

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

IAIS Malaysia Year in Review 2017

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IAIS started the year by hosting the UN Women's Exposure Visit from Afghanistan. This five-day workshop offered perspectives on "Gender Responsive Law Reform Process in the Context of Islam", with a detailed coverage of women's issues, achievements and challenges in Malaysia. Among the prominent figures who participated in this event were Prof. Dr. Mohammad Hashim Kamali of IAIS, YB Datuk Mas Emieyati, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture Malaysia, Datin Paduka Hajjah Che Asmah Ibrahim of IKRAM, and YAA Dato' Dr Mohd Naim Mokhtar, Chief Judge of Selangor Sharia'ah Judiciary Department (JAKESS).

On 29 January 2016, IAIS and Al-Naqiy Islamic Solutions jointly organised a public lecture on "Understanding Key Features of Basel III and Its Implications on the Islamic Banking Industry." The presenter, Mr. Abozer Magzoub Mohammed, the Project Co-Manager for IFSB Revised Capital Adequacy Standard based on Basel III (IFSB-15), said that Basel III has impact in terms of its approaches to enhance the quality of investment capital by changing debt-based capital into equity-based.

On 25 February 2016, IAIS, IDEAS and Istanbul Network organised a Public Lecture: "Early Islam and the Birth of Capitalism." The presenter, Dr. Benedikt Koehler, stated that capitalism has its origins in Arabia. Early Islam therefore made a contribution to the history of Western economic thought.

On 10 March 2016, IAIS Malaysia with the Office of the Mufti of the Federal Territories, MAIWP, MAIS, IKIM, INFAD, APIUM, and JAKIM organised a seminar on "Understanding Fatwa in the Contemporary Context: Issues Relating to Fatwa in the Context of Contemporary Fiqh." The Keynote Address was delivered by the Mufti of the Federal Territories, Dr. Zulkifli Mohamad Al-Bakri. Other presentations were given by Zulkifly Muda (Mufti of Terengganu), Prof. Kamali (Founding CEO, IAIS Malaysia), Prof. Emeritus Dr. Mahmood Zuhdi (UM), Prof. Dr. Ahmad Hidayat Buang (UM), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil (Deputy CEO, IAIS Malaysia) and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Irwan Mohd Subri (USIM).

On 31 March 2016, IAIS Malaysia hosted a book launch event for Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, Founder and Chairman of the Cordoba Initiative, who published a new book entitled “Defining Islamic Statehood: Measuring and Indexing Contemporary Muslim States.” The event was launched by YABhg. Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, former Prime Minister of Malaysia and Chairman of IAIS Malaysia.

On 16 April 2016, IAIS Malaysia and Islamic Book Trust (IBT) co-organised the fourth Abdullah Yusuf Ali Memorial Lecture on “English as a Modern Literary Language for Islam: The Significance of Yusuf Ali’s Translation of the Qur’an”. The lecture was delivered by Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, an eminent diplomat and Islamic scholar who has served as Foreign Minister of Thailand and ASEAN’s Secretary-General.

On 27 May 2016, IAIS Malaysia, Crescent Collective, Radical Middle Way Asia, Simply Islam and Seekers Hub co-organised a lecture on “Dealing with Diversity: Reviving the Ethics of Disagreement”. Shaykh Faid said that “reform” means going back to tradition, not away from it.

On 23 of June 2016, the Malaysia Institute of Integrity (INTEGRITI) and IAIS co-organised a round table discussion: “*Rukun Negara Teras Integriti Penganut Pelbagai Agama di Malaysia: Impian atau Realiti*” (Rukun Negara as a basis of integrity for different religions in Malaysia: Dream or Reality) with its main speaker, Dr Chandra Muzaffar from Yayasan 1Malaysia. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil (IAIS) was a discussant.

On 19 July 2016, IAIS and JAKESS jointly organised a seminar on “Women as Judges and Leaders.” In this seminar, Prof. Kamali, Prof Dr Raihanah Abdullah, Dean of Humanities Research Cluster at UM, and Justice Noor Huda Binti Roslan, the Shari’ah High Court Judge of Selangor, shared their thoughts. Prof. Kamali said that there is no Qur’anic verse that forbids women from having a leadership role in society. Prof. Raihanah Abdullah recommended that religious authorities review fatwas forbidding Muslim women from becoming Shari’ah Court Judges.

On 28 July 2016, IAIS, IKIM and the Ministry of Health organised a seminar on “Vaccination and Health: The Islamic Perspective.” The speakers were Dr. Faridah Abu Bakar, Deputy Director of Family Health Development Division MOH, Dr. Sh. Mohd Saifuddeen, Director of the Centre for Science and Environmental Studies, IKIM, and IAIS’s Research Fellow, Ahmad Badri Abdullah. Dr. Faridah said that Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakaria Al-Razi (854 – 925) was the first scholar to describe smallpox and measles. The Ministry of Health Malaysia has assured the public that there are no dangerous substances in vaccines.

On 9 August 2016, IAIS Malaysia organised a seminar on “Accountability & Transparency of Zakat Institutions.” It featured three speakers: 1) Assoc. Prof.

Dr Abd Halim Mohd Noor, Director, Centre for Islamic Philanthropy and Social Finance (CIPSF), Universiti Teknologi MARA of Malacca; 2) Haji Halidan Bin Md Daud, General Manager, Pusat Kutipan Zakat Pahang & Chairman; and 3) Tuan Haji Hussin Bin Mohd Ali, CEO, Lembaga Zakat Selangor (LZS). LZS Chief Executive Hussin Mohd Ali assured us that LZS has always been transparent in its collection and distribution of alms.

On 19 August 2016, IAIS Malaysia and JUST jointly organised a forum on “The Coup in Turkey and the Future of Muslim Politics.” The panellists were Wan Ahmad Faysal (Putra Business School), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Syed Farid Alatas (National University of Singapore), Prof. Dr. Abdullah Al-Ahsan (IIUM) and Junaid Ahmad (JUST). Moderated by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil (IAIS), the opening speech was delivered by Dr. Chandra Muzaffar (JUST).

IAIS Malaysia & JUST co-organised a seminar on “World Beyond War: The Rohingya Refugee Crisis and its Implications on Security in ASEAN.” The seminar took place at Institut Integriti Malaysia (IIM) on 24 September 2016. The seminar featured Dr. Chandra Muzaffar (JUST), Tan Sri Hasmy Agam (former Chairman of SUHAKAM), Richard Towle (Representative/Commissioner of UNHCR), Dr. Arujunan Narayanan (JUST), Dr. Jastwan Singh (UM), Azlinariah Abdullah (ASTRO Awani), Dr. Mohammad Iqbal Omar (MERCY Malaysia) and Junaid Ahmad (JUST). There was a general agreement that to resolve the conflict, the Myanmar government has to show political will and take remedial action.

The 8th International Seminar on Contemporary Fiqh (*Seminar Hukum Islam Semasa - SHIS-8*), co-organised by APIUM and Usul Fiqh Department, was revived after 5 years. This year’s theme was: “Maqasid Shari’ah: Standard, Application, and Contemporary Challenges.” The event was officiated by Prof. Dr. Shaliza Ibrahim, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) of the University of Malaya.

On 10 October 2016, IAIS held a public lecture by Mr. Thomas H. Greco, Jr. on “A World Without Money and Interest.” As the leading figure on moneyless exchange, Mr. Greco, Jr reiterated that a world without money and interest is possible, necessary and inevitable.

On 15 October 2016, Dr. Eric Winkel launched his book at IAIS Malaysia, a translation of Ibn ‘Arabi’s *al-Futuh al-Makkiyyah*, a classic Sufi text. It was the first in a series of English-Arabic translations. After the opening remarks by IAIS Deputy CEO, Dr. Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil, and a few additional remarks from the Director General of IKIM, Prof. Dr. Azizah Baharuddin, Dr. Winkel touched on a number of important themes in Sufism.

On 17 and 18 of October 2016, Faculty of Law, UiTM, Shah Alam and IAIS Malaysia co-organised “The Inaugural International Conference on Women

and Children (ICWC 2016).” Emeritus Prof. Dr. Hassan Said, Vice Chancellor, UiTM, officiated the event. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil, together with Dr. Rafeah Saidon, Senior Lecturer at UiTM Shah Alam, presented a paper on “Religion as a Determinant of Child Welfare in Custody Cases.”

On 3 November 2016, IAIS organised a round table discussion on “*Isu & Cabaran Kontemporari Dalam Pengurusan Zakat di Malaysia*” (Contemporary Issues and Challenges in the Handling of Zakah in Malaysia). The sub-themes “Isu-Isu Kemiskinan di Malaysia” (Poverty in Malaysia), “Cabaran Institusi Zakat Dalam Menangani Kemiskinan di Malaysia” (Challenges by Zakat Institutions in Handling Poverty in Malaysia), “Isu-Isu Mendesak dalam Pengurusan Zakat di Malaysia” (Crucial Issues for Zakat Management in Malaysia).

On 16 November 2016, IAIS organised a seminar on “Islam and Green Technology.” Fellow academicians and Muslim scholars discussed renewable energy from the Islamic perspective. Datuk Dr. Abu Bakar, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MoSTI) officiated the seminar.

On 5 and 6 of December 2016, IAIS Malaysia co-organised the 1st International Conference On Islam & Contemporary Issues on The Islamic World: Challenges & Way Forward (ICIC-2016) with the Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya (APIUM) and IIUM. The conference aimed at raising awareness and understanding of various challenges that Muslims are currently facing, and appreciating the opportunities that the Islamic world has to offer for the future.

The 1st International Conference on Islam and Contemporary Issues in the Muslim World: Challenges and The Way Forward (ICIC 2016) (University of Malaya, 5-6 December 2016)

Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil

Held on 5-6 December 2016, the inaugural *International Conference on Islam and Contemporary Issues in the Muslim World: Challenges and the Way Forward (ICIC 2016)* was co-organised by the Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya (APIUM), the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) Malaysia, the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) and the Academy of Islamic Studies Alumni Association (ALIM). The event was intended as an academic platform where scholars could meet to share and discuss issues relating to Islam and the contemporary Muslim world.

The two-day conference witnessed the participation of around 400 individuals, comprising mostly academicians and post-graduate students. There were 212