

# President Policy Speech

# ISLAM LEADING CHANGE

AT THE ISLAMIC PARTY OF MALAYSIA (PAS)  
55<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2009

## Introductory Welcome

Praise be to Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. I humbly welcome all delegates and dignitaries from Malaysia and overseas to this Annual Conference. May Allah guide us all to His Straight Path and may Allah accept our deliverance as good deeds in the earnest conviction that our party's struggle is in line with Allah's commandments.

## Fundamental Framework

PAS struggle is a continuation of the works by the Prophets, the Companions of the Prophet, and the pious and righteous Islamic scholar (*ulama*). PAS basic reference is the Holy Quran and *As-Sunnah* and on this fundamental teachings that PAS was founded half a century ago by *ulamas* and Muslim intellectuals.

## A Glimpse of 2008

In the last Conference we adopted a very important resolution regarding the need to strengthen *Pakatan Rakyat* (People's Alliance) and PAS openness to have dialogues with any interested parties/ groups for the betterment of Islam and the Malaysian public in general.

## A Glimpse of 2008

The year of 2008 also saw some radical changes in the Malaysian political landscape which includes a change in political leadership of the ruling National Front (*Barisan Nasional*), economic downturn, the lingering issue of corruption, the use of English language in the teachings of mathematics and science and the holding of a string of by-elections; we have convincingly won five of the six by-elections held signaling that the people's confidence and aspiration is still with the *Pakatan Rakyat*.

## A Glimpse of 2008

As a backlash to the rising people's support for the *Pakatan Rakyat*, the ruling National Front Government has staged an immoral and unconstitutional means to topple the legitimate Government of the State of Perak duly elected by the people. It signals nothing else except the near downfall of National Front headed by Umno.

## Islam Leading Change – A Real Change

In the light of the changing nature of human life, both nationally and internationally, it is indeed an opportune time to conceive a change that only harbors positive impacts (*ma'aruf*) as opposed to its negative implications (*mungkar*).

## Islam Leading Change – A Real Change

In this respect PAS is committed to leading political change that will unite all the ethnic groups on the basis of universal justice as enjoined by Islam; at the international level, the failures of the so-called global and contending man-made ideologies, particularly that of Communism and Liberal-Capitalism, sending a clear beacon that Islam must lead the changing and uncertain national and international environments.



## Islam Leading Change – Change Perceived by Umno/BN

Umno/BN is also eager for change by providing the ever-changing political slogans such as ‘Clean, Efficient, Trustworthy’, ‘Leadership by Example’ and the latest ‘One Malaysia’. All these slogans are no more than political rhetorics that are bereft of any substantial meanings. Thus there is no radical and substantive change taking place in the society. The bases of politics is still deeply ingrained in communalism, the practice of democracy is still limited in nature and the notion of the separation of power is still far from perfect.

## Islam Leading Change – Change Perceived by Umno/BN

This under development of political system and culture is a very conducive environment for Umno/BN to be more intolerant of right of dissent and more tolerant of the misuse of power with its negative implications for corruption and the like. This negative political culture is perpetuated by an education system that is devoid of moral underpinnings for the development of an all-round human capital.

## Islam Leading Change – A Change Perceived by PAS

In contrast to the nature of change as perceived by Umno/BN, PAS perception of change is based on the concept universal justice of Islam, a notion of justice that is in line with the nature of mankind. In this case it transcends racial boundaries.

## Islam Leading Change – A Change Perceived by PAS

The various races that made up mankind is a manifestation of the greatness of Allah and the feelings of mutual respect (*lita'arafu*) not racial antagonisms, must be the basis of racial relations. On this basis, Islam perceives non-Muslim as human beings (*an-naas*) that deserve equal treatment, anywhere and time.

## Islam Leading Change – A Change Perceived by PAS

PAS strongly subscribes to this eternal principle; and the plural society of Malaysia provides a practical test case. A PAS that provides a leadership that link itself closely with the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah is certainly a better form of leadership for Malaysia. They will be better managers of change, a change for the better.

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

The formation of PAS in 1951 as a political party was to struggle for the nation's independence from the clutches of British colonialism.

Members of PAS were the real heroes of independence where most of them were imprisoned as opposed to Umno/BN members who functioned more as lackeys of the British.

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

PAS pressured the Reid Commission to include Islam as an *official* religion in the Constitution even though Umno/BN supporters interpreted it from a secular viewpoint to mean *officiating*. The nation's independence from the British rule should also apply to the independence of Islam as playing central roles in determining the nature of the administrative and political systems. Under Umno/BN, Islam was (and still is) given a marginal role.

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

In contrast, PAS fought for the sovereignty of Islam in the affairs of the state. Following the adage of ‘old wine in new bottles’, Umno/BN was unable to materialize the beauty of the universal justice as embedded in Islam in the day-to-day living of ordinary citizens. As such, Malaysians were exposed to a wrong model of Islam by Umno/BN, a model of Islam shaped by Umno/BN to advance their own political interests rather than the true teachings of Islam that benefits all Malaysians, regardless of their background and political beliefs.



## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

Umno was also not sensitive to the of Malay language as the 'soul' of the Malay race itself. The Jawi language ( a language which is closer to the Arabic script) was marginalized with the introduction of The National Language Act of 1967 in favor of the Rumi (or Romanized) language known as Bahasa Malaysia. With the adoption of the teachings of mathematics and science in English, Umno is keen on killing the Bahasa Melayu/Malaysia itself. Oddly enough, the Indians and the Chinese jealously guarded their own respective language i.e. Tamil and Mandarin.

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

The recent change in leadership is not only an Umno's internal affairs. The leader of a nation must be the best of the citizen, an individual with strong moral foundation, free of scandals and corruption. He must be clean and seen to be clean. If international community is worried about this specific political event, then something must be done to clear this negative image. It may has a far-reaching consequences in terms of international cooperation and trade.

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

The political system of the nation is still strongly embedded with draconian laws such as the Internal Security Act, Police Act among many others, that thwarted the democratic practices and worst still these Acts were used to protect the political and economic interests of Umno/BN

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

As a staunch believer in the democratic process, PAS has never missed in participating in elections even though knowing too well that the playing ground was never levelled. Winning the states of Kelantan and Trengganu in the national general election of 1959, but latter on losing Trengganu due to the politics of bribery and gengsterism purported by Umno/BN .

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

The use of Emergency Law in 1978 to topple PAS Government in Kelantan can be seen from the same perspective. The undemocratic means used to sideline the *Pakatan Rakyat* Government in the State of Perak recently is a continuation of this shameless tradition.

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

Since the national general election of 1990, under the leadership of the ulamas, PAS convincingly won the elections in the state of Kelantan and up until now managed to hold on to the rein of power. PAS won the State of Trengganu in the national general election of 1999, formed coalition governments in Kedah, Perak, Penang and Selangor. Umno/BN holding on to their last breath of power, has shamelessly embarked on money politics and various instruments of coercion to weaken *Pakatan Rakyat* and by the grace of Allah they only internally weakened themselves instead.

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

PAS strength (especially their Members of Parliament and State Assemblymen) must be in their holistic understandings of what Islam is all about, of good deeds and evil doings, of the interconnectedness between the present world and the Hereafter. This completeness in the manifestation of *iman* guides them in all aspects of their life. This is the strongest contribution of PAS in molding the behaviors of its followers.

## Islam Leading Change – PAS and Domestic Affairs

Without sacrificing the basic principles of Islam as advanced by PAS, the party has successfully managed to establish political co-operations (*tahalluf siyasi*) with other political parties and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). We reached a common understanding that a corrupt leader and a corrupt system is our common enemy.



## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

Presently, the world is facing financial crisis. From the Islamic point of view, the financial crisis of the capitalist system of the West is basically due to the fact that the system is based on *riba*, *ihtikar* and *gharar*. Now it is clear why Allah considered this type economic practice as a major sin.

## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

The National Front Government is not really learning from this crisis and always blaming the ‘external factors’ for the crisis. The internal factors that can be seen as anti-growth in economic terms are still rampant: Money politics, corruption, misuse of power and resources and cronyism .The die hard negative practices of the old order is still at large.

## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

The whole issue of transparency and accountability is still foreign to economic practices. The global economic downturn has effected Malaysian workers. By the end of the year 2009, it is estimated that some 200,000 workers will be out of jobs. The social-economic implications will be tremendous.

## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

PAS has always reminded the National Front Government and those captain of industry to be wary of the fact that the management of the natural resources as endowed by Allah is also a trust (*amanah*) from Allah and employers are duly answerable in front of Allah in the Hereafter. Morality as a factor of production (in the contexts of applying the concept of (*hifzul-mal*) would certainly helped to cushion economic downturn.

## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

The government-linked companies such as Permodalan Nasional Berhad, Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja and Lembaga Tabung Haji which have at their disposal billions of Ringgit should be more susceptible to Islamic economic practices so as to ensure that their investments will mostly benefit the people at large. The national leadership must adhere to economic priority list (*awlawiyat*). The failure to adhere to this basic economic principle is really glaring.

## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

The rice shortage as experienced by the nation not long ago is an indication that there is no effective economic planning in the sense of having the right economic priority for the nation. What is worst is the fact that some of the states in Malaysia are known as “rice-bowls”.

## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

The concern for food security is the basic economic priority of developed countries like United Kingdom, Japan, United States and Europe. We are too hurried in our quest for a developed status nation but at the same time missing the trees for the forest !

## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

PAS is of the opinion that it is now appropriate for world economy to look for alternative vis-à-vis the outdated economy of liberal-capitalism. International trade should recourse to precious metals like gold and silver as alternatives to money as a way of avoiding instability and inflation.



## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

PAS is very delighted with the idea of Green Growth and this should be practiced and strengthen in the years to come. The careful appropriation of natural resources for the maximum benefits of mankind is indeed in line with the teachings of Islam where mankind is asked to be a productive being in looking after the Earth and not destroying it.

## Islam Leading Change – Economics Environment

The economic downturn can certainly be cushioned if economic activities are basically based on the principle of sharing gains and losses. The privatization of public amenities and services (such as water, electricity, education and health) should not be encouraged in so far as it will have negative implications for the general welfare of the public.

## Islam Leading Change – Strengthening the Organization

A political party as a form of organization needs to be constantly strengthen through courses such as upgrading organizational skills. The quality of members, not only in terms of numbers, must be upgraded, especially their sense of commitment to the Party's struggle and hence their sense of sacrifice.

## Islam Leading Change – Strengthening the Organization

This is very important especially in view of the fact that PAS is a mass party, opening its membership to individuals of varied educational training and level of understanding as far as Islam is concerned. These members from different educational background must be exposed to the idea of Islamic politics as espoused by PAS, the political culture as practiced in PAS and PAS own approaches in dealings with the political issues of the day.

## Islam Leading Change – Strengthening the Organization

The need to further strengthen the organizational structure of the party is more urgent in the light of increased non-Muslims support accorded to PAS through Supporters Clubs.

## Islam Leading Change – Strengthening the Organization

These Supporters Clubs among the Chinese and the Indians must be ingeniously institutionalized by inclusion of appropriate references in the PAS Constitution to include its status, role, structure and type of membership within the larger organizational framework of PAS, so that their roles can be made more effective in furthering PAS missions and visions.

## Islam Leading Change – Sabah and Sarawak

PAS realized the importance of Sabah and Sarawak in the overall development of the nation. There is a glaring discrepancy in this regards. This unbalanced development were often brought up in parliamentary sessions by Members of Parliament from Sabah and Sarawak, but they were not taken seriously by Umno/BN. On the basis of this reality, PAS needs to quickly spreads its wings into Sabah and Sarawak, in the name of justice and the need to propagate the true teachings of Islam.

## Islam Leading Change – The Ulamak Council

Historically, the Ulamak was responsible for the founding of PAS in their conference on the 23 August 1951. The central role of Ulamak in PAS is firmly established in the party's Constitution. According to Article 40, Sub-section (6)(a) and (b) of PAS Constitution, the role of the Ulamak is to enhanced the Islamic struggle in Malaysia and through educational means prepare for the Islamic leadership in the party, with the Ulamak as its commanding height.



## Islam Leading Change – The Youth Council

As a second layer to the Party's leadership the Youth Council has shown some very impressive achievements. The Council managed to attract substantial numbers of youth to support PAS in elections. The next level of commitment for the Council is to give an “*akhlaq*” basis to activities such as entertaining, social and sports.

## Islam Leading Change – The Youth Council

In the field of education, the Council must subscribe to leadership training programs of highest quality so as to prepare their leaders to be of a world class standing. The Council must continue their effective function of ‘check and balance’ for the Party as a whole so that the Party is always on the right track.

## Islam Leading Change – The Women Council

Demographically, the Council is expected to play a larger and important roles in the future, managing various issues relating to women. The effective roles of the Council will certainly reflect, from the societal point of view, the capability of PAS leading change in the Malaysian social-political contexts. In sum, members of the Council must be committed to works of *amal* and *jihad*.

## Islam Leading Change – International Settings

Various crisis that have dotted the international scene is a clear indication of how man has avoided the clear guidance from Allah in lieu of man's own limitless cravings for power and prestige. Thus the lives of Muslims in countries like Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq and lately Pakistan were treated as if they were worthless.

## Islam Leading Change – International Settings

What is more saddening is the fact that some Muslim countries are in actual fact partners to the Great Powers that destroy their own Muslim brothers. The Palestinian issue is indeed a test from Allah for Muslims from all over the world of whether they are truly steadfast in their faith in Islam in their struggle to uphold what is the truth and to forgo what is false. PAS is committed in upholding the truth and is very consistent in fighting for the Palestinian cause.

## Islam Leading Change – The ASEAN Region

In line with PAS stands on the Islamic concept of universal justice, PAS is deeply concerned with what happens to Muslim minorities in Southern Philippines and Southern Thailand that were embroiled in ceaseless conflicts.

## Islam Leading Change – The ASEAN Region

There are no immediate and serious efforts to end the conflicts, basically because the Muslims fighters that are fighting for their rights in these countries are seen as ‘Islamic terrorists’ that deserve no help. These conflicts must be brought to an end through diplomatic channels. PAS is ever willing to play the bridging roles as it has successfully done in the case of *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM) and the Indonesian Government.

## Islam Leading Change – Conclusion

As a framework of action, the following suggestions are deemed important for PAS leaders and members to adhere to :

- a) All members must strengthen the spirit of brotherhood in realizing Allah's injunction of *bunyanun-marsus* as stated in the Quran , Chapter As-Soff, verse 4. This directive is also applicable to Supporters Clubs in PAS;



## Islam Leading Change – Conclusion

b) Let us manage our victories and weaknesses in line with Islamic teachings. We hope to leading change in our country using Islam; and all leaders and members of the party must work towards this noble end through their daily interactions with the society at large;

## Islam Leading Change – Conclusion

- c) Let us effectively realized our role as *daii* within the framework of *muwajahah silmiyyah* through dialogues, discussions and debates with various interested groups in our sincere efforts to effectively operationalized the stated theme of ***Islam Leading Change***;

## Islam Leading Change – Conclusion

d) Let us continuously strengthen our beloved Party and its leadership in order to face the ever-increasing challenges, nationally and internationally. Specifically, the leadership of the ulamak in PAS must be brave and creative in offering *ijtihad* on various legal and the burning political issues of the day.

## Islam Leading Change – Conclusion

- e) Let us present an image of PAS as an Islamic political party that is ever-willing to face any present and future challenges with approaches based on *usuliy* in terms of its principles of struggle, *mu'asirah* in terms of its leadership and organization and *istiqbaliy* in terms of its preparedness in facing future challenges;

## Islam Leading Change – Conclusion

- f) Let us increased and embolden our relationships, at all levels, within the Pakatan Rakyat since this will increase our effective work relations in facing and winning, *insyaAllah*, the coming 13th National General Election.

## Epilogue

May Allah Bless and Guide us all in our deliberations; and Allah has promised victory for His pious servants who struggle in His right path.