



**Mahathir gives thumbs up for interfaith council**  
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Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad is supportive of calls for an interfaith council to be established, in view of inter-religious conflicts over the rights of non-Muslims to use the term 'Allah'.

"I think an interfaith council is a very good place where we can talk reasonably in the room and not take to the streets,"

Mahathir said in a press conference after delivering a keynote address at the launch of the General Conference for the Support of Al-Quds in Kuala Lumpur today.

"Sensitive issues should not be discussed in public, because there will always be extremists and unreasonable people whose idea about arguing is to damage property."

Currently, there have been calls by some quarters for the establishment of an interfaith council (IFC) to discuss religious matters, especially after recent arson and vandalism attacks against about a dozen places of worship, mostly churches.

In the past, proposals for a formal IFC were vehemently opposed by some Muslim groups who saw them as a conduit for making concessions to non-Muslims.

Currently, government leaders seem split over the establishment of an IFC while the opposition Pakatan Rakyat appears to lean towards it.

To another question, Mahathir showed disagreement with the recent Information, Culture and Communications Minister Rais Yatim's call for Muslims to avoid popular social networking website *Facebook* and micro-blogging site *Twitter*.

"As a popular blogger, I would like them to read what is in the blog and *Facebook*. But of course, the government has its own agenda," said Mahathir, who runs the popular *chedet.cc* blog.

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