Image source: freemalaysiatoday

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THE HARMONI-MESRA CAMPUS PROGRAMME FOR MALAYSIA

An Initiative Supporting The Objectives of Rukun Negara

EDITORIAL PAGE

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LOGO OF HARMONI-MESRA CAMPUS PROGRAMME

Design and Concept

The Harmoni-Mesra Campus programme is an actionable practice of the concept of Harmoni-Mesra. It supports the objectives of Rukun Negara, which in turn, is our national aspiration for a harmonious, prosperous, progressive and sustainable (HPPS) Malaysia.

The centre configuration in different colours represents the Rukun Negara, the stars, the five principles and the interlocking arches the five objectives thereof. These are embraced by the four petals representing HPPS in a unifying single blue colour.

02 FOREWORD

Dato' Peter Ng

UCSI Founder and Executive Chairman

As a proud Malaysian, I am honoured to pen a few words about Harmoni-Mesra - a concept that is close to my heart. Translated into English, it stands for harmony and kindness. Harmoni-Mesra is enshrined in the fifth principle of our Rukunegara. It is a guiding principle that fosters empathy and co-existence. And ultimately, it is a catalyst for unity in our multi-ethnic nation.

At the heart of Harmoni-Mesra is the belief that Malaysians are stronger when they stand together. Diversity should be seen as celebrated as a way of life. And differences should be treated as opportunities to build bridges instead of walls. In many ways, Malaysia is already a model nation. We see this in the many harmony moments, the way we celebrate our cultural festivals. And during competitions like the Thomas Cup, Malaysians come together as one voice regardless of race, language or religion.

But what happens after these festive occasions run their course? What happens when the euphoria is gone? Of late, we have seen worrying trends that various groups are out to split Malaysian society. Seemingly trivial things are blown out of proportion. If left unchecked, these actions could cause an alarming spiral of decline as far as unity is concerned. And the cumulative impact of this could be disastrous.

This is where Harmoni-Mesra comes in. Malaysians must make a conscious and sustainable effort to promote unity, empathy and harmony. And to truly be at peace and love each other, we must understand each other. The seeds of promise must be sown early and there is no better place to start than our schools and universities. On this note, may we work towards a shared future - one that is built on mutual respect, empathy and trust.

Malaysia Boleh!

Why Is UCSI Taking The Lead?

Professor Datuk Ir Ts Dr Siti Hamisah Binti Tapsir, FASc
The Vice-Chancellor of UCSI University

I am happy to know that the UCSI University is publishing a book on the Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme for Malaysia.

Amid the recent challenges faced, UCSI continues to build on its strong foundation to operate harmoniously at the highest standards of academic excellence while instilling values of diversity and inclusiveness to sustain its vision for the coming generations. The campus's diverse background of students from 110 different nationalities and its strong commitment to fostering unity can serve as a role model for other institutions in Malaysia and around the world.

We start at the campus itself by inculcating unity among our UCSI students, staff and community. We trust that imparting the values of respect, caring, sharing, and acceptance in youth is the best way to develop unity on campus from a young age. It's through initiatives like this that we can create a sense of togetherness and build a prosperous and developed nation.

At the same time, fostering "Harmoni-Mesra" requires open communication, celebrating diversity, encouraging cooperation, and educating people on the benefits of unity. By working towards these goals, we can create a sense of togetherness that can help to build a prosperous and developed nation.

I trust that the publication of "Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme For Malaysia" will be a valuable resource for the community at large, helping to promote the principles of RUKUN NEGARA's goal and encouraging others to learn from the experiences of a Harmoni-Mesra campus. On that note, I wish UCSI University all the best in their continued efforts to promote harmony and inclusiveness.

Dialog Rakyat's 'Harmoni-Mesra' and The Rukun Negara

Academician Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr. Omar Abdul Rahman, FASc
Chair Dialog Rakyat Organising Committee, Member UCSI University Council

What has been termed as the blueprint for our national unity was launched as the RUKUN NEGARA on August 31, 1970. It consists of two parts: the Principles and the Objectives. While we are constantly being reminded of the its five Principles (Belief in God, Loyalty to King and Country, Supremacy of the Constitution, Rule of Law, Ethical Behaviour & Morality), the Objectives are seldom highlighted.

The result is that many are unaware of the very important five Objectives which are: 1. Achieving a greater unity of her people, 2. Maintaining a democratic way of life, 3. Creating a just society with equitable sharing of prosperity, 4. Ensuring a liberal approach to the country's rich and diverse cultural traditions and 5. Building a progressive society by harnessing modern science and technology. These Objectives can be summed up as our National Aspiration for a Harmonious, Prosperous, Progressive, and Sustainable (HPPS) Malaysia.

I feel as a nation we are guilty of negligence, of ignoring the Objectives, of failure to commit and of not translating them into effective actionable practices, beyond just reciting the Principles. Take the Harmonious component of HPPS, which encapsulates Objectives 1 and 4; we are still a long way from achieving it.

Polarising forces in the form of divisive and toxic rhetorics, cultural ignorance combined with cultural arrogance and interfaith intolerance are still rampant. In short, national cohesion and social harmony still cannot be taken for granted.

To counter the unhealthy situation and explore actionable practices to promote sustained harmony, the Dialog Rakyat for National Cohesion and Unity was established in 2016. This was the initiative of a group of civil society organisations comprising PCORE, PAGE, MINDS, National Building School, G25, Insaf Malaysia, Yayasan Perpaduan Malaysia and NCWO with ASLI initially providing the secretariat support, which currently is undertaken by KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific.

Between 2016 and 2019 nine Dialog Rakyat were convened involving concerned individuals, school and university communities and neighbourhood communities. The Harmoni-Mesra (H-M) concept, principles and practices and the Dialog Rakyat Code of Ethical Conduct (CEC), are the outcomes from these dialogues. Promoting H-M Malaysian Communities and Nurturing H-M Generations for Malaysia become the Strategic Mission of Dialog Rakyat, with 'Harmoni-Mesra Saling Hormati', a contribution from PCORE, as the theme song and the CEC as the 'tataperadaban' for H-M.

One actionable practice for H-M, is the Harmoni-Mesra Campus proposal which comprises two components: acceptance of the principles and basic framework of H-M, and implementation of the operational framework, i.e., integration into the functions of the university, namely governance and administration, teaching and research, community and industry outreach, advocacy and advice, international collaboration and students extracurricular activities.

It is most heartening and encouraging for the Dialog Rakyat community and for me personally that UCSI University has embraced the H-M concept and has taken the lead to implement the Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme and to work towards the aspiration of getting the participation of Malaysian university communities. I see this as another of UCSI University's contributions towards the achievement of the objectives of Rukun Negara.

Kudos to UCSI University.

"Go Beyond, Be Profound"

03 BACKGROUND

The Rukun Negara

RUKUN NEGARA

On August 31, 1970, the Rukun Negara (National Principles) was established to mark Malaysia's 13th anniversary of independence. It was implemented in the wake of the May 13 incident in 1969, which had led to racial riots in Malaysia.

The Five Principles

1. Belief in God
2. Loyalty to the King and Country
3. Supremacy of The Constitution
4. Rules of Law
5. Courtesy and Morality

The Five Objectives

1. Achieving a greater unity of her people
2. Maintaining a democratic way of life.
3. Creating a just society with equitable sharing of prosperity.
4. Ensuring a liberal approach to the country's rich and diverse cultural traditions.
5. Building a progressive society by harnessing modern science and technology.

After more than 50 years of emphasis on the Five Principles of Rukun Negara, objectives 1 and 4 remain unfulfilled:

"Achieving a greater unity of her people", and

"Ensuring a liberal approach to the country's rich and diverse cultural traditions"

- ★ National cohesion and unity still cannot be taken for granted,
- ★ Social Harmony continues to be under threat. Sustained Harmony or Kesejahteraan Negara remains a dream.

04 THREATS TO NATIONAL UNITY AND SOCIAL HARMONY

Image source: Getty images

Racism

Image source: The Star Newspaper

Ethnic nationalism, divisive and polarising rhetorics

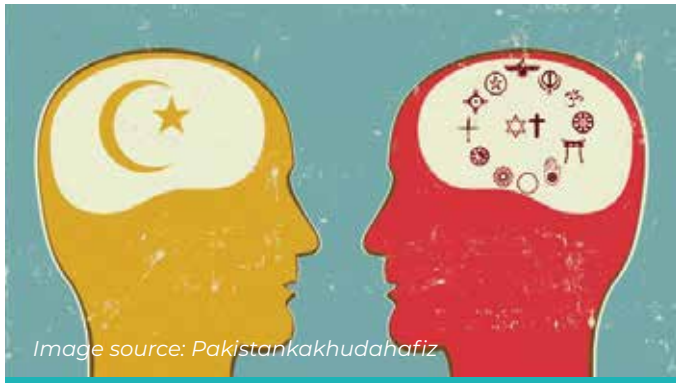


Image source: Pakistankakhudahafiz

Religious intolerance

Image source: University of Groningen

Erosion of civility, empathy, integrity

Image source: Malaysiakini

Failure to adhere to the practices of muhibah and neighbourliness

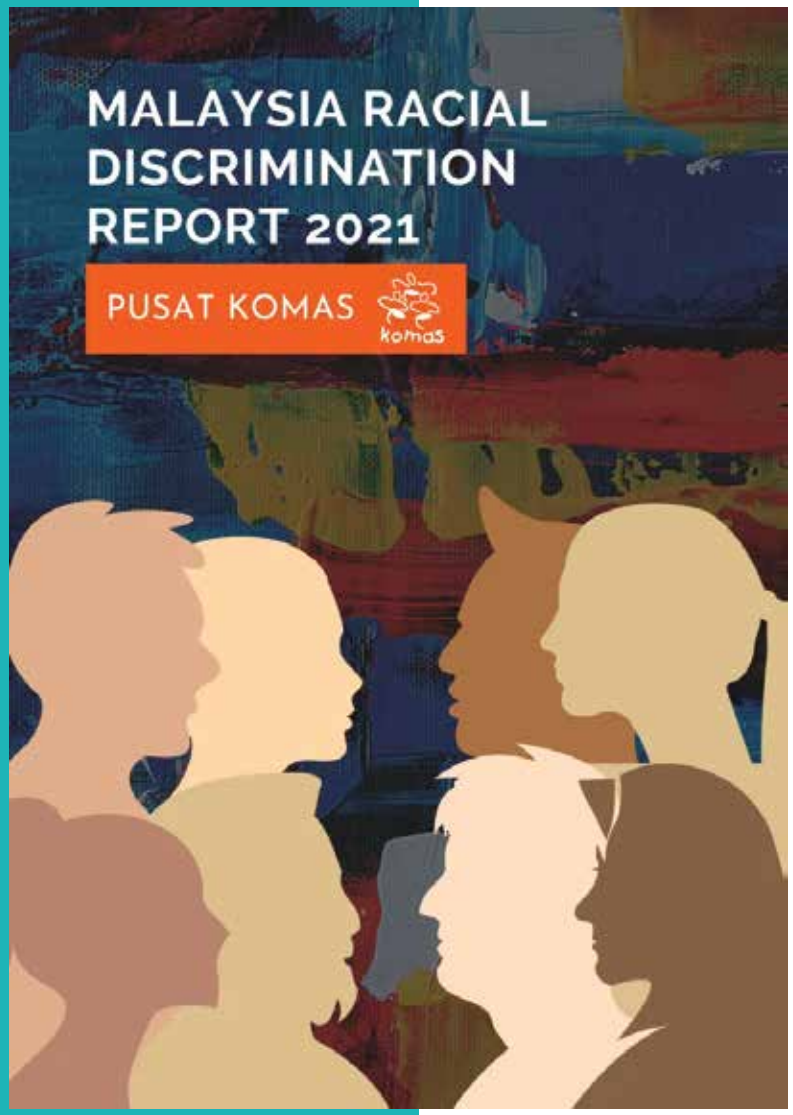
Image source: Pexels

Abandonment of our acclaimed commitment to moderation and 'wasatiyyah'

REPORT ON THE RISE IN RACISM:

"Malaysia has seen a rise in published incidents of racial discrimination; 51 such incidents, recorded in 2021, compared to 21 cases in 2020." Of the 51, the top three categories were "Racial and Religious Politics" at 28 percent, "Racial and Religious Provocation" at 23 percent and "Xenophobia" at 13 percent.

Extract from "Malaysia Racial Discrimination Report 2021" by the Malaysian Human Right Organisation, Pusat Komas.



1.The threat to harmony can be very concerning at times that the Prime Minister, on 17/3/23 for example, has urged Malaysians:
- not to "...fan religious and racial issues"
- to "avoid resorting to excessive acts".
and to "resolve animosity amicably"Also he had "directed security forces to monitor the situation closely to prevent people from creating trouble"

YAB Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, 17/3/23

2.-"Bukit Aman has warned of strict action on those who issue statements touching on race and religious sensitivities." They are "monitoring the situation closely and will not hesitate to act against people who threaten security and public order."

The Star, 18/3/23

-"The public is reminded to desist from uploading or sharing hateful content related to race, religion and the royal institution (3Rs) on social media as well as text messaging applications."

MCMC 19/3/23

05 THE JOURNEY TO SUSTAINED HARMONY

The Journey to Sustained Harmony (Kesejahteraan Negara)

Three milestones:

Image source: Linkedin

01 - INTEGRATION – THE FIRST MILESTONE

Coming together, working together, teamwork for specific purpose: sports, celebrations, cultural events, gotong royong, open houses etc.

Social Behaviour, short term objective.

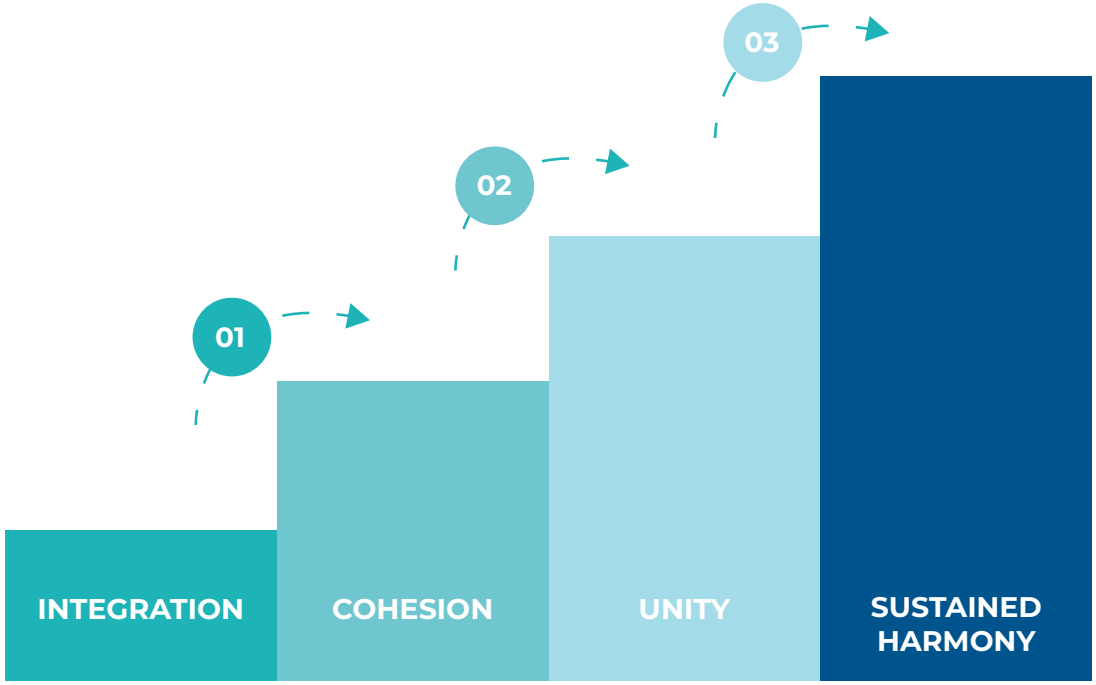
Harmony Moments.

02 - COHESION - THE SECOND MILESTONE

- Principles and reasons for a longer-term bonding: 'kongsi, toleransi, integrasi'.
- Cooperation, collaboration, partnership
- Security, stability, civility, survivality, prosperity
- **RATIONAL** behaviour governed by the Brain
- **HARMONI-MESRA**

03 - UNITY - THE THIRD MILESTONE

- Full commitment, collective responsibility, loyalty, shared destiny.
- Civic nationalism, patriotism.
- **EMOTIONAL** behaviour, governed by the heart
- **KESEJAHTERAAN NEGARA.**



SUSTAINED HARMONY

- Working together, understanding, and respecting one another, living together bounded by the code of ethical conduct based on smart partnership principles and practices.
- Harmony Moments, Cordial Relationship, National Wellbeing.

06 CONSISTENCY PARADIGM

Image source: Study Penang

CONSISTENCY PARADIGM

The objectives of Rukun Negara encapsulate our national aspiration for a Harmonious, Prosperous, Progressive and Sustainable (HPPS) Malaysia. HPPS is the overarching objectives of all expressions of national aspiration and political slogans since (Vision 2020, OneMalaysia, Ekspresi Negaraku, Transformasi National). Keluarga Malaysia is an emphasis on the “H” component of HPPS. The newly proclaimed Madani by the new government, which comprises sustainability, care and compassion, respect, innovation, prosperity and trust, is an expression of HPPS, heavy on the H component: care and compassion, respect and trust being both the requirements for and the outcome of 'Harmonious'.

HPPS represents the **CONSISTENCY PARADIGM** for Malaysia's National Aspiration.

07 THE REQUIREMENTS FOR HPPS

Image source: shutterstock

Harmonious, Prosperous, Progressive and Sustainable (HPPS) Malaysia.

Embracing HPPS as the overarching objectives of our National Aspiration, however way it is articulated, the Consistency Paradigm - would facilitate monitoring, evaluation and enhancement of implementation strategies and programs in political, economic, social as well as science, technology and innovation development.

Requirements for "Harmonious"

Social-Cultural-Spiritual (SCS) components:

Social-Cultural-Spiritual (SCS) components:
Ketenteraman and Kesejahteraan Masyarakat: coming together/ understanding and respecting each other/working and living peacefully together.
Tata Peradaban (Code of Conduct) based on respect, trust, transparency, tolerance, and accommodation; compassion, empathy, goodwill, muhibah.

Satisfying basic needs:

e.g., food, water, shelter, basic education, primary healthcare, energy, gainful employment.

Improving quality of life:

Higher level of basic needs, e.g., nutritious food, clean water, improved healthcare, quality education, gender equality, sustainable practices.

Image source: Study International

Requirement for “Prosperous”

Gainful employment, equitable income distribution derived from a robust high income, innovation driven, private sector led economy.

Image source: Royal Care Glove

Requirement for “Progressive”

Being an active part of the present and an influential part of the future on the global stage and being future aware and future ready.

Image source: MercedesAMGF1

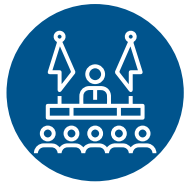
Requirement for “Sustainable”

ACCA: Awareness, Comprehension, Commitment, Appropriate Action (actionable sustainable practices at all levels).

Image source: flydenver

Overall Requirements for HPPS

Good Governance



Responsible Government

Consistency Policy

Sustained Commitment

Persistent Implementation

The Four Critical Enablers:

- The Political
- The Economic
- The Sociological
- The Technological - optimal and competent

Image source:The Star Newspaper

08 THE HPPS AND THE SDG

THE HPPS AND THE SDG

It is to be noted that there is congruence in the SDG and the HPPS of National Aspirations. The SDG 2016-2030, labeled as UN Agenda 2030- Transforming Our World, which can be interpreted as SocioEconomic Transformation at the global level, is in effect a Global Aspiration for a Harmonious, Prosperous, Progressive and Sustainable (HPPS) World.

The SDG Goal 16

Peace and Justice, calls for strong institutions to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development" and "provide access to justice to all....”.

These are the ingredients for social harmony, the pre-requisite to sustainability because without which, there is the spectre of the five Dreadful Ds:

- Disruptions
- Displacement
- Destruction
- Disfigurement
- Death

which spells an end of story for the Sustainable Development Goals.

09 COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Collective Responsibility

"The effort to increase unity among the people does not rest on the shoulders of the government alone, it is in collective responsibility."

YAB Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, 30th July 2019.

The Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme is UCSI's acceptance of its Collective Responsibility in addressing the social harmony issues.

10 HARMONI-MESRA CAMPUS PROGRAMME

Embracing Diversity, Fostering Sustained Harmony

Image source: blog.nave

Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme: Embracing Diversity, Fostering Sustained Harmony

In promoting national cohesion and social harmony as propounded by Rukun Negara and based on the concept of Consistency Paradigm and the principle of Collective Responsibility, UCSI University on October 17, 2022, in collaboration with Dialog Rakyat and PCORE, has launched the Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme.

- Acceptance of the Concept, Principles and Practices of Harmoni-Mesra.
- Create a Campus Culture conducive to Sustained Harmony, integrating the Harmoni-Mesra practices into the functions of the University: governance & administration, teaching and research, industry and community outreach, advocacy and advice, international collaboration and students extracurricular activities.

What is Harmoni-Mesra?

• Recognising the importance of, and the need to increase, "Harmony Moments" - activities that bring members of communities together to interact, socialise, break down barriers, exchange experiences, strengthen friendship and rekindle the spirit of muhibbah and neighbourliness, these constitute the **SOCIAL** components.

• Enhancing the benefits of "harmony moments" by instilling the **RATIONAL** elements through formal, informal, and non-formal programmes, meetings and discussions and other means to promote the understanding of our national heritage, cultures, values and national aspirations; and address the issues of cultural ignorance and cultural arrogance and interfaith intolerance.

• Introducing rituals or instruments that inspire the **EMOTIONAL** attachment, the song 'Harmoni Mesra, Saling Hormati', being an example.

• Strengthening the Social with the Rational and Emotional elements to establish strong bonding and spirit of goodwill among the citizens of Malaysia to secure sustained and enduring National Unity and Social Harmony leading to **KESEJAHTERAAN NEGARA.**

TATAPERADABAN FOR HARMONI-MESRA

The Dialog Rakyat Code of Ethical Conduct.

11 PARTNERS IN HARMONI-MESRA CAMPUS PROGRAMME

- Dialog Rakyat

- PCORE

Dialog Rakyat

The Dialog Rakyat for National Cohesion and Unity was established in 2016 by representatives of civil society organisations concerned about both insidious and rampant racism, religious intolerance, divisive and polarising rhetorics and hateful tweets existing in our country despite the proclamation of Rukun Negara in 1970. It is a forum for exchanging ideas and exploring actionable practices by individual citizens and citizen groups to counter the untenable situation.

The Harmoni-Mesra concept, principles and practices and the Code of Ethical Conduct emerged from the discussions taking place during 2016 and 2019. One actionable practice manifestation of Harmoni-Mesra is the Harmoni-Mesra Campus proposal.

The Dialog Rakyat code of ethical conduct is the 'tata-peradaban' for Harmoni-Mesra.

Image source: Malay Mail

Dialog Rakyat Code Of Ethical Conduct For National Cohesion And Unity

We, the Concerned and Responsible Citizens of Malaysia undertake therefore to adopt a set of behavioural patterns that embodies Moderation, Respect, Understanding, Trust, Transparency, Tolerance and Accommodation that reflects:

- Respect for one another regardless of ethnicity, religion, geographical region, status or political leaning.
- Recognition of our similarities and acceptance of our differences.

Image source: World Atlas

We, the Concerned and Responsible Citizens of Malaysia agree to:

- Respect the Federal Constitution and uphold the Rukunegara so as to preserve the independence and sovereignty of our nation.
- Promote activities that nurture civic consciousness, civic nationalism, patriotism, national cohesiveness, harmony, and unity at all levels of society.
- Advocate justice and fairness, transparency and integrity in all aspects of management and governance.
- Resolve contentions and differences through constructive engagement always seeking for equitable, mutually beneficial outcomes.
- Refrain from actions that offend, insult, humiliate, or intimidate others.
- Reject any form of discrimination, bigotry, extremism, unjustified acts causing harm to any individual or group, including any actions that can disrupt harmony and cohesion.
- Fight corruption and kleptocracy at all levels and in all its manifestations.

Actionable Practices By The University Communities - Outcome of Dialog Rakyat 3 (22 May, 2017) Jointly Convened With UKM, UPM, UCSI University and MAHSA University

"Conscious of the fact that national cohesion and unity are of prime importance in our national aspiration to be a harmonious, prosperous, progressive and sustainable Malaysia, universities in Malaysia attending the Dialog Rakyat 3 on 22nd of May, 2017 are in agreement that we have a crucial role to play in promoting and fostering cohesion, harmony and unity, among students and in the general citizenry.

The academic community undertake to abide by and to promote to our students the Dialog Rakyat Code of Ethical Conduct and be guided by its set of behavioural patterns that embodies moderation, respect, understanding, trust, transparency, tolerance and accommodation which reflect respect for other persons regardless of ethnicity, religion, geographical region, status and political leaning.

Image source: Malaysia Focus 2019

We will refrain from action that offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate, and will uphold justice, fairness, transparency and integrity in all our dealings with others and will impart these values to our students.

We undertake to promote and foster national cohesion, harmony and unity as well as patriotism, civic nationalism, and civic consciousness as part of our responsibility through one or several of the programmes and activities to be identified which are within our authority to implement In particular we will be focusing on the following aspects:

- **Embedding positive values and relevant soft skills that encourage cohesion, harmony and unity into teaching and learning activities.**
- **Incorporate positive values and relevant soft skills through courses or curricular activities, through students extracurricular activities, through personal conduct and interactions, through community interactions and engagement, and through the educators themselves.**

We undertake to also promote the above to other universities in Malaysia.

Association Of Voices Of Peace, Conscience And Reason (PCORE)

The Association of Voices of Peace, Conscience and Reason (PCORE) is a citizen's movement group that has been registered with Registrar of Societies (ROS) since 21 May 2011. PCORE actively participated in Dialog Rakyat sessions and its President, and two other members sit on Dialog Rakyat Organising Committee.

PCORE activities are focused around our six areas of concern:

Image source: National Today

1. Strengthening national integration, community well-being and unity.

ASEAN Business Partners

2. Celebrating diversity and interfaith relations.

Image Source: TallyPress

3. Synergising schools and homes in the education of our children.

Image source: Malaysia Travel Blog

4. Maintaining and preserving heritage and culture.

Image source: The Star

5. Promoting discourse and action towards closing the gender gap and disparity gap in public and private environments;

Image source: The Edge Markets

6. Building integrity and ethics.

“Harmoni-Mesra, Saling Hormati”

Harmoni-Mesra Theme Song

PCORE produced the lyrics of the song “Harmoni Mesra-Saling Hormati”, which was sung by four PCORE members and launched at the Education Summit in 2019 in the presence of the then Minister of Unity. This song was also played at the “Kem Integrasi Murid Peringkat Kebangsaan 2019”. It is hoped that this song will be used in schools in fostering harmony, warmth, and mutual respect among people of all races.

HARMONI-MESRA SALING HORMATI

Harmoni-Mesra Saling Hormati
Hidup Bahagia Usaha Berkati
Harmoni-Mesra Pegangan Kita
Saling Hormati Bersatu Hati
HAR – MO – NI tekad bersama
HOR – MA - TI saling mencinta

Langkah ke depan penuh harapan
MES-RA menghulur tangan
Berganding bahu, rapat jalinan
CIN-TA rakan dan tauladan
Mencungkil ilmu, tangga kejayaan

Harmoni-Mesra Saling Hormati
Menjalin Cinta Bahagia Di Hati
Harmoni-Mesra Komuniti Bahagia
Sejahtera Negara Matlamat Kita

12 ENHANCEMENT OF CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

Enhancement Of Civic Responsibility

The Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme will be a major activity of the UCSI University's Sekretariat Rukun Negara and complement and enhance the activities of the SDG Secretariat, Regional Centre of Expertise Greater Kuala Lumpur and the Students and Alumni Affairs Division.

Towards A Harmoni-Mesra Campus Network In Malaysia

UCSI University looks forward to collaborating with Malaysian university communities to establish a network of Harmoni-Mesra Campuses in Malaysia, promoting Harmoni-Mesra Malaysian communities and fostering Harmoni-Mesra Generations for Malaysia, fulfilling our civic responsibility towards sustained harmony and Kesejahteraan Negara.

13 UCSI - A PRAXIS UNIVERSITY IN A "HARMONI-MESRA CAMPUS"

Image source: UCSI Website

UCSI: A Praxis University in a "Harmoni-Mesra Campus"

UCSI is a Praxis University now establishing a campus that nurtures Harmoni-Mesra generations for Malaysia and fosters Harmoni-Mesra society within the campus and with the communities outside the campus.

14 INTEGRATION WITHIN UCSI COMMUNITY AND UPSCALING THE INITIATIVE NATIONALLY

Integration Within UCSI Community & Upscaling The Aspiration Nationally

The rationale:

FIRST STAGE:

UCSI University accepts and implements the Harmoni-Mesra principles and practices and moves towards establishing the first Harmoni-Mesra campus.

SECOND STAGE:

We initiated an annual University 'Unity and Harmony Week' to showcase its Harmoni-Mesra activities, culminating with the ceremony for the Tan Sri Omar's Harmony Awards.

THIRD STAGE:

We initiated the process of engaging other universities to establish a network of Harmoni-Mesra University Campuses.

15 TOWARDS A HARMONI-MESRA CAMPUS NETWORK IN MALAYSIA

Towards A Harmoni-Mesra Campus Network In Malaysia

UCSI University looks forward to collaborating with Malaysian university communities to establish a network of Harmoni-Mesra Campuses in Malaysia, promoting Harmoni-Mesra Malaysian communities and fostering Harmoni-Mesra Generations for Malaysia, fulfilling our civic responsibility towards sustained harmony and **KESEJAHTERAAN NEGARA.**

16 HARMONI-MESRA FOR ENDURING SOCIAL HARMONY

Academic Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr. Omar Abdul Rahman
Member of UCSI University Council

FROM HARMONY MOMENTS TO 'HARMONI-MESRA' FOR SUSTAINED SOCIAL HARMONY

Although Rukun Negara, the blueprint for national unity, was launched some 53 years ago, Academician Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr Omar Abdul Rahman believes that we Malaysians while being adept at parroting the principles, often forget about its objectives. "National cohesion and unity still cannot be taken for granted. At this point, social harmony continues to be under threat and sustained harmony or kesejahteraan negara remains a dream." The social malaise in Malaysia has him ill at ease, and therefore it is his goal to promote enduring harmony with the implementation of Harmoni-Mesra, the concept, principles, and practices of which were developed by Dialog Rakyat building on harmony moments.

"We may be enjoying many harmony moments in Malaysia, coming together to celebrate Merdeka Day, Malaysia Day, waving the Jalur Gemilang and singing patriotic songs, to celebrate our various festivals, to support our teams in many sporting events."

"These are short term social events and we need to build upon these harmony moments with the rational reasons for stronger long term social bonding and that is what Harmoni-Mesra is about."

"Rukun Negara for me is our national aspiration for a harmonious, prosperous, progressive and sustainable (HPPS) Malaysia. The most important part is harmonious, without which you cannot have the other three components. Countries with disharmony suffer from the five Dreadful Ds: disruption, displacement, destruction, disfigurement, and death. There are many examples around the world today. Harmoni-Mesra is about addressing the Harmonious component to achieve HPPS."

"Rukun Negara for me is our national aspiration for a harmonious, prosperous, progressive and sustainable (HPPS) Malaysia. The most important part is harmonious, without which you cannot have the other three components. Countries with disharmony suffer from the five Dreadful Ds: disruption, displacement, destruction, disfigurement, and death.

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Image source: Glide Technology

Harmoni-Mesra – A Solution to A Harmonious, Prosperous, Progressive, and Sustainable (HPPS) Malaysia.

Image source: Banyan Tree

Tan Sri Omar Harmony Awards

"Ah yes about the Harmony Awards. The idea came up in 2018. I was making a presentation at the UCSI University Students and Alumni Affairs Lecture on 6th March of that year. The topic was 'Sustained Harmony - The Pre-Requisite for Malaysia 2050'."

"At the end of the of the presentation I posed a question What can UCSI University students do to promote sustained harmony in Malaysia. I reminded them about the Oxford English Dictionary's word of the year for 2017, which was YOUTHQUAKE, meaning a significant cultural, political or social change arising from the actions or the influence of young people."

"What about UCSI University Students YOUTHQUAKE for sustained harmony in Malaysia was my challenge to the students. And I offered two proposals as starters."

First was "students initiated Annual Public Lecture on National Cohesion, Unity and Harmony, covering aspects of national heritage, cultures, values and National Aspiration. My talk this morning can be the inaugural lecture."

"My second proposal was to initiate a UCSI Students Harmony Awards, for individuals or groups, for students activities promoting social harmony on or off campus."

Tan Sri Omar later donated the fund for the cash prizes of RM 1000, 600 and 400, for the first three years.

The inaugural awards ceremony took place on 1st October 2019 officiated by the then Minister of Education, Dr Maszlee Malik. Our Datuk Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Hamisah Tapsir then as Chief Secretary (Ketua Setiausaha-KSU) of Ministry of Education (MOE) also was present on that occasion.

"The UCSI Students Harmony Awards was my suggested name, but the University Council overruled me. Now that it is called the way it is, don't anybody dare to change it." Omar quipped in jest. The TSO Harmony Awards is now an integral part of the UCSI Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme. And with increased cash prizes, the Awards have now gone national. The USCI University Council has now decided to name the awards as the Tan Sri Omar Harmoni-Mesra Awards.

Image source: whitecase

17 INITIAL STEPS IN HARMONI-MESRA

Ms Norani Abu Bakar

Working with directors of more than 20 subsidiaries of UCSI Group is part of Noraini Abu Bakar's job scope as an Executive Director of the UCSI Group SDG Office. She helps to streamline and coordinate their long-term plans by implementing sustainable practices that are in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

On Harmoni-Mesra, Noraini believes that Harmoni is the result when people can live in unity and peace.

> "As for Mesra to me it is the way we are hospitable; both happy and comfortable to engage with one another. Unity can be an agreement to work and live together, but kemesraan is when we come to celebrate."

Ms Noraini Abu Bakar
Former Executive Director, SDG Secretariat, UCSI Group

“ We have diverse groups of people – from various ethnicities, religious background, and nationalities, we all bring richness into the Malaysian community ”

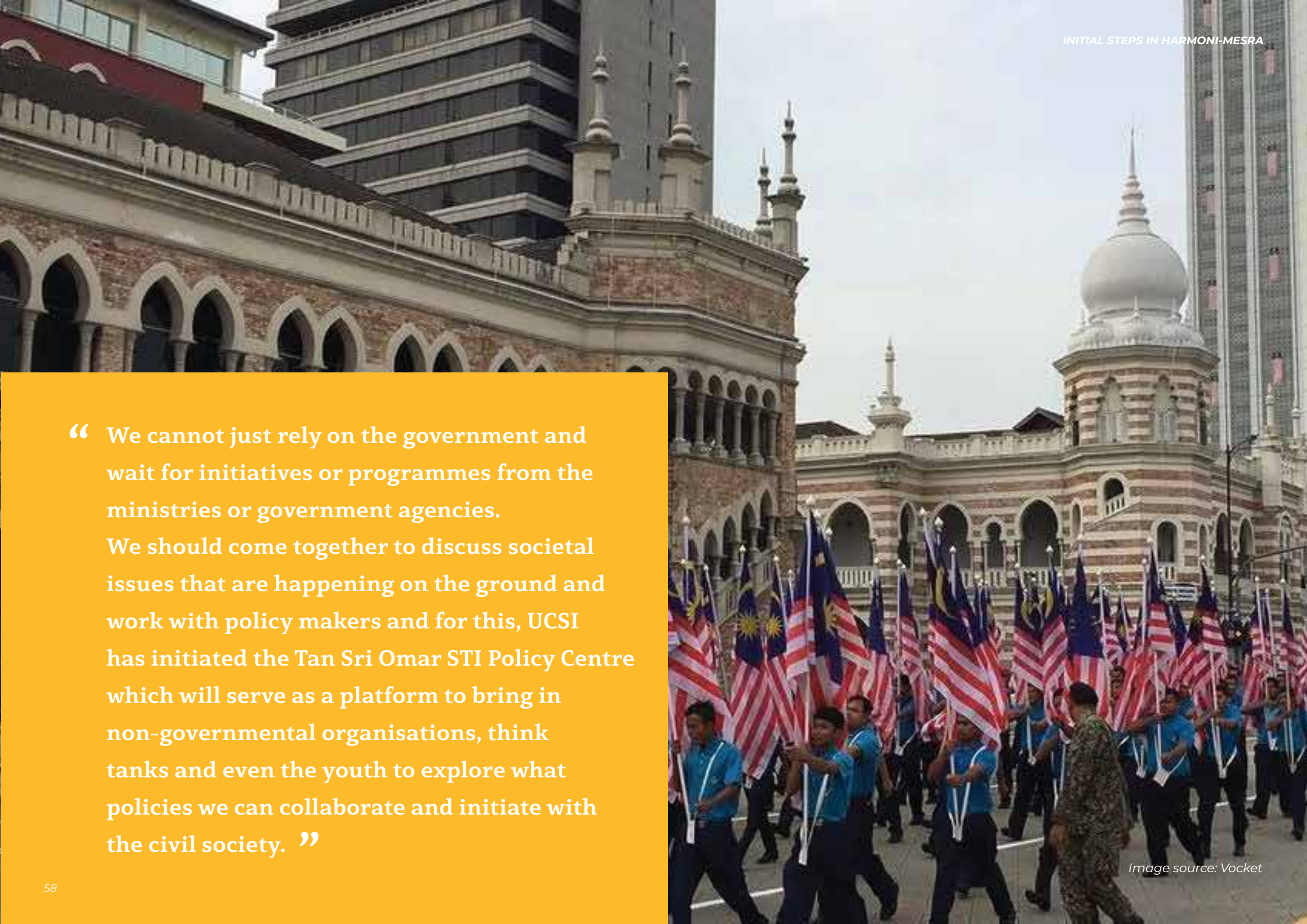

Image source: Vocket

> “We cannot just rely on the government and wait for initiatives or programmes from the ministries or government agencies.
> We should come together to discuss societal issues that are happening on the ground and work with policy makers and for this, UCSI has initiated the Tan Sri Omar STI Policy Centre which will serve as a platform to bring in non-governmental organisations, think tanks and even the youth to explore what policies we can collaborate and initiate with the civil society.”

UCSI University's students have been actively involved with the migrant communities. She proudly said that "If anyone goes to alternative learning centres within KL and mentions that they're from UCSI, they would be told that UCSI students have been there. It is part of our commitment to welcoming others, to engage with them and support their needs and this is all part of SDG 4 – Quality Education. Our youth at UCSI have been walking the talk."

> “ I do not feel that we will be able to develop a harmonious country without involving the youth – especially as today with the extent of virtual worlds, the youth have the capacity to make things happen. ”

- Ms Norani Abu Bakar

Image source: sharulnizam blog

> “I think this is why Harmoni-Mesra is so important – we have great people of different ethnicities that actually love and care for one another – we need to believe that there is goodness among Malaysians”

Harmoni-Mesra Experience

Having lived in a Federal Land Development Authority, commonly known to Malaysians as FELDA, Noraini recounted an interracial story that evokes feelings of what Harmoni-Mesra means to her, “My mother had a grocery store and the majority of the people living in the area were Malay. I remember during rainy days they couldn’t go over to the rubber plantations for some time – so many of them had to live on buku tiga lima – it was a book in which you could write down what you bought and what you owed. I was helping my mother and so, I wrote a lot in it. My mother’s supplier who was also her good friend was a Chinese guy from Kota Tinggi. He too, would allow my mother to get the items in stock first and pay later. Rice, sugar and all the essential necessities. And this is how people of different backgrounds come together to support each other.”

18 EMBRACING HARMONI-MESRA

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR MABEL TAN HWEE JOO
President & Chief Executive Officer UCSI College

Associate Professor Dr Mabel Tan Hwee Joo serves as the President and the Chief Executive Officer of UCSI College – her primary goal is to help students turn their ambitions into reality.

"We are looking at better relationships and harmony among the races. It is important to nuture Harmoni-Mesra as we should come together and work with each other's strengths instead of focusing on differences.

We at UCSI College are building on these principles and are implementing them inside and outside our classrooms."

“ To me, Harmoni-Mesra means accepting each other. It is not just about tolerating but accepting and respecting each other. At the same time, it is also about giving space to one another to develop and grow, ”

Image source: New Straits Time

Harmoni-Mesra Experience

Dr Mabel fondly remembered as a young child about her move from her hometown in Sungai Petani, Kedah to Kuala Lumpur during her childhood. "Weeks before we had to move, there was the sense of muhibbah – the neighbours in the kampung invited my family for farewell dinners and parties.

On the day of the move, the whole neighbourhood came together – they were helping us load furniture onto the lorry. There were hugs, kisses and tears all around from our Malay, Chinese and Indian neighbours. That sort of togetherness – this is what Harmoni-Mesra is all about."

During the floods of December 2021 when a group of Malaysians were abruptly displaced, UCSI College hosted a live-streaming charity event. “We managed to raise RM30,000. Simultaneously, UCSI University was having their music charity event ‘Flood Relief Concert Donation Drive’ where the patron was YAM Tunku Zain Al-‘Abidin ibni Tuanku Muhriz – we collected RM70,000.

When we pooled the funds together, UCSI as a group channelled RM100,000 to the Ministry of Higher Education’s ‘Tabung Bantuan Banjir’, Lions Club KL and Malaysian Red Crescent (Selangor) to aid in their respective flood relief initiatives.

It was a good moment as in these events, we saw our students of different races coming together to help.

Assistant Professor Ts Lucas Lim Boon Leong
ICAD Head of Events, UCSI Press Art Director

> “Harmoni-Mesra for me is that we should not judge people by the colour of their skin, race or religion and we should live in harmony by helping each other.”

Assistant Professor Ts Lucas Lim Boon Leong is the Head of Events and UCSI Press Art Director. Lucas Lim believed that the concept of Harmoni-Mesra should be promoted globally as it would help unite the people of the world.

> “Malaysians from all walks of life came together and supported the UCSI PPV Food Bank programme.”

Harmoni-Mesra Experience

Lucas Lim was a volunteer in the UCSI Vaccination Centre (PPV) and it was during his volunteering work he noticed that some of the people who came for vaccination were poor and looking for help. “Many of them were jobless and suffering. I feel that we need to plan something to help our society, many of them were reaching out for support especially for food assistance and it was that cry for help that initiated the idea to set up Food Bank in the UCSI PPV, the first PPV in Malaysia which also provided the public especially the vulnerable communities with food assistance and also counseling support.

The programme received contribution of various essential goods such as rice, oil, instant noodles, canned food, biscuits along with cash worth more than RM50,000 in total. The Food Bank programme had helped more than 3,000 families around Klang Valley.

19 MY LIFETIME HARMONI-MESRA EXPERIENCE

Professor Dr. Mohamad Tajuddin

Professor Dr. Mohamad Tajuddin Mohamad Rasdi
Professor | School of Architecture and Built Environment, UCSI University

My Lifetime Harmoni-Mesra Experience

For me, Harmoni Mesra means three important things. Firstly, the idea of according dignity to all regardless of race, culture, faith and ideology. Secondly, it is the admission by ourselves that we will always need others from the differences that God has created so as to complete ourselves socially, economically and spiritually. Thirdly, our mortality is our most common denominator and that our biology is transferable between us regardless of what our social, religious or political narratives are.

I have not one incident of Harmony Mesra to share but a life time of learning and living experiences. In Sekolah Rendah St'Marks, Butterworth, from Primary 1 to Primary 6, I was taught by all non-Malay and non-Muslim teachers from many different races. They were all nurturing and dedicated and I never felt being discriminated or isolated. In Sekolah Menengah Jenis Kebangsaan Hua Lian, Taiping, from Form 2 to Lower Six, almost all my teachers were non-Malays and non-Muslims. Again, they were all caring, professional and non-discriminatory. They taught with love, passion and honour till I overcame many of my weaknesses in academic subjects. My all Chinese school mates also supported me and helped me through my education. When I went to the United States of America for my Bachelors and Masters in Architecture, my teachers were also all non-Muslim. It was in the USA that I rediscovered Islam as a spiritual, social and political force of development for humanity (The Madani Islam concept). Later on, I was supervised by another non-Muslim scholar for my PhD on The Mosque as a Community Development Center.

After the sacking of Anwar Ibrahim in 1998, my political awakening led to a career as a columnist in many main stream media like Utusan Malaysia, The Star, Borneo Post, Sin Chew Daily, Sinar Harian, Freemalaysiatoday, Malaysiakini and Malaysian Insider. My writings seek to realign the Malays to a centrist position of Madani Islam but the establishment reacted against my writings and placed my career in cold storage. Upon my optional retirement as the most senior and youngest Professor of Architecture with more than 50 books published, public universities spurned my services. Again, a non-Malay and non-Muslim Malaysian saved my career by appointing me Professor at UCSI University. In 2018, after suffering a heart attack, my cardiologists had prepped me for a heart by-pass surgery. He advised me to get 8 blood donors. After asking friends and students for help, 6 Chinese males and females donated blood for me. These six were the friends of my students whom I do not know at all! Although I never went through the by-pass because an emergency angioplasty was able to miraculously be performed, I have never forgotten the selfless deeds of the six Chinese donors.

I have concluded that my life and career would not have been possible without the aid of others who are not of my own faith and culture. God has created differences and opposites in nature for it to thrive and we would be fools to dishonor His creations. Our differences is both our destiny and salvation.

20 EVENTS

UCSI Context – CAMPUS (Focus Group Discussion)

27 MAY 2022 (Friday)

Mapping issue together with the community:

- Youth from UCSI

28 MAY 2022 (Saturday)

- Resident Association Taman Segar, Taman Supreme
- Residents of Landslide Homes, Lorong Selangat, Taman Pertama
- Homeless Citizen
- Farmers Community, The Spring Garden

29 MAY 2022 (Sunday)

- Residents from Sri Sarawak and Loke Yew Flats
- OKU Community (Loke Yew)
- OKU Community (Association of Women with Disabilities Malaysia & Malaysian Spinal Cord Injury Advocacy Association)
- Pudu Small Vendor Community

Mapping Main Issues (18 – 22 Years)

Social:

• Safety outside the campus due to lack of street lighting and close circuit television (CCTV).

• Long waiting time due to due no access to the transportation schedule.

• Traffic congestion due to construction and potholes.

• Government's lack of initiatives to encourage harmony among the ethnic youths.

• Students' tuition fee is exceptionally high with the additional cost increment need to be controlled.

• The starting salary for fresh graduates is a big concern.

Tan Sri Omar Harmony Award 2021 - National Level

Tan Sri Omar Harmony Award (National), World Interfaith Harmony Week & UCSI SRN launching

- UCSI SRN Committees
- UCSI University - Club
- UCSI College - Student Council

World Interfaith Harmony Week Publication of Annual WIHW messages / sharing in 25 February 2022

13 SRN tertiary education chapters participated in quizzes after they have been promoted by Ministry of National Unity's SRN office.

1. World Interfaith Harmony week 2022
2. Tan Sri Omar Harmony Award (National Level)
3. Youth Peace and Unity Workshop & SRN

Prepared By: UCSI Group - SDG Secretariat Office

Top 50 scorers & Top 16:

1. International Islamic University (4 recipients)
2. UCSI University (4)
3. University Technology Mara UiTM (2)
4. UCSI College (2)
5. Arukah Transformation Community Centre (1)
6. University Putra Malaysia (1)
7. Climate Action Incubator Program (1)
8. El-Shaddai Refugee Learning Centre (1)
9. Tunku Abdul Rahman University College
10. Asia Pacific University
11. Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus, Kelantan
12. Tunku Abdul Rahman University College
13. IPG Kampus Bahasa Antarabangsa

Youth Peace and Unity Workshop 2022 (Proposed to Ministry of National Unity by Malaysian Youth Council)

One of the 6 Case Studies presented to members of the parliament by All Party Parliamentary Group of Malaysia (APPGM) for SDG. A research project sponsored by UNDP.

2021 RCE Awards for Innovative Projects
10 international recipients & RCE GKL

Certificate of Participation

This is to acknowledge that

XXXX

has participated in Session 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 12 of

Online Peace and Unity in Diversity Education Workshop

May - June 2021

Nooral Huda Abu Bakar
The Blue Ribbon Global
(Malaysia)

Norani Abu Bakar
Chairperson
RCE Greater Kuala Lumpur

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zainal Abidin Sanusi
International Islamic University Malaysia
RCE Greater Gombak

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Amer Siddiq AN
University Malaya
RCE Central Semenanjung

Programme Developer

Partners

UCSI Group

UNIVERSITI MALAYA

UNIVERSITI MALAYA

Certificate for participants, facilitators and trainers (sample from past training)

Partners:

- RCE Central Semenanjung (UM)
- RCE Greater Gombak (IIUM)
- United Nations University

SDG Roadmap for Cheras Community

Sharing aspirations among participants from various backgrounds; reviewing pressing community needs; and learning from others about their evidence-based services.

A strategic roadmap for Cheras was facilitied by Tan Sri Omar Centre for STI Policy Studies, a centre established to enhance national Science, Technology and Social Innovation (STSI) in promoting a Harmonious, Prosperous, Progressive, and Sustainable (HPPS) Malaysia.

- Announcement of Tan Sri Omar Harmony Week
- SRN activities
- Merdeka to Malaysia Day from 31 August to 16 September 2022
- Cheras SDG Day 2022 in conjunction with the university's Harmoni-Mesra Campus Week launched on 26 October 2022

The launch was officiated by Professor Datuk Siti Hamisah Tapsir, CEO of UCSI Group and Vice-Chancellor of UCSI University, together with Academician Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dr Omar Abdul Rahman, Council Member of UCSI University and Chair Organising Committee 'Dialog Rakyat for National Cohesion & Unity', Madam Tan Boon Charn, Representative of Cheras Community, Dato' Dr Abd Halim Mohd Hussin, President of International Counselling Association of Malaysia, Associate Professor Dr Mabel Tan Hwee Joo, President and Chief Executive Office UCSI College, Dr Japareng Lalung, Coordinator Regional Centre of Expertise Penang, Mr Thai Ming Yeow, Buddhist Missionary Society Malaysia, students from Universiti Sains Malaysia and Regional Centre of Expertise Greater Kuala Lumpur (RCE GKL). As the university champions the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the event was one of the initiatives to promote SDG 16 — Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. In addition, the Cheras SDG Day also aims to enhance harmony and unity, health, and well-being, as well as celebrate the community's partnerships and achievements in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and SDGs.

Various activities, such as interactive SDG games, workshops, and talks, were organised for the students and public throughout the week.

"UCSI University has over 12,000 students, with nearly 30% international students and 70% local students. As we build future leaders, it is critical that we promote national unity and social harmony among our students" stated Siti Hamisah.

She also stated that the university is working hard to improve education by incorporating SDGs into courses and extracurricular learning for its students and faculty.

"Our goal is to encourage our students to take on the responsibility of becoming active agents of change, where they can contribute to addressing social, political, and economic challenges ranging from poverty and inequality to environmental conservation," added Siti Hamisah.

This event also received support from RCE Penang, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). To further encourage the 'harmony-mesra' among students, RCE Penang, USM sent a group of students from Penang to UCSI, to experience and to take part in the Harmoni-Mesra Exchange Programme 2022.

Madam Tan Boon Charn, who represents the Cheras community, stated that collaboration is essential in addressing the Cheras community's pressing issues and needs. "We believe that this exercise will help to unite the Cheras community, resulting in a stronger voice and more effective action in making Cheras a more sustainable and liveable city." In addition to the launch, the university celebrated the National Counselling Month and the one-year anniversary of the Regional Centre of Expertise GKL's progress in Education for Sustainable Development.

Moving Towards The Third Stage

- UCSI integrating indicators in Happines Index
- Following-up on proposal on Peace and Unity to Kementerian Perpaduan Negara
- Fostering greater rapport with KPN
- Developing 3 Year Road Map
- Collaboration with RCE Penang (Host: USM) on student exchange program.
- Reviewing Sustainability Policy and considering the proposed Code of Ethical Conduct
- RCEs to organize national competitions that include under privilege youth (APPGM-Refugee Policy June 2022)

21 CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Our National Aspiration, implicit in the Objectives of the Rukun Negara, is for a Harmonious, Prosperous, Progressive and Sustainable (HPPS) Malaysia. Malaysian universities are duty bound, as part of their collective responsibility, to contribute to the achievement of HPPS Malaysia.

The Harmoni-Mesra Campus proposal, based on Dialog Rakyat's Harmoni-Mesra concept, principles and practices, is a means of promoting the Harmonious component of HPPS by the university communities in Malaysia. UCSI University, in collaboration with Dialog Rakyat and PCORE, is taking the lead to implement this initiative.

Like the global Green Gown movement of universities and colleges, a Harmoni-Mesra University Campus movement can be established. UCSI University looks forward to joining forces with like-minded institutions of higher learning to establish a network of Harmoni-Mesra Campuses for sharing experiences and collaborating in activities supporting the Harmonious component of HPPS Malaysia, thus contributing to the attainment of the objectives of Rukun Negara.

Image source: MSU.edu

THE HARMONI-MESRA CAMPUS PROGRAMME -

Promoting A University Campus Culture Conducive to Enduring Harmony and Kesejahteraan Negara for Malaysia.

The Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme Coordination Committee

To oversee the implementation of the programme, comprising two components:

- acceptance of the principles and basic framework of H-M
- acceptance of the operational framework, ie integration of

  H-M practices into the functions of the university :

  - governance/ administration
  - teaching
  - research
  - industry outreach
  - community outreach
  - advocacy & advice
  - international collaboration
  - Students extracurricular activities

* The CC will meet to review progress and development once every quarter and as necessary.

To Promote the Development of H-M Practices and Determine the SOP.

To Set the Minimum SOP Qualifying for H-M Campus Status.

To Encourage the Participation of the Malaysian University Communities.

Membership of the Harmoni-Mesra Campus Programme Coordination Committee:

CHAIRPERSON : Professor Ir. Ts. Dr. Siti Hamisah Binti Tapsir, FASc.
Vice-Chancellor UCSI University & Group CEO

CO-CHAIRPERSON : Academician Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Omar Abdul Rahman, FASc.
UCSI University (Council) & Dialog Rakyat

Group's Vice President, UCSI Group Sustainability Office
Mr. Leong Sat Sing

RCE GREATER KUALA LUMPUR (RCE-GKL)
REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE
Education for Sustainable Development
Ms Norani Abu Bakar, Chairperson

DIALOG RAKYAT:
Madam Mariammah Subramaniam
Mr. Voon Zhen Yi, Secretary Dialog Rakyat, Research Director of KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific

PCORE:
Professor Dr Kalaivani Nadarajah – President PCORE
Professor Dr Asma Abdullah – Vice President PCORE
Ms Masnoon Bujang – Secretary PCORE (alternate to the President)

SECRETARY
Secretary: To be appointed
*As other universities join the programme, two representatives from each will join the Coordination Committee (CC)

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