



KEMENTERIAN PERPADUAN NEGARA

OFFICIAL ADDRESS BY

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MINISTER OF NATIONAL UNITY**

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE

**INTERNATIONAL INTER-FAITH
PEACE CONFERENCE (IIPC) 2026**

8th AUGUST 2026

GRAND SWISS BELHOTEL MELAKA

Salam Perpaduan, dan Salam Malaysia MADANI.

SALUTATION

**Latest salutation will be provided separately*

INTRODUCTION

1. It is a great honour and privilege to join all of you at the **International Interfaith Peace Conference 2026**. I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the **Allied Coordinating Committee of Islamic NGOs (ACCIN)** for organising this important international gathering for the fifth consecutive year.
2. This conference has established itself as an important international platform where **religious leaders, policymakers, and members of civil society** from different regions of the world can engage in meaningful dialogue, exchange ideas and strengthen cooperation in pursuit of peace and social harmony.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

CONFERENCE THEME

3. The theme of this year's conference, **"Melaka and Malaysia as a Meeting Point of Faith, Culture, Diversity and Harmony Towards Cohesive Nation Building,"** beautifully captures both our historical legacy and our aspirations for the future.
4. Nation building is often associated with economic development, infrastructure and institutional reform. While these are undoubtedly important, **true nation building begins with people. It begins by cultivating trust, strengthening social cohesion and developing a shared sense of belonging among citizens from different backgrounds.**
5. This is why Melaka provides such an appropriate setting for today's conference. More than six centuries ago, Melaka emerged as one of the world's greatest maritime trading centres. Long before the concept of globalisation became widely understood, **Melaka had already become a vibrant meeting point of civilisations.** Merchants, scholars and

travellers from Arabia, Persia, India, China, the Malay Archipelago, Africa and Europe gathered here not only to trade goods but also to exchange knowledge, ideas, traditions and cultures.

6. **Its greatest achievement was demonstrating that diversity could become a source of strength rather than conflict. Different languages were spoken. Different religions were practised. Different cultures flourished alongside one another.**

7. Melaka teaches us an enduring lesson that remains relevant today. **Peace is not achieved by eliminating diversity. Peace is achieved when diversity is embraced through mutual respect, openness and cooperation.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

WHY PEACE MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

8. Throughout history, religion has been one of humanity's greatest sources of moral guidance and social transformation. Across different faith traditions, we find remarkable similarities in the values they uphold. **Every major religion in the world**

encourages compassion, justice, mercy, honesty, forgiveness, and respect for human dignity.

9. **Unfortunately, interfaith dialogue continues to be misunderstood by some sections of society.** There remains a perception that engaging with people of different faiths somehow weakens one's own religious convictions or requires compromising fundamental religious beliefs. Others fear that interfaith engagement seeks to blur theological differences or create religious uniformity.

10. Allow me to state this clearly. **Interfaith dialogue is not about changing anyone's faith. It is not about compromising religious principles.** Instead, interfaith dialogue is about creating mutual understanding while respecting our differences.

11. Over the past few months, I have had the privilege of participating in several interfaith engagements, including the **Harmony Symposium, the World Religious Leaders Conference, and the Roundtable Discussion on Multi-Faith Partnerships in Praxis for Human Flourishing.** Despite their different themes and participants, all these conferences shared one common objective, to bring people

together through dialogue and **deepen mutual understanding through the sharing of interfaith information.** This is precisely why interfaith dialogue remains as relevant today as ever.

12. **The purpose of interfaith dialogue is not to seek theological agreement or produce final binding decisions.** Rather, it serves as a **platform for disseminating accurate information, sharing information, and best practices.** By disseminating accurate information, interfaith dialogue helps to dispel misconceptions, reduce prejudice and strengthen mutual respect among people of different faiths. Equally important, interfaith dialogues also empower young people to become bridge-builders across communities, encourages collaboration between religious leaders - government, and reinforces our shared responsibility in advancing nation building.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

MALAYSIA TODAY AND TOMORROW

13. Malaysia is entering a new chapter in its national development journey. Under the **Thirteenth Malaysia Plan (RMK13), Nation Building (*Pembinaan Negara Bangsa*)**

has, for the first time, been elevated as one of the nation's strategic priorities.

14. Nation building is therefore a long-term endeavour to cultivate a strong Malaysian identity while preserving the rich cultural, religious and ethnic diversity that defines our nation.
15. **Culture, faith and diversity are not peripheral elements of nation building, they are among its strongest pillars.** Culture shapes our identity, preserves our heritage and connects generations. Faith provides moral guidance, nurtures compassion and inspires ethical leadership and responsible citizenship. Diversity enriches society by bringing together different perspectives, experiences and traditions that encourage creativity, innovation and resilience.
16. Recognising the importance of this agenda, the **Ministry of National Unity will continue to strengthen unity by promoting intercultural dialogue, expanding community engagement, and empowering grassroots initiatives.**

CONCLUSION

17. Today's conference continues that important mission. It provides us with another valuable opportunity to listen with open minds, learn from one another and build stronger partnerships based on trust and mutual respect. I hope our discussions will culminate in a meaningful **Peace Resolution** that reaffirms our collective commitment to promoting interfaith understanding, rejecting hatred and extremism, strengthening cooperation across faiths and nations, and advancing peace, harmony and peaceful coexistence for the benefit of present and future generations.

18. Together, let us build a Malaysia that is confident in its identity, steadfast in its values and united in its diversity a nation where peace, inclusivity, resilience and shared purpose become the enduring foundations of sustainable development and lasting national prosperity.

Thank You.