

Behind the 2024 World Scholars Conference

News:

The Office of the Minister at the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs), in cooperation with the Department of Islamic Development of Malaysia (JAKIM) and the Muslim World League (MWL) from Saudi Arabia, recently organized the 2024 World Religious Leaders Conference and the 2024 Asian Scholars Council in Kuala Lumpur. This conference aimed to develop a vision of a shared civilization that unites the values of moderation and unity, addresses the threat of extremist thought, and transforms conflict into understanding, cooperation, and unity.

Comment:

In May 2016, a committee was formed in Washington to plan cooperation with Saudi Arabia as a centre to address extremism. Subsequently, in May 2017, the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology (GCCIE) was founded and launched during President Donald Trump's visit to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. MWL played a crucial role in empowering this agenda of "moderate Islam". Through the leadership of Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, MWL initiated the "Mecca Charter" in May 2019, which was supported by a group of prominent Muslim scholars who gathered in the Holy City to promote the narrative of moderate Islam. Moderate Islam is a school of thought sponsored by the West that combines Islamic teachings with secular principles and openness, encouraging flexible interpretations often deviating from the straightness and truth of Islam. For this purpose, Saudi Arabia and MWL are responsible as platforms for spreading this agenda to other Muslim countries through various conferences and councils of scholars, focusing on building a young Muslim generation whose thoughts are based on the ideas of the Mecca Charter. What we can read from this is that the West insists that Islam must be adapted to the circumstances, rather than the circumstances being adapted to Islam. And the circumstances we are living in today are dominated by Western thoughts and culture. For Muslims who desire the full and correct implementation of Islam, they are often labelled as Islamist, and not infrequently, as extremists and radicals!

In reality, the Muslim Ummah does not require the concept of moderate Islam and the path of tolerance peddled and pioneered by the US. For 1400 years, Muslims have lived harmoniously with various peoples and religions under Islam. This is well documented in historical records and many books - even non-Muslim historians acknowledge this fact. For example, the book "The Ornament of the World" written by an American scholar, presented the rich cultural diversity when Muslims ruled Al-Andalus (Spain) under Islamic law. During that time, Muslims, Jews, and Christians not only coexisted but also fostered a high culture of tolerance. It is even referred to as the golden age for the Jews! On the other hand, the spread of various Western thoughts has brought numerous disasters to the harmony and welfare of human life. And it is these ideas that the West requests Muslims to adopt in the name of moderate Islam.

It is sad that at this moment, scholars should have been focusing all their efforts on building unity and strength in the Islamic world to free Palestine and all oppressed regions, and not trap themselves in this Western hegemonic game. In truth, the West is neither qualified nor has ever had the moral standing to teach or lead the global community on the meaning of life and peace. Instead, today, the most qualified to teach the world about humanity are the Muslims in Palestine. We have seen enough of the suffering and oppression that befall Muslims there and the betrayals committed by the leaders of the Islamic world. Scholars must reject this Western sponsored call for moderate Islam and start focusing efforts on unifying the Ummah under the banner of the Khilafah (Caliphate).

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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