrajaya, 4-5 March 2017)

Tengku Ahmad Hazri

For more than a decade, the Reviving the Islamic Spirit Convention (RIS) has been an annual Islamic event held in Canada, initially to address the challenges of Muslim minorities living in the West. The convention provides a platform for spiritual reflection through lectures by leading Islamic scholars, networking and interaction among Muslims globally. This year marked a new chapter in RIS history, as it made its first appearance outside Canada, in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

RIS Malaysia 2017 featured several distinguished scholars, such as Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, Shaykh Dr Afifi al-Akiti, Dr Umar Faruq Abd-Allah, Shaykh