

**Moderation Can Eliminate Extremism, Says Abdullah
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 18 (Bernama) -- Moderation or 'wasatiyyah' can eliminate and cast aside extremism that can lead to aggression, said former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

While saying that poverty and extremism were the two arch enemies of moderation, he said moderation could make way for friendship, cooperation, development, mutual understanding of doing things together that created an environment or condition that encouraged economic development.

"Poverty is certainly not a problem afflicting only poor muslim countries. Global poverty is a grave threat to global stability and provides breeding grounds for extremism.

"I strongly believe that the elimination of poverty and the provision of good governance are key in the fight against extremism and violence," he said in his speech entitled "Human Capital Development: The Key to Moderation" at the Global Movement of Moderates Conference Dinner, here Wednesday night.

He said the Quran emphasized on the importance of 'ummatan wasatan', which means Muslims were meant to be an ummah which is justly balanced in nature between the legal aspect of religion and the spiritual dimension, as well as between the internal and the external aspect of life.

"Wasatiyyah is not something new. It has been in the Quran, and when the six mus'haf (the early copies of the Quran) have been sent to various centres of learning, people read the Quran, and seek to be guided by the Quran," he said.

Abdullah said unfortunately, today it seems that Muslims were fighting among themselves although God had showed the way to live in peace, stability, harmony and prosperity, by giving the Quran.

"Yet, the Muslims continue to dispute and to fight and to wage war among them. To those people, I like to ask, 'Have we forgotten the Quran and its teaching? Have we forgotten Allah?'," he said.

He said however, in his view, wasatiyyah must have content for it to be able to be promoted and to eliminate extremism.

"I want to say this, wasatiyyah must have a manhaj - a guide, and the manhaj is Islam Hadhari," he added.

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