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SEMINAR KEBANGSAAN "PERANAN DAN RANGKAIAN DIALOG PERADABAN MENJAYAKAN SATU MALAYSIA"

National Seminar on The Role and The Importance of Networking in Civilisational Dialogue in Promoting the Concept of 1 Malaysia. 22-23 Disember 2009

Dialogue among Civilisations plays a crucial role for mankind nowadays. Even the United Nations adopted a resolution to name the year 2001 as the Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, which signifies that Dialogue has globally risen to prominence. Recognising the importance of Dialogue among Civilisations in Malaysia, the University of Malaya Centre for Civilisational Dialogue (UMCCD) has taken the audacious initiative to organise the *Seminar Kebangsaan: "Peranan dan Rangkaian Dialog Peradaban Menjayakan Satu Malaysia"*.

The seminar was held at the Auditorium Tun Mohamed Suffian, Faculty of Law, University of Malaya from December 22 to December 23, 2009 and was officiated by YBhg. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zarida Hambali, Director of the Academic Division, the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.



One of the session during the National Conference

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University of Malaya UNESCO Club Activities throughout 2009

Since its establishment in 2007, University of Malaya UNESCO Club (UMUC) has organised several successful programmes. In 2009, altogether five programmes have been conducted or participated in by UMUC members.

1) Discussion between the University Of Malaya UNESCO Club (UMUC) Committee Members and the Malaysian National Commission For UNESCO Malaysia (NATCOM)

Date : 25th March 2009

Time : 2.30pm

Venue : International Relations Division, Ministry of Education, Putrajaya.

Aiming at forging closer relationships between NATCOM and UMUC and consequently achieving UNESCO's mission collectively, a discussion was made between the two institutions. A fruitful exchange of ideas took place, hopefully ensuring that these aims are achievable. As a result of the discussion, collaboration between NATCOM and UMUC will be strengthened via various planned activities such as the Opening Young Eyes! (OYES!) Programme which among other aim to highlight the UNESCO heritage sites of Malaysia among young Malaysians.

2) Celebration of *Norooz* – A Celebration of the End and the Rebirth of Life

Date : 26th March 2009

Venue : Katha Room, Centre for Civilisational Dialogue

Director : Rahim Kaviani

Norooz marks the first day of spring and the beginning of the year in the Iranian calendar. Today, the festival of *Norooz* is principally celebrated in countries like Iran, Iraq, India, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. This cultural activity has been celebrated for 7000 years and due to its deep roots in Ancient Iran, it was officially registered on the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009. Realizing the significance of *Norooz*, members of UMUC, headed by Mr. Rahim Kaviani, a PhD student at the Academy of Islamic Studies, UM, have taken a bold initiative to introduce *Norooz* at the University of Malaya. The occasion was graced by the Cultural Counselor of The Embassy of The Islamic Republic of Iran, the Honourable Mr. Vahedi.



Participants for the Kinabalu International Expedition, 2009.

3) Kinabalu International Expedition, Sabah

Date : 23rd-29th July 2009

Venue : Kinabalu Park, Sabah

This project is modelled on the VOCAL concept founded by the Associated School Project Network (ASPNet) Malaysia which was introduced mainly to inculcate the spirit of voluntarism, caring and loving (VOCAL) among students. Its focus is primarily on environmental issues. This expedition involves both local and international participants from UNESCO ASPNet and the Asia Europe Classroom Network (AEC Net). The six-day Kinabalu International Expedition 2009 was filled with exciting activities such as bird watching, tour on Mount Kinabalu Botanical Garden, visiting and experiencing Kg. Sinisian's cultural life as well as climbing Malaysia's first natural World Heritage, Mount Kinabalu.

4) One World Culture Night 2009

Date : 10th October 2009
 Venue : Nilai University College

The University of Malaya UNESCO Club (UMUC), in collaboration with UM's International Student Centre has participated in an International Students' Carnival organised by the Ministry of Higher Education. The *Saman Dance*, which originated from Indonesia, was performed in the Cultural Performance Competition, placing UM second in the competition behind University Malaysia Perlis while, Universiti Putra Malaysia grabbed the third place. Meanwhile, for the Voices Competition, the top honor was awarded to Universiti Sains Malaysia. University of Malaya was in competition with other universities, such as Kuala Lumpur Metropolitan University, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Help College, Nilai University College, and Kolej Damansara Utama.

5) Freeze for Earth & Celebration of the International United Nations Day

Date : 24th October 2009
 Venues : Kuala Lumpur Central Station
 Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC)
 Perdanasiswa Complex

"Freeze for Earth" is a project which focuses primarily on the dissemination of information, as one of the three main functions of the UM UNESCO Club, in addition to training and action. During this event, participants were brought to two public venues. When the signal was given, all participants froze for the whole 5 minutes. **This programme was in conjunction with the International Day of Climate Action and the International United Nations Day** which falls on the same date which is on 24th October 2009.



Among participants of Freeze for Earth

Freeze for Earth aims to raise awareness about climate change due to the carbon content in the atmosphere; 350 refers to the parts per million allowable.

Another event was the celebration of the **International United Nations Day** at the Perdanasiswa Complex. The event started around 8:30 p.m. and was launched by Prof. Datin Dr. Azizan Baharuddin, Director of the Centre for Civilisational Dialogue. Attendees were given the chance to create a statement of peace in their own language which they shared with the crowd. After that, they were shown a slideshow on the **structure of the United Nations**, the **role and function of the UM UNESCO Club**, as well as a brief video show on human rights issues and the 350 movement. The crowd was then entertained by **three different kinds of cultural performances**, beginning with a traditional dance from Indonesia called '*Saman*' which was performed by the group of UM students who won second place in the recent International **Students Carnival**, followed by a singing performance by a local student who sang a popular Arabic song. Finally there was a melancholic/melodious musical performance by UM's Iranian students. After the cultural performance ended, every attendee was given a balloon to blow up and burst simultaneously in an activity dubbed "**Burst for Earth**". The attendees then gathered at the Gazebo square to light hundreds of candles, which were aligned to create the number '350.' as a **sign of peace** and to symbolise the 350 movement. After all the candles had been lit, the committee members of the Club stood on the stage and sang '**We are the World**' (by Michael Jackson) together with the crowd.

*For further information, please log on to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBos7L-I43M>