



In the name of Allah, All-Merciful, Most Merciful

**UJN Declaration
On the challenges and priorities of Islam and Muslims 1438 / 2016ⁱ**

Hold fast to the rope of Allah all together, and do not separate.

Quran, Surah 3, verse 103.

In furtherance to our commitment to the Quranic obligation to create and maintain a unified Muslim Ummah.

And recognizing the many difficult challenges faced by Muslims in the modern world, including:

- a. The destruction and devaluing of human life along with the degradation of the environment through the creation of a culture of death, wars, other acts of aggression and unrestrained economic exploitation of our resources by a wealthy minority.
- b. Economic misery for millions around the globe due to the imposition of neo-liberal capitalist economic policies;
- c. The colonisation of Muslim educational and institutional space;

- d. The decline in morality in our societies, the undermining of the institution of the family and the introduction of non-Islamic sexual perversions, all of which have resulted from a shift away from Islam towards immoral western norms;
- e. The pervasiveness of conceptual illiteracy in our communitiesⁱⁱ;
- f. The scourge of disunity, particularly sectarianism, tearing the Ummah apart;
- g. The interference in the affairs of the Muslim world by external powers and their Muslim proxies;
- h. The sub-alternisation of Muslim peoples, wherever they are, resulting in an environment of hate against them;
- i. The social engineering of Islam and the hybridisation of Muslim identity to serve western interests;
- j. The undermining of Islamic knowledge and norms by the widespread and unrestrained use of new technologies like the internet and social media.
- k. Ever increasing loss of confidence in pursuit of own political, cultural and religious beliefs and interests.

And reaffirming the priorities that Islam sets out for us, which comprise of:

- a. The obligation to not deviate from the truth of Islam;
- b. To avoid all types of dogmatic and unidirectional approaches in the form of exclusivism or inclusivism, Islamophobic reactions, or Islamoromicⁱⁱⁱ responses and not being apologetic towards atheism;
- c. Standing for cultural, political and economic justice for all;
- d. Respecting the most knowledgeable and entrusted leaders of the Muslims around the world;
- e. Being vigilant against all kinds of threats, terror, hate, discrimination and war which are obvious archetypes of injustice;
- f. Raising cultural and political Islamic literacy with reference to pure Islamic knowledge;
- g. Working for Muslim unity and prevention of all factors which cause division;
- h. Avoiding secularization of Islam, de-politicisation of Islam and hybridisation of

Muslim identities.

We, the undersigned, believe it is necessary to take affirmative action to rebuild the Muslim personality by overcoming the challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah and to actualise the priorities set out by Islam, in order to create a just and peaceful world for all. We believe the action points set out in this declaration are necessary to realize this objective:

1. Research, creation and implementation of projects to arrest the moral degradation sweeping through the Muslim Ummah.
2. Strengthening existing institutions, like schools, Masjids and the family, to help foster Islamic societies.
3. The creation of international collaborative projects for the purpose of information and knowledge sharing, to allow us to learn from each other's research and experience in the fields of decolonisation.
4. The creation of systems for capacity building and training for grassroots.
5. Research into creating spaces for decolonised knowledge production and addressing the challenges produced by colonised education spaces.
6. Research into how Islamic economics can remove itself from the pervasive control of neo-liberal capitalist economics. Any findings and recommendations from this research needs to be implemented at a macro and micro level as well as used to challenge the hegemony of neo-liberal capitalism.
7. Developing, dissemination and organisation strategies towards independent movements that will result in globalisation that is led from the grassroots. This will include campaigning and advocacy.
8. To encourage and foster unity amongst Muslims and to challenge and combat the bigotry and violence of sectarianism.
9. To identify principles that guide our relationships with governments, based on the needs and aspirations of the Muslim community rather than the agenda of those in power.
10. The need for centralized administration and management of the action points set out in this declaration, whether through existing infrastructure or through the creation of a new secretariat to facilitate the above.

Signatories

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We ask Allah that He gives us success in achieving the points set out in this declaration.

This declaration was made on the **Twenty-Fifth** of the month of Muharram, 1438 A.H. - the
Twenty-Sixth of August, 2016 - in Penang, Malaysia.

God is the Granter of success, and in Him we take refuge!

*Peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad, and upon his household, his noble
blessed companions, and upon all the messengers and prophets*

ⁱ Short Title: Penang Declaration 1438.

ⁱⁱ This refers to a lack of a deep understanding of the cultural and political concerns of Islam and Muslims today. Furthermore, there is a lack of understanding of what is truth and falsehood, what is right and what is wrong.

ⁱⁱⁱ Islamoromia is a study of Islam, looking at and synthesising analysis of Islam through a Western normative framework.