

**Harun Taib: PAS leaders must be Muslim**  
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**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, March 1 — The PAS Ulama Council has insisted that the Islamic party's top leaders must be Muslim, despite one of its senior lawmakers saying earlier this week it was ready to accept non-Muslims in positions as high as deputy president.

The council's chief Datuk Harun Taib (picture) pointed out that such a move requires an amendment to the party constitution.

"This is not PAS's stand. PAS has never discussed this. If (central committee member) Dzulkefly Ahmad suggests opening the door to have non-Muslims appointed as deputy president, it is only his personal view and nothing to do with party policy," he was quoted by Sinar Harian as saying.

PAS research chief Dzulkefly said on Tuesday the party was ready to accept non-Muslims in positions as senior as deputy president.

The Kuala Selangor MP said the party was prepared to emulate Egypt's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), which appointed Coptic Christian intellectual Rafiq Habib as its vice-president last year.

Dzulkefly said such a move was not against Islam and was "only an administrative matter" that was allowed because "Islam can address change for intellectual renewal. Islam can withstand the challenge of time."

His statement came under immediate fire from other party leaders such as Youth chief Nasrudin Hassan Tantawi as well as sacked former Selangor PAS chief Datuk Hasan Ali.

Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad also challenged PAS to appoint DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang as its president.

But PAS secretary general Datuk Mustafa Ali said Dzulkefly's statement was theoretical in nature and difficult to implement right now.

"I feel PAS should just hold on to what we have now. If non-Muslims are interested, they can table it through the PAS supporters' wing," Sinar Harian quoted him as saying.

However, Mustafa added that while the party constitution barred non-Muslims from leading the party, he could not rule out such a development in the future.

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