

**Moderation Is A Must, Not An Option, Says Muhyiddin
Bernama
January 19, 2012**

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 19 (Bernama) -- Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has described today's challenging world as one where moderation was no longer an option but a must.

Embracing moderation and rejecting extremism was the key to civilisational engagement and global peace, said the deputy prime minister.

"The future path of global peace and prosperity must be built upon mutual understanding and respect between communities which represent the world's major civilisations.

"Be it Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Taoism and other major civilisations, all must work for the perpetuation of peaceful co-existence between people of different religions and cultures," he said when closing the three-day International Conference on Global Movement of Moderates here Thursday.

Muhyiddin said, if the nature of religion could be seen through the prism of moderation, common values could be identified, which is peace, harmony and true happiness.

"This will materialise when the followers of every religion avoid excessiveness in religious practices and in conduct of worldly life.

"I believe if everybody can nurture the spirit of moderation, which implies rejection of excessiveness and extremism, there will be no harm done to human kind, in the name of religion or ideology," he said.

At the same, the deputy prime minister said the root causes of extremism and fanaticism which often led to hatred and enmity among the people of different religions and cultures, were economic alienation, political exclusion and social deprivation.

"We need to replace economic alienation with equitable distribution of wealth, end political exclusion by promoting political inclusiveness, eliminate social deprivation by upholding social justice and have respect for human dignity," he said.

In the Malaysian context, Muhyiddin said the country promoted moderation through active government involvement, together with civil society in educating the people about the values of moderation and peace.

"Moderation has been the pillar of Malaysia's success in dealing with ethnic and religious diversity. I must say that our success as a nation depends on the willingness of the moderates from all religions and cultures to set aside differences and work for a common goal," he said.

At the function, Muhyiddin also launched a book entitled, 'Voice of Islamic Moderation From the Malay World', written by Tan Sri Prof Dr Muhammad Kamal Hassan, distinguished professor from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

The 358-page hardcover book, among others, compiles evidences from the Al-Quran and prophetic traditions which extol the essence of Islam as the religion of moderation.

There are also numerous empirical evidences which epitomise moderation as the foundation of peace, harmony and stability in the Malay world in general, and in Malaysia, in particular.

Also present were Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal and Chief Secretary to the Government, Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan, who is also IIUM president.

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Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v6/newsindex.php?id=641219>