

### Conferences/Seminars

## Second Annual Conference of the “ASEAN Muslim Social Scientists’ Forum”

*Muḥarram 20-23, 1409/September 1-4, 1988*

The Muslim Social Science Scholars’ Forum of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) held its Second Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand from *Muḥarram 20-23, 1409/September 1-4, 1988*, under the auspices of the Foundation for Democracy and Development Studies. The theme for the meeting was “Muslim Scholars and Social Science Research,” aimed at documenting, discussing and analyzing the types of scholarship or research that have been done about Muslims in the Southeast Asian region, particularly within the ASEAN countries.

A select group of Muslim social science scholars (together with some Muslim politicians) from the countries within ASEAN, except Brunei, were invited to the “Forum.” They included: Drs. Dawan Raharjo and Nurcholis Majid, and Professor Moeslim (Indonesia), Drs. Surin Pitsuwan, Sene Madmarn and Chaiwat (Thailand), Drs. Yusof Talib and Hussain Mutalib (Singapore), Professors Taib Osman and Wan Hashim and Umar Farouq (Malaysia), and Drs. Carmen Abubakar, Madale and Mastura (Philippines). All participants were either presenters of papers or discussants.

Throughout the four-day deliberations, participants discussed the types of studies and research that have been the focus of scholars studying Muslim communities in the ASEAN region. Some titles of papers included: “Muslim Studies in the Phillipines;” “Social Science Research in Thailand;” and “Social Science Research in Malaysia: the Case of Islamic Resurgence.”

Given the “closed-door” nature of the meeting (participation was by invitation only), there was adequate time for a more intensive, frank and thorough discussions of the papers. Problems and issues were aired and posed, and alternative options offered by participants. For every paper, there was a discussant; hence, the issues that came out of the papers managed to be seen, discussed and appreciated from a more complete and balanced perspective.

By and large, the Bangkok meeting was a successful one. The approximately twenty participants were generally pleased with the high quality of papers presented and the sense of brotherhood that prevailed. The warm hospitality of the hosts from Thailand was also appreciated.

One of the resolutions of the Conference was to hold its next meeting in the Philippines. Professor Carmen Abubakar, with the assistance of Dr. Madale, will act as host and will coordinate preparations for the meeting including the possibility of arranging a visit to Marawi City as part of the Conference program. The mayor of the city wanted delegates to see first-hand his attempts at Islamizing the government administration there, and has invited delegates to visit his city.

For the second resolution, the Conference in Bangkok nominated Dr. Hussain Mutalib from the National University of Singapore, to coordinate the editing and publishing of the papers. It was suggested that existing recognized journals within ASEAN be approached to publish a special issue of papers of the Conference. If this is not possible, the publication should still proceed with the support of other Muslim academic bodies or organizations.

The Conference ended with agreement on the theme for next year's meeting, and with the *du'a'* that the next meeting will be even better.

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*And when ye judge between man and man,  
that ye judge with justice.*