

Penyampai : DATO SERI DR. SITI HASMAH BT HJ MOHD ALI  
Tajuk : PRESS CONFERENCE FOR OIC SUMMIT 2003 FOR FIRST LADIES DIALOGUE  
INCONJUNCTION WITH THE 10TH SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE 16-18 OCT  
2003, PUTRAJAYA  
Lokasi : RENAISSANCE HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR  
Tarikh : 17-10-2003

THEME: WOMEN, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT In conjunction with the 10th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference to be held in Putrajaya from 16-18 October 2003, the Ministry of Women and Family Development of Malaysia is organising a First Ladies Dialogue on Friday 17 October 2003, beginning at 9.30 am, at the Renaissance Hotel, Kuala Lumpur.

2. The theme of the Dialogue is: Women, Peace and Development. The Dialogue is aimed at sharing women's views and experiences in the efforts to build, maintain and sustain peace for national, regional and global development of the Ummah in the context of a globalised world.

3. The First Lady of Malaysia, YABhg Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah bt Hj Mohd Ali will lead the discussion by sharing her observations on the role of women in peace and development and the challenges faced by Muslim society in achieving the goals of development as outlined in the eight UN Millennium Development Goals.

Her paper will highlight the following: (a) Women, peace and development as the three interlocking fundamental elements in a nation's march towards progress. Women constitute half the population, and in some countries, especially those involved with armed conflict, women comprise more than half of the population. Whilst women have always been acknowledged as the traditional home-makers and care givers in the family, their productive role is increasingly being recognised and their income is significantly crucial for the family's survival and well being. Experiences of many countries show that when women's productive role is harnessed in tandem with their reproductive role and done in ways that protect and promote their human rights as well as eliminate any gender-based discrimination in the distribution of resources, it will lead to the desired development for the nation, family and women. For development to take place peace is essential.

(b) Constraints and challenges faced by many Muslim countries today where peace is elusive, women are yet to take their rightful place in society and development is haltingly slow. The war against terrorism is taking its toll on Muslim countries, the veil of Islamic modesty is used to deny women their human rights and the status of human development is medium to low with poor progress towards achieving the eight UN Millennium Development Goals.

(c) Suggestions on how Muslim countries should return to the Quran which advocates equality between women and men both as regards responsibilities and before the law so that Muslim women can regain their rightful place to participate and benefit from the various aspects and levels of development. Special areas of focus include education, health, and poverty reduction and income generation; scientific and technological development; HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases; avoidance of conflicts and violence; and representation as well as participation in the life of the community. The paper will also examine how global partnerships, networking; cooperation and unity can alleviate problems and enhance the advancement of Muslim women and nations.

4. The key note will be followed by round table discussions focusing on specific issues that impact on women and girls such as education at school and tertiary levels; health, in particular maternal and child health; poverty; scientific and technological development; HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases; avoidance of conflicts and violence; and representation as well as participation in the life of the community.

They will examine how global partnerships, networking; cooperation and unity can alleviate problems and enhance the advancement of Muslim nations.

5. The outcome of the Dialogue will be brought to the attention of the Chairman of OIC.