

CLOSING REMARKS MiDAS CONFERENCE 2015

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EXTREMISM AND MILITANCY: A CHALLENGE TO NATIONAL SECURITY

Bismillah.....

Your Excellencies, Distinguished guests, Speakers and Conference participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh and Salam 1 Malaysia

Alhamdulillah, praise be to almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala for with His Blessings and guidance we are able to congregate here today to participate in this third MiDAS Conference. Let me begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude and congratulating the Malaysian Institute of Defence and Security (MiDAS) for organising this conference, aimed to broaden the base for knowledge and awareness on the serious issue of **Extremism, Militancy and Radicalism** that is proving to be a big challenge to our national security and stability. This theme, '**Extremism and Militancy: A Challenge to National Security**', I believe echoed and reflected the importance of Malaysia's concept of moderation and our society's ability to react and rebound in the face of adversity. This is in cognisance with our philosophy of achieving ***Peace and Security through Moderation***.

I have no doubts that the conference this year has managed to engage equally a variety of experts and academicians to address the threat and challenges posed by extremism and militancy. Therefore it is vital to note the importance of not only strengthening our national security but maintaining the stability which we are currently enjoying. I am pleased to acknowledge the presence of both local and international distinguished speakers and moderators here. I am sure all of you have contributed immensely in our discussions today

It is also heartening to note the presence of several prominent civil service figures especially the professional spheres of the Malaysian Armed Forces, Police, related enforcement agencies and academia as participants of the conference. Personally, this is a manifestation of your dedication and commitment shown towards achieving national security. It also reflects the solidarity we can garner from all levels of society when dealing with a security challenge.

Today we are faced with security dilemma that does not have a face or identity. Since the turn of the century, our peace and stability was constantly rocked by acts of terrorism. These perpetrators do not distinguish their victims. Extremism and militancy is challenging the fabric of our society and if not addressed accordingly it may blemish and divide our community that is built on diversity and trust.

I believe our sessions today were able to highlight the alarming rate on the spread of extremism and radical ideologies. If gone unchecked it may destroy the very foundation of our nation state. Here, we are not short of examples of a broken society and state directly attributed by extremism and radicalisation.

I sincerely hope and believe that this kind of forum should be held continuously to spread the message that Malaysia is against any acts of extremism and militancy. As I speak, our government security mechanism is keeping watch of certain quarters that are spreading online urging its followers to carry out attacks on key assets and public areas in Malaysia. Hence I agree with the speakers and reiterate that militant ideologies and radicalisms must be removed from our society. We owe this responsibility to our next and future generations.

We must also acknowledge and accept the fact that no one organisation can combat and neutralise the threat posed by extremism and militancy alone. The dynamism of the security landscape in the face of terrorism, militancy and radicalisation if not addressed will cause havoc to a state's society.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To sum-up, in the face of these security threats, the rich diversity, tolerance and trust amongst all of us Malaysians, should remain true at the core of our being. Diversity should be complemented with inclusivity, the resolve to live harmoniously and a common vision of national unity. The concept of One Malaysia as propagated by YAB Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak hits the nail as its emphasis is on prosperity and respect for diversity.

I agree with the distinguish speakers that reiterated the importance of the relationship between the state and its citizens and vice versa. It is about the role of individuals and communities. It can be concluded that as a moderate Malaysia, we have to adapt initiatives to counter terrorism responses that include counter-radicalisation and strategies that focus on soft approaches. These soft approaches should include engagement

through media, cultural, educational and religious forums, with the aim of highlighting the realities of life under the IS. This will serve to dissuade individuals from internalising extremism messages advocated by extremist groups like the IS.

I have no doubts that this conference had provided both an informal and unofficial platform for each of us, individual or unit to take back and to refine our strategies and actions so as to make Malaysia a more stable and prosperous nation.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and kudos to Lieutenant General Dato' Azizan Md Delin and his team at MiDAS for their efforts in convening this conference. I have fond memories of this conference, having pioneered the formation of MiDAS as a Defence Minister then and its subsequent activities such as the MiDAS Conference. Let me extend my deep gratitude to the distinguished moderators and speakers for their commitment in sharing their knowledge, experiences and thoughts. To all the participants, I also thank you and hope that the lessons that we take away today will be utilised for the benefit of the nation in strengthening national resilience and security as a leading agenda. On that note, I hereby pronounce the MiDAS Conference 2015 themed Extremism and Militancy: A Challenge to National Security officially closed.

WabillahiTaufiq Walhidayah Wassalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Taala Wabarkatuh and Thank you.