

IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF VISION-2077

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INTRODUCTION: IMPLICATIONS OF POST-COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The global COVID-19 pandemic has altered the present world scenarios drastically and, if its destructive capability continues—albeit in less menacing ways—to pose a potential threat for the next few years, the socio-economic and socio-political futures of many countries in the world would become more uncertain and more challenging. If we also take into account the current global climate emergency with its adverse impact on several aspects of contemporary societies, then we could expect future global crises to be more hazardous than the current turbulence and turmoil. In this regard our futures thinking and planning vis-a-vis the Malaysian Muslim *ummah* beyond 2050 has to take into account the probability of such pandemics and/or environmental catastrophes in the future impacting on Malaysian society and the Muslim *ummah* in it.

Several credible forecasts have been made by international organisations and research bodies prior to the eruption of the pandemic and during the last five months of COVID-19 crisis. They have given us a largely pessimistic socio-economic picture of the world in the immediate future. Some affluent countries would be experiencing recession if not depression, in the next one to two years, and the scenarios of serious

environmental catastrophes in several countries or regions of our battered planet Earth would become more depressing in the decades ahead. The following statement of Antonio Guterres, the Secretary General of the United Nations, in the last couple days, underscores the gravity of the predicament the world is facing today. He laments:

The world is in turmoil. Economies are in freefall. We have been brought to our knees – by a microscopic virus. The pandemic has demonstrated the fragility of our world... COVID-19 has been likened to an x-ray, revealing fractures in the fragile skeleton of the societies we have built. It is exposing fallacies and falsehoods everywhere: the lie that free markets can deliver healthcare for all; the fiction that unpaid care work is not work; the delusion that we live in a post-racist world; the myth that we are all in the same boat. Because while we are all floating on the same sea, it's clear that some are in superyachts while others are clinging to drifting debris (Antonio Guterres 2020).

Under these circumstances it is fair to assume that Muslim nations, communities and organisations too will be confronting – within the next decade or more -- very challenging future scenarios which might include “the unthought” disruptions, “wild cards”, “Black Elephants”, “Black Swans” or “Black Jelly-Fishes”, to borrow the well-known metaphors of scholars of futures studies. (see Ziauddin Sardar 2019: 121-172, Sohail Inayatullah 2018). Therefore, in order to plan, prepare and produce the requisite and relevant human talents and new skills, with better psychological, intellectual, emotional, moral, spiritual, natural or technological resources to meet what Ziauddin Sardar calls radically changed “postnormal times” (PNT), Muslim leaders in different sectors of national life will have to chart out new roadmaps with revised strategies to move forward, collectively and systematically, to a better or more preferred future of Islam and the *ummah* before or at the advent of the

next *Hijriyyah* century, the year 1500 *Hijrah* (in November 28, 2076, *in shā' Allāh* (if Allah S.W.T. wills).

Hopefully they would be able to negotiate cautiously but wisely the uncertain, complex, contradicting, chaotic or even “wicked” realities of the future -- domestically as well as regionally or globally. This is an urgent national and ummatic task because we believe the roadmaps and strategic planning blueprints, painstakingly produced in the last two decades, may have been rendered obsolete or irrelevant by the COVID-19 global “*tsunami*” and its disruptive repercussions in human societies.

On the positive side, the tragedy of COVID-19 should be viewed as a powerful wake-up call for humanity and the Muslim countries to seriously reconsider the conventional paradigms of national development and models of civilisational progress. For Muslim nation-states, the pandemic opens up a rare opportunity to finally abandon the culture of aping or unmindful adoption of the secular Western models of “progress”, “development”, “modernity” and “happiness”.

Muslim nation-states ought to understand, revitalise and adopt the traditional and God-given paradigm of holistic human and environmental development as well as the path of *al-falāḥ* (true wellbeing, success, prosperity and happiness) which will prevent them from being seduced by the materialistic deceptions (*ghurūr*) of sensate cultures and profane lifestyles (*matā` al-ḥayāh al-dunyā*) which Allah S.W.T., The Creator and Compassionate Master-Sustainer, has been warning against in many verses of the Qur'an. (Q. *al-An`ām* 6:70, 130; *al-A`rāf* 7: 51; *Luqmān* 31: 33; *Fāṭir* 35: 5; *al-Ḥadīd* 57: 20; *Āl-`Imrān* 3: 197).

COVID-19 pandemic should compel Muslim leaders and educated elites to look for new ways of cooperating with fellow Muslim countries as

well as with the rest of the world in the spirit of spreading *Raḥmatan li'l-`Ālamīn* (Mercy to all the worlds including mankind, in Q.*al-Anbiyā'* 21:107). At the same time they need to be reminded not to continue to become blind followers of Western or East Asian models of development or national progress simply because of their materialistic success, scientific, medical and technological advancements. Our Compassionate Master-Sustainer has given the following advice to all the Believers:

And never turn your eyes [with longing] towards whatever splendour of this world's life We may have allowed so many others to enjoy in order that We might test them thereby: for the sustenance which thy Sustainer provides [for you] is better and more enduring. (Q. Ṭā Hā 20: 130 – 131)

Turn not your eyes [longingly] towards the worldly benefits which We have granted unto some of those [that deny the truth]. And neither grieve over those [who refuse to heed you], but spread the wings of your tenderness over the Believers. (Q. al-Hijr 15: 88).

The above verses enjoin the Believers to have the ability to distinguish between worldly progress that is morally and spiritually acceptable and those aspects of Occidental or Oriental capitalistic affluence or material advancement which are not acceptable from Islamic perspective. Adherents of Islam are also taught by the Compassionate Master-Sustainer not to be easily deceived by what is normally projected as mainstream lifestyles by those who do not believe in the ultimate accountability to the Master-Sustainer in the Hereafter, as though their so-called “progress” in this world really means progress in the worldview of the Qur’an and is acceptable to the Master-Sustainer. They may not realise that they are in fact the greatest losers (*al-akhsarūn*) from the spiritual and transcendent viewpoints. The Qur’an declares:

Say: "Shall we tell you who are the greatest losers (*al-akhsarūn*) in whatever they may do? "[It is] they whose labour has gone astray in [the pursuit of no more than] this world's life, and who none the less think that they are doing good works: It is they who have chosen to deny their Sustainer's messages and the truth that they are destined to meet Him." Hence, all their [good] deeds come to nothing, and no weight shall We assign to them on Resurrection Day (Q. *al-Kahf* 18: 103-105).

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IIUM'S VISION-2077: BACKGROUND

Inspired and motivated by our religious beliefs and convictions in; a) the worldview of *Tauḥīd* (belief in the absolute and uncompromising oneness of Allah, The One and Only God, without any intermediary nor any one or any thing sharing His essence or any of His attributes. He is not just The Creator, but The Compassionate Master-Sustainer-Judge Whose will and sovereignty embrace all aspects of human life and the Cosmos); b) the Qur'anic affirmation of the civilisational leadership roles of the universal Islamic *ummah*; and c) taking lessons from the global ummatic failures of the past 150 years, including from the failures, weaknesses and mistakes of the Muslim *ummah* in Malaysia since Independence in 1957, we decided in 2019 that IIUM as a premier international Islamic university should take the lead to envision "A New *Hijrah* (Spiritual-Ethical Migration)" of the Muslim *ummah* in Malaysia. It shall be a collective spiritual-ethical migration away from agonising historical malaise and current burdens, towards the fulfilment of the holistic leadership role which Allah, The Compassionate Master-Sustainer has placed upon the shoulders of His believing servants and the *ummah*.

Currently the Malaysian Muslim *ummah* as a whole carries with it:

2.1. The baggage of the past—in particular, a mindset of complacency, mediocrity, and dependency shaped by the deceptions (*ghurūr*) of modernity and Westernisation. It is a mindset which has been lulled by the materialistic visions of material progress and prosperity during the post-independence period of economic boom. The community as a whole has been psychologically and emotionally assured by the political dominance of Malay political masters, while the masses felt secured at the frequent display of flamboyant external symbols of traditional Malay-Muslim sovereignty. Notwithstanding the fact there have been positive developments in aspects of Islamic education, culture, politics and economic institutions, it must be admitted that the large majority of the Malay-Muslim community have not really understood the far-reaching implications of the worldview of *Tauhīd* in the lives of Muslim individuals, families, organisations, society and state.

2.2. The humiliating contemporary scenario of widespread moral corruption--of Malay political leaders and senior civil servants, coupled with the shameful intra-ethnic political divisions and conflicts within the Malay-Muslim population amidst a worrying economic downturn, while the destructive and poisonous social ills of the younger generation of Malay-Muslims continue to rise.

Therefore, we decided that we should be thinking, planning and strategising for the long-term future of the Malaysian *ummah* up to the year 2077 C.E., notwithstanding what other countries around the world may be doing towards resolving their present and future problems, with some of them planning for their future wellbeing up to the year 2050 C.E. The choice of the year 2077 for the Muslim *ummah* of Malaysia was made for **Four Principal Reasons:**

2.3. The First Reason.

By the 28th of November 2076, *in shā' Allāh*, the Muslim *ummah* in Malaysia and the whole world would enter the new 16th century *Hijriyyah* (1500 A.H.), hopefully, in a much better condition by that time or by the year 2080, six decades from today;

2.4. The Second Reason.

We feel most disillusioned with the state of the Muslim world 42 years since the advent of the 15th Islamic century in 1979. We are also distressed by the deep Malaysian socio-political crisis and the widening internal political divisions of the Muslim community. That being the case, we do not wish the Muslim *ummah* of Malaysia, if not the whole Muslim world, to repeat the major mistakes of the global *ummah* prior to the beginning of the 15th century *Hijriyyah* (i.e. in November 1979 C.E.), particularly the failure of leaders and decision makers of Muslim countries to come up with credible futuristic plans and strategies for a better condition of the *ummah* in the new century.

2.5. The Third Reason.

Looking back at the Muslim world from Morocco to Malaysia, particularly at the political and economic instabilities and military conflicts in West Asia after the Iranian Revolution of 1979, we witnessed with grave concern the destabilising factors within the body politic of the Muslim *ummah*. First of all, the Muslim world was rudely awakened by the belligerent declaration of “War on Terror” made by President George Bush Jr. followed by the vicious U.S. invasions of Iraq and Aghanistan.

The shocking 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers of New York provided the much-needed pretext—the claim that Iraq had “Weapons of Mass Destruction” turned out to be a U.S. “weapon of mass deception”, as part of a Big Lie--for the U.S. President to impose U.S.A’s hegemonic designs

on several West Asian countries while it endorsed, protected and reinforced the political and military ambitions of Israel. The brutality of Zionist unilateral expansionism supported by the U.S. government and its allies have been creating havoc upon the increasingly oppressed Palestinian communities.

The bloody and dehumanising civil-wars, proxy wars and imperial wars in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, and Yemen -- together with the political impotence of the O.I.C -- only serve to perpetuate hardships, turmoil, disillusionment, disgrace, chaos, and insane barbarities in the region. The devastation and destruction of Syria, the dismal failure of the “Arab Spring”, the hypocrisy and double standards of affluent Arab regimes and the unending socio-political conflicts and economic crises in Muslim countries have turned the Muslim-Arab world into a tragic humiliating spectacle. The assessment of the situation in that part of the world made by the well-known political analyst Marwan Bishara of Aljazeera in his recent article “Beware of the looming chaos in the Middle East: The region in 2020 is in much worse shape than in 2010” is an eye-opener:

If you thought the Middle East has hit rock bottom and may finally emerge intact from a decade of upheaval and conflict, think again. The economic, political and societal realities in the region are going from dire to horrendous, with no end in sight. They could spiral out of control towards a more violent and chaotic future with unforeseen international ramifications. The killings may have relatively subsided in some places, for now, but the wounds of war are not healing and are being exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic and its associated economic hardship. The greater Middle East is hurting far more than meets the eye. (Marwan Bishara, 3 August 2020)

If we add on to this deplorable phenomenon of Muslim disintegration and disgrace, the unending inter-ethnic and inter-sectarian violence in West Asia, the rising tide of Islamophobia in the West, India, China, Russia and a few countries in Southeast Asia, coupled with white supremacist trends and neo-Fascist xenophobic fervour against Muslim presence in Europe, the global Muslim *ummah* appears to have the worst of existential crises since the advent of the 15th century *Hijriyyah* 42 years ago.

2.6. **The Fourth Reason** is that we, in the ASEAN region, believe that more promising future scenarios of Islam and Muslims await the Muslim Southeast Asian communities of Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, Mindanao in Southern Philippines, Kampuchea, Thailand and Vietnam. Myanmar, however, is a shameful exception: we are appalled by the deplorable conditions and sufferings of the Rohingya Muslim community which has been subjected to systematic genocidal and barbaric persecution by the army, assisted by anti-Islamic militancy of a radical group of Buddhist clergy of Myanmar.

As far as Malaysia is concerned, we are realistically optimistic that Malaysia of the next six decades up to 2080 would witness a more favourable and desirable future of the Muslim *ummah*, **provided** the Muslim leaders, elites, academics and families work together from today to overcome our ummatic failures, cultural weaknesses, political divisiveness, economic woes, educational mediocrity, mindset deficits and moral shortcomings in the long run.

On our part in IIUM, we intend to produce a well thought-out plan with commendable strategies to be implemented in Phase One of Vision2077, namely from 2020-2050. Our future IIUM colleagues would take care of the future of each of the remaining three decades until IIUM reaches the year 2080 *in shā' Allāh* S.W.T. We believe Malaysia has the

human resources and spiritual-moral potentials for positive developments of the *ummah* for the next six decades, **if the *ummah* can be religiously and politically united, economically strengthened and led by the right kind of leaders.** Currently -- it must be admitted -- the political disunity, polarisation of the Malay-Muslim community and endemic corruption of many Malay political, administrative and law enforcement elites are most embarrassing and disgusting. Hence we came up in September 2019 with a long-term futuristic vision of the Malaysian Muslim *ummah* called **VISION-2077**. This six-decade long IIUM project envisages a desirable and Preferred Scenario of the Muslim *ummah* in Malaysia by the time it enters into the 16th century *Hijriyyah*.

3

THE QUR'ANIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE FUTURE

As Muslim Believers, our highest and ultimate sources of knowledge and wisdom, principles and values, norms and guidance, are the Glorious Qur'an and the Noble *Sunnah* of the Final Messenger of The Compassionate Creator-Master-Sustainer, Muḥammad (may the peace and blessings of Allah S.W.T. be upon him, his noble family and his illustrious Companions). The Qur'an praises the Prophet (S.A.W.) as the possessor of the loftiest character (*khuluq `aẓīm*) and urges all the Believers to follow and emulate his excellent character traits (*uswah ḥasanah*) in their personal, inter-personal and societal conduct:

Surely there was a good example (uswah ḥasanah) for you in the Messenger of Allah, for all those who look forward to Allah and the Last Day and remember Allah much (Q.al-Ahzāb 33: 21).

We also regard his exemplary religio-political leadership and the new multi-religious city-state of *al-Madīnah* under his wise, ethical and just rule as the best examples of leadership, governance and statecraft for people

to emulate. For us Believers, it is the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* that we accept as the highest and infallible authorities in our lives. They are also the highest and most authoritative references from where we get divinely-revealed knowledge and truths about Allah S.W.T. and *Tāghūt* (false god), Reality and Illusion, Truth (*al-Ḥaqq*) and Falsehood (*al-Bāṭil*), Good (*al-Khair*) and Evil (*al-Sharr*), True Success (*al-Falāḥ*) and True Failure (*al-Khusrān*), and True Righteousness and Improvement (*al-Ṣalāḥ, al-Iṣlāḥ*) and True Corruption and Decadence (*al-Fasād*). It is the Word of The Creator, al-Qur'an, which gives us the true and correct knowledge about the origin and nature of the Cosmos that He created; the conception, origin and nature of human beings--not as products of natural selection or as an accident of nature, but as the direct creation of The Creator; the purpose of human life and existence; the struggle between proponents of Truth and proponents of Falsehood, between adherents of *Tauḥīd* and adherents of *Kufr* (assisted by adherents of Polytheism (*Shirk*) and Hypocrisy (*Nifāq*), and between Partisans (*Ḥizb*) of Allah S.W.T. and Partisans (*Ḥizb*) of Satan; the meaning and goal of human life; and the conception of true religion and false religion. We believe and accept wholeheartedly the divinely-revealed knowledge of the Compassionate Master-Sustainer that:

3.1. Human beings have been and are created by Him as essentially spiritual-ethical (or theo-centric) beings—although their physical forms were created from earthly substances—and they are His servants (*ʿibādu'Llāh*) endowed with intuitive, contemplative, affective and cognitive faculties. As the best of the creation of the Compassionate Master-Sustainer, humans are given the divine trust (*amānah*) and limited free-will to be His vicegerents (*khulafā'* sing. *khalīfah*) on His Earth in order to serve Him and to responsibly cultivate, utilise and develop—according to

the concept of *istikhlāf* (stewardship)--the natural resources for the betterment of human societies with the spirit of gratitude (*shukr*) to the Benevolent Sustainer and Provider.

They also carry the responsibility of *da`wah*, i.e. to preach, establish and spread by peaceful and non-coercive ways, the religion of *Islām* throughout the world as a comprehensive way of life, while constructing and developing a God-oriented and virtuous civilisation (*ḥaḍārah ṣāliḥah*). This city-based civilisation is modelled upon the Prophetic city-state of *al-Madīnah* in which governance and public administration were based on and integrated with Islamic religious and ethical principles, values and norms. An Islamic civilisation, like Islamic culture, is built upon the foundation of the twin and interconnected branches of knowledge: a) divinely-revealed knowledge (*`ulūm al-dīn /`ulūm naqliyyah /`ulūm shar`iyyah*) which address the needs and issues of theology, jurisprudence, law and order and ethics, including the understanding of ultimate purposes and ends of human life; and b) acquired human knowledge (*`ulūm muktasabah /`ulūm `aqliyyah /ulum ghair shar`iyyah*) derived from logical-rational thinking, scientific studies, experimentations, analyses and discoveries of the Master-Sustainer's laws and Signs in the whole universe, including useful ancient knowledge (*`ilm al-awā'il*) and wisdom (*ḥikmah*) from other civilisations, such the ancient Greek, Mesopotamian, Iranian, Indian or Chinese civilisations.

3.2. Human beings are designed by the Creator-Master-Sustainer to exist and live in two continuous phases, one while on planet Earth which is a short and temporary period of this-worldly existence (*al-Dunyā*), but in which they will be tested by the unseen Master-Sustainer as to how they act, work and behave -- either in obedience to His commandments and following His Way, or in disobedience or defiance of His commandments

while following their own desire (*hawā*) independent thought, imaginations or conjectures (sing. *ẓann*).

The second and final phase known as ***al-`Ākhirah*** (the Hereafter) is an everlasting abode, an abode not of labour or work (*`amal*) but of results (*dāru'n-natījah*) in which human beings will be shown by their Master-Sustainer the ultimate results of their actions in the *Dunyā* (*dāru'l-`amal*) phase, including the trials (*balā'*, *ibtīlā'*) and tribulations they went through in the temporal phase. As a consequence of their beliefs, conduct, work and actions on this Earth, human beings will be judged by the Compassionate Master-Sustainer on the Day of Judgement, and will be rewarded for their righteous deeds or punished for their evil deeds. The former group will live forever in true happiness and felicity in Paradise being blessed with the good pleasure (*riḍwān*) of the Compassionate Master-Sustainer, while the latter group will experience different degrees of pain, shame and suffering in Hell with different periods and types of retribution.

It should not be forgotten that Believers are urged by the Compassionate Master-Sustainer to always strive for human and environmental betterment (*iṣlāḥ*), to bring about positive individual and social changes **so that they could achieve goodness-wellbeing (*ḥasanah*) in this world and goodness-wellbeing (*ḥasanah*) in the Hereafter**. They are being told in the Qur'an thus:

...Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. And when Allah intends for a people ill, there is no repelling it. And there is not for them besides Him any patron (Q. al-Ra`d 13: 11).

That is because Allah would not change a favor which He had bestowed upon a people until they change what is within themselves. And indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing (Q. al-Anfāl 8: 53).

The positive changes brought about by Muslim individuals, organisations or societies in this world, in accordance with the ultimate objectives of the *Sharī`ah* (*maqāṣid al-sharī`ah*) are absolutely necessary for the Believers to avert falling into the abyss of true loss, indignity, misery and suffering (*al-khusrān*) and deceptions (*ghurūr*) of Satan, to achieve, instead, ultimate and true success, happiness, wellbeing, peace and prosperity (*al-falāḥ*).

For Believers the ultimate and final future in the **Ākhirah** -- contrary to what the secularists, agnostics, materialists, atheists, post-modernists or secular humanists believe in -- is the most important **future** of their lives because; a) in this phase they will be able to witness and experience without any delusions or deceptions (as in the earthly existence) the real and final results and consequences of their earthly actions and behaviour; b) its permanent unveiling of transcendent realities particularly of the true nature of human beings as highly privileged creation of Divinity with the highest spiritual capacity and, more importantly, the unveiling of the true nature of the Compassionate Master-Sustainer as The One and Only God and Absolute Master manifesting His Beauty, Majesty, Justice, Sovereignty and Mercy. All the false perceptions, worldviews, philosophies, beliefs, knowledge, conjectures or promises which human beings used to accept as true or right in the life of *al-Dunyā* will be exposed by the Compassionate Master-Sustainer in the future of the Hereafter. To the Believers, it is the Ultimate Reality in the Hereafter that matters most and that which they look forward to while they were existing in the temporal reality of *al-Dunyā*. Yet they did not neglect their

comprehensive worldly responsibilities for they know that it is the proper fulfilment of those *'ubūdiyyah* (service to God), *khilāfah* (vicegerency) and *'umrān* (civilisational development) responsibilities which would put them in the state of ultimate wellbeing in the Hereafter:

But seek, through those [bounties and provisions] which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters." (Q. al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 77).

3.3. As far as human history is concerned, the Qur'an repeatedly stresses the point that the most significant and determinant aspect from divine perspective is the extent to which human beings and communities follow and obey the teachings of His human Messengers, the most important being the message and worldview of *Tauḥīd* as opposed to those of *Kufr* (Disbelief), *Shirk* (Polytheism) and *Nifāq* (Hypocrisy). True human progress or regress, advancement or degeneration, are measured not by the criteria of materialistic, technological or scientific achievements but by assessing the nature of their belief in Allah S.W.T., obedience to His laws and His Messengers, and their *taqwā* (profound consciousness of the presence and will of Allah S.W.T., being afraid of His wrath or punishment and wanting to gain His pleasure), their ethical conduct and their spiritual proximity to Him. The Qur'an narrates several accounts of thriving ancient civilisations and communities which arrogantly and defiantly rejected the divine messages and warnings given by the human Messengers. All of them were finally destroyed by Allah S.W.T. by various ways, and He has urged human beings to travel in the earth to see the fate and ruins of those defiant disbelievers and rebellious communities, and take spiritual-moral lessons from the violent ends of human history (Q. *Āl 'Imrān* 137, *al-An`ām* 6:11, *al-Naḥl* 16: 36, *al-Naml* 27: 69).

3.3.a) Muslim communities should contemplate or reflect upon the destruction at the end of the world and of the whole Cosmos, for the Qur'an repeatedly relates those cataclysmic events with stark and graphic descriptions. There will be signals regarding the advent of the Day of Resurrection (*Yaum al-Qiyāmah*) which will be the beginning of the Hereafter (*Yaum al-Ākhirah*), the final destiny and ultimate future of mankind. As for the true and highly committed Believers, they have been labouring and struggling in their earthly sojourn against the external forces of Disbelief, Polytheism, Hypocrisy, Satanic impulses, and worldly Deceptions on the one hand, and against the internal spiritual diseases of desire, lust, sensuality and self-centredness on the other hand. Holding fast to the teachings of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, the true Believers -- driven by their devotion to, and love of the Compassionate Master-Sustainer and His Final Messenger (S.A.W.) -- aspire to live the permanent life of *al-falāḥ* (true wellbeing, success, peace and happiness) in the Paradise of ultimate bliss, which would be complemented with the privilege of gazing upon the infinite Beauty of the Countenance of the Compassionate Master-Sustainer.

4

THE NECESSITY FOR PLANNING THE FUTURE OF THE *UMMAH*

In light of the external and internal challenges and various obstacles to be overcome on the path leading to Paradise and the good pleasure of the Master-Sustainer, and following the excellent example of prophetic planning and strategising for the first *Hijrah* from Makkah to Yathrib, in yearning for the "good life" (*ḥayāh ṭayyibah*, in Q. *al-Nahl* 16: 97) in this

world and “the supreme triumph” (*al-fauz al-a`zīm*, mentioned in 14 verses of the Qur’an) in the Hereafter, set by Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and his noble Companions (may Allah S.W.T. be pleased with them all), the careful planning for realising preferable Muslim futures by the Believers becomes an urgent and necessary task of all Muslim nations, including Malaysia, for several reasons which we shall outline below.

4.1. The First Reason

The Muslim *ummah* (universal religious community or nation of Islam), in particular the first generation of Muslims under the God-fearing and virtuous leadership of the Prophet (s.a.w), was regarded by the Compassionate Master-Sustainer as being “**The Best Community brought forth for mankind**,” as long as it carried out the heavy spiritual-moral responsibility of a) “**Commanding that which is *Ma`rūf*** (right, good, agreeable, beneficial), b) **Forbidding that which is *Munkar*** (wrong, bad, reprehensible, harmful), and c) **Having strong faith in Allah**”. To sustain this divinely-conferred honour of being “The Best Community”, Muslim communities and states around the world are duty bound to fulfil those three fundamental conditions of commanding ***al-Ma`rūf***, prohibiting ***al-Munkar***, and having strong faith in Allah (S.W.T) in the true sense of the word (Q. *Āl `Imrān* 3: 110). These are very challenging responsibilities especially in this era of **Global *Fasād*** (widespread moral decay, oppression, exploitation, injustices, fraud and corruption: Q. *Al-Rūm* 30: 41). In another verse of the Qur’an, Allah the Compassionate Master-Sustainer makes a momentous declaration concerning the foremost responsibility and primary characteristic of the Muslim *ummah* which no Believer can afford to take lightly. Allah S.W.T. declares (in translation):

*Thus We have made you [community of real Believers of Islam] a Just and Best Nation/Community, (**Ummatan Wasaṭan**) so that [with your personalities and lives] you be Witnesses (**Shuhadā'**) over mankind and the Messenger [Muḥammad] be a witness (**Shahīdan**) over you....(Q. al-Baqarah 2: 143).*

This verse is extremely important for all Muslims to reflect upon, understand and practise, because it means: a) that the Muslim community has been appointed by its Creator-Master-Sustainer, Allah S.W.T. as a community/nation with **the characteristic** (*khaṣṣah*) of **Wasaṭiyyah** (consisting of the integrated attributes of Justice (**`Adl**), Excellence or Being the Best (**Khairiyyah**) and Balance (**Tawāzun** or **i`tidāl**, or **tawassuṭ** -- between all forms of excess or extravagance (**ifrāṭ**) and deficiency or laxity (**tafrīṭ**), and b) the Muslim community has been charged with the global leadership responsibility as **Witnesses** over the whole mankind, while Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was appointed as a **Witness** over the Muslim community.

Before discussing the responsibility of witnessing, we need to emphasise that the characteristic of **Wasaṭiyyah** has to be actualised by the community of Believers -- to the best of their abilities -- in the future development of Muslim communities and states. At least the Believers have to be nurtured and trained to become the foremost representatives, upholders and defenders of the moral ideals of Justice, Goodness/Best Community and Balance which is manifested in maintaining a middle or moderate position between two extremes, what more in multi-religious and multi-ethnic societies such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Turkey, Nigeria or South Africa. Believers need to know that those **Wasaṭiyyah** ideals were successfully translated into societal realities by Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and his Noble Companions (may Allah S.W.T. be pleased with

them all) as Allah S.W.T. had confirmed the prophetic and *ummatic* success in the life of the Prophet (s.a.w.) as indicated by the relevant verses of the Qur'an.

Unfortunately the global Muslim community in the 20th Century C.E. and in the last two decades of the 21st Century (or the last 42 years of the 15th Century A.H.) have failed in actualising any of the principal characteristics or in fulfilling the major moral responsibilities of *al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf* and *al-nahy `an al-munkar*. However, we should be optimistic because at the level of individuals, families, organisations and institutions, there have been and there are reliable evidences to show that small groups of Muslims in several Muslim countries have attained success in upholding the principles of **Justice, Goodness and Balance or religiously ordained moderation or the golden mean position in most affairs.**

Given the widespread misperception among Muslims and non-Muslims around the world and in Malaysia, that *Wasatiyyah* essentially means “religious moderation” --- to emphasise Islam’s rejection and abhorrence of religious extremism — and nothing more, it is imperative that Muslim political, economic, bureaucratic, educational, religious and civil society leaders, decision-makers, institutions, parents and individual Believers understand the true meaning of *Ummah Wasat* as a Community of Justice, Goodness and Balance as explained by the classical commentators of the Qur'an and the writings of Dr. Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, and not to forget that the divinely-ordained purpose of becoming the *Ummah Wasat*, is “in order that you become **Witnesses** over mankind....”

Thus our planning for the preferred future scenario of the Malaysian Muslim ummah by 2077 has to be understood and crafted

as a long-term preparation and development of the Muslim community a) to fulfil the divinely-endowed *Wasaṭiyyah* and Best Community characteristics as best as we can, and b) to carry out the civilisational role and responsibility of becoming JUST WITNESSES over mankind, after meeting the conditionality of Justice, Goodness/Spiritual-Moral Excellence, and Balance (with its diverse manifestations of maintaining a moderate or middle position) in this world so that on the Day of Judgement, the Muslim ummah could step forward as a whole with confidence when called upon by Allah S.W.T. to testify regarding the reaction of non-Muḥammadan communities or nations to their respective Messengers. (see the commentaries of al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Kathīr, etc.)

In elaborating the meaning of ***Wasaṭiyyah***, Shaikh Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī -- popularly regarded by Sunni Muslim scholars as “*Shaikh al-Wasaṭiyyah*” and the “Leader of *Wasaṭiyyah* Trends” -- explains that *al-Wasaṭiyyah* is also manifested through ***al-Amn*** (peace, safety and security), ***al-Quwwah*** (strength, power, capability), and ***al-Waḥdah*** (unity, solidarity) (al-Qaraḍāwī 1977: 121-124). His elaboration on the Islamic characteristic of Balance (*al-Tawāzun*) as manifested in the Islamic creed, worship proper, morality and law, including the *maqāṣid al-sharʿah*, is most illuminating.

The divinely-commissioned responsibility of the Muslim communities all over the world requires proper and professional planning in the area of establishing a moral and virtuous Muslim society, whose leaders know what policies and projects to be prioritised in the socio-economic development and growth which are inclusivistic and equitable.

4.2. The Second Reason

The message of Islam is to be spread peacefully to all mankind as a ***Raḥmatan li'l-`Ālamīn*** (“a mercy to all mankind and all the worlds” in Q. *al-Anbiyā'* 21: 107), so that after they have encountered Muslims of good and praiseworthy character, or “tasted” the different appealing flavours of merciful and compassionate attributes of Islam, eventually this religion of Allah S.W.T. would be the main religion and way of life of the majority of human beings (Q. *al-Şaff* 61: 9). This is a formidable challenge to Islamic *da`wah* efforts of the future, particularly to its non-verbal manifestations (*lisānu'l-ḥāli*) of humanistic compassion (***insāniyyat'ul-Islām***), humility and simplicity.

4.3. The Third Reason

The Qur'an is full of reminders to the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah S.W.T. be upon them all) and the Believers that they would find that most of mankind are ungratefull (*aktharu'n-nās lā yashkurūn*) to the Compassionate Master-Sustainer and most of them are unwilling to accept the teachings of *Tauḥīd* and the implications of believing in the absolute and uncompromising monotheism of Islam. This challenge requires that the planning or futures strategic thinking gives attention to improving the quality and relevancy of Islamic intellectual discourse and inter-faith dialogues. The production of future *dā`is* has to give emphasis to the acquisition of relevant languages, competencies and skills.

4.4. The Fourth Reason

The Qur'an regards *Kufr* (Disbelief) and *Shirk* (polytheism) as two ideological forces which are united in opposing the spread and impact of Islam, so that the Muslim community and Believers have to be prepared intellectually, spiritually, politically, materially and collectively against the encroachments or influences of those two allied forces. Those anti-Islamic alliances have challenged the spread of Islam in the past, they are also

doing it – albeit in different ways and strategies – today, and they would continue to obstruct the development and progress of Islam in the future. The existence of pseudo-Muslims or Hypocrites (*Munāfiqun*) and “Liberal Muslims” within the Muslim community and among the educated elites will also have to be addressed by the futures planning and strategising of the Believers.

4.5. The Fifth Reason

The contemporary spread of **Islamophobia** and demonic stereotyping of Muslims by the non-Muslim international media and nations in the West and the East as purveyors of religious bigotry, militancy and terrorism, together with the advent of assertive neo-atheism and evangelical Zionist Christian movements in the West, have succeeded in framing Islam and Muslims as anti-democratic misfits in the world of secular modernity, technocratic advancement and liberal democracy.

4.6. The Sixth Reason

The Muslim nations and societies are in dire need of internal spiritual-moral reform and socio-cultural transformation before they can play the leadership roles as intended by the Compassionate Master-Sustainer.

4.7. The Seventh Reason

There is an urgent need to produce a new breed of Islamic leaders who are sincerely committed to the implementation of the holistic and comprehensive Islamic way of life by their internalisation of and steadfastness to the principles of professional excellence, high moral integrity, piety and profound consciousness of their accountability to the Compassionate Master-Sustainer, honesty, trustworthiness, humility,

selflessness, and putting the interest and welfare of the people and the community above personal interests.

4.8. The Eighth Reason

This is a reason specific to the Malaysian context and the intellectual and civilisational leadership role of an international Islamic university such as the IIUM. As an international university with many students, scholars and intellectuals from different Muslim countries, IIUM has to play a leading role in bringing about the necessary societal transformations in Malaysia, in line with its vision, mission, philosophy and objectives. It was born in 1983, a few years after the advent of the 15th Century A.H. and has witnessed the dismal failures and weaknesses of the Muslim *ummah* throughout the last 42 years since 1979. IIUM has shown its capability to become a leading Islamic institution in the world today to address the needs of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Southeast Asia and has been awarded the first position in the Green Gown University international competition for 2020. Its religious responsibility to work towards a better future of the Muslim *ummah* in Malaysia, which funded and nurtured its development and progress since its establishment in 1983 takes precedence over its humanistic obligations to United Nations's organisations or agenda, including Agenda 2030.

The fulfilment of these holistic ummatic leadership ideals, no doubt, requires a major revamp of the Muslim religious as well as worldly education in many Muslim countries. The educational plans of the future Muslim communities will have to address, among other things, the necessity of restoring and revitalising Islamic spiritual-ethical education of the new generation of Muslims as the integrated core of the curriculum, while the production of a new type of Muslim teachers and educationists who are

competent, professionally and spiritually, to implement the transformed curriculum will have to be given serious attention.

Keeping in mind that the future wellbeing of the Muslims as individuals and the Muslim *ummah* in the Hereafter is dependent on, and consequential to, the wellbeing achieved in this temporal world of *al-Dunyā*, the planning for the future of the Muslim *ummah* in this world must be conceived as the necessary preparation for the attainment of *al-falāḥ* in the Hereafter. To this end the Believers do not need to follow the mainstream models or paradigms of futures planning of the Disbelievers or the secularists and the atheists. They have been given the true Guidance and the best Model to be implemented in this temporal phase of their existence by the Compassionate Master-Sustainer Himself.

4.9. The Ninth Reason

We strongly believe and trust in the promises and reminders of Allah S.W.T. in the Qur'an. Some of the relevant verses are as follows:

1. *You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in your personal selves, and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allah, but if you **persevere patiently**, and become **al-Muttaqūn** (the pious) then verily, that will be a determining factor in all affairs, and that is from the great matters (which you must hold on with all your efforts) (Q. Āli `Imrān, 3: 186).*
2. *If a good befalls you, it grieves them, but if some evil overtakes you, they rejoice at it. But if you remain **patient** and become **al-Muttaqūn** (the pious), not the least harm will their cunning do to you. Surely, Allah surrounds all that they do" (Q. Āli `Imrān, 3: 120).*
3. *Or you think that you will enter Paradise without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger*

and those who believed along with him said, 'When (will come) the Help of Allah?' Yes! Certainly, the Help of Allah is near! (Q. al-Baqarah, 2:214).

4. *Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present leaders) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Fāsiqūn (rebellious and disobedient to Allah) (Q. al-Nūr, 24: 55).*

Commenting on the above Qur'anic verse, *Imām al-Hāfidh Ibn Kathīr* said:

This is a promise from Allah to His Messenger (s.a.w.) that He will cause his Ummah to gain authority in the land, i.e., become leaders of people and rulers over them, and by means of them the people's affairs will be put right and the people will submit to their rule, and after having being afraid of the people, they will enjoy security and will rule over them. And He, may He be glorified and exalted, did indeed do that, may He be praised. The Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) did not die until Allah enabled him to conquer Makkah, Khaibar, Bahrain, the entire Arabian Peninsula and all of the land of Yemen; he took the jizyah from the Magians of Hajar and from some of the border regions of greater Syria. Heraclius, the ruler of Byzantium, exchanged gifts with him, as did the ruler of Egypt and Alexandria, al-Muqawqis, the kings of Oman, and the Negus, the ruler of Abyssinia, who came to the throne after Ashamah, may Allah have mercy on him and honour him. Then when the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.) died, and Allah chose for him that which is with Him of honour, Abu Bakr al-Siddīq became the leader (Caliph) of the Muslims (See *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, volume 6 page 77).

5. *Those (Muslim leaders) who, if We give them power in the land, (they) order for Iqāmatu's-Ṣalāh. (i.e. to establish performance of the five compulsory congregational Ṣalāh (prayers), to pay the Zakāh and they enjoin al-Ma`rūf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all the good things that Islam enjoins or commands Muslims to do), and forbid al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam has forbidden). And with Allah rests the end of (all) matters (of creatures) (Q al-Ḥajj, 22: 41).*

6. *O you who believe! If you help (in the cause of) Allah, He will help you, and make your foothold firm. But those who disbelieve (in the Oneness of Allah or Islamic Monotheism), for them is destruction, and (Allah) will make their deeds vain (Q. Muḥammad, 47: 7, 8).*
7. *Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him) (Q. Āli `Imrān, 3:159).*
8. *And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war to threaten the enemies of Allah and your enemies, and others besides whom you may not know but whom Allah does know. And whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allah shall be repaid unto you, and you shall not be treated unjustly (Q. al-Anfāl, 8: 60).*
9. *And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright (Q. al-Baqarah, 2:186).*
10. *And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (Peace be upon him), fears Allah, and keeps his duty (to Him), such are the successful ones (Q. al-Nūr, 24: 52).*
11. *And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart, and be patient. Surely, Allah is with those who are al-Ṣābirīn (the patient ones, etc.) (Q. al-Anfāl, 8: 46).*
12. *O you who believe! Endure and be more patient (than your enemy), and guard your territory by stationing army units permanently at the places from where the enemy can attack you, and fear Allah, so that you may be successful (Q. Āli `Imrān, 3: 200)*
13. *Verily, those who disbelieve spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the Path of Allah, and so will they continue to spend it; but in the end it will become an anguish for them. Then they will be overcome. And those who disbelieve will be gathered unto Hell (Q. al-Anfāl 8: 36)*

14. *They (enemies) want to extinguish Allah's Light (with which Muhammad (s.a.w.) has been sent – Islamic Monotheism) with their mouths, but Allah will not allow except that His Light should be perfected even though the disbelievers hate (it) (Q. al-Taubah 9: 32).*
15. *They intend to put out the Light of Allah (i.e. the religion of Islam, this Qur'an, and Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.) with their mouths. But Allah will complete His Light even though the disbelievers hate (it) (Q. al-Şaff, 8).*

(Source: Murtadha Gusau, 2019)

5

THE VISION OF 2077 IS DERIVED FROM THE CLEAR INJUNCTIONS AND DECREES OF ALLAH S.W.T. IN THE QUR'AN

- 5. a) *Ummah Wasaʿt (Ummah of Justice, Excellence and Balance between Laxity and Extravagance to become Witnesses unto mankind,***
- 5. b) *Khair Ummah (the Best Community) brought forth for mankind, inviting (da`wah) to all that is Good and True, and Carrying out the Responsibility of al-Amr bi'l-Ma`rūf wa'n-Nahy `an al-munkar,***
- 5. c) *Pursuing Holistic Development and Progress in accordance with the Sharī`ah and its Maqāşid,***
- 5.d) *Implementing the Message of Islam in accordance with the Prophetic Method of Raḥmatan Li'l-`Ālamīn, and***
- 5. e) *Trusting in all the Promises and Warnings of the Compassionate Master-Sustainer***

We wish to make it clear that as Muslim academics and administrators in an Islamic university, we subscribe to the Qur'anic worldview of *Tauḥīd* (affirmation of the absolute oneness, comprehensive

sovereignty, active and absolute Lordship of Allah SWT over all His creation, including mankind) and we acknowledge the impact of this worldview in all aspects of our lives as His obedient servants.

As His vicegerents (*Khulafā'*) on Earth and as His Believers (*Mu'minūn*), we are to strive as a single Community of Believers to the best of our ability to cultivate the earth and utilise all the God-given bounties in establishing a complete and virtuous way of life and holistic civilisation for the benefit of all mankind as it is aimed at achieving goodness-wellbeing (*ḥasanah*) in this world and goodness-wellbeing (*ḥasanah*) in the Hereafter.

Islam teaches us that our life in this mundane world, though temporary, is a very important and necessary phase of human existence which has to be lived in accordance with the divinely-prescribed Way (*Sharī'ah*) or Allah's Straight Path (*al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*) as exemplified and demonstrated by Allah's Final Messenger, the Noble Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

The Believers' struggle to follow the Divinely-prescribed Way is bound to be met with opposition or resistance from those who refused to believe in the worldview of *Tauḥīd* and by the deceptions of Satanic forces operating within the inner recesses of the Believers' soul. But if the Believers' faith in the Compassionate Master-Sustainer and conviction in the Hereafter are strengthened by taqwa and the diseases of the spiritual heart could be overcome by the process of spiritual warfare (*mujāhadah al-nafs*), their life of good deeds and virtuous actions in this transient phase of existence would lead them to wellbeing and happiness in the Hereafter after their death.

This blessed goal of permanent bliss in Paradise is achieved by obeying and following the teachings of the Qur'an as exemplified by the

Sunnah of His Final Messenger, Muhammad (s.a.w). To the true Believers it is the future of ultimate wellbeing and true happiness in eternal life with divine pleasure (*riḍwān*) that they are looking forward to. That ultimate goal is not to be achieved by renouncing the world or by abandoning worldly and societal responsibilities. On the contrary, the *Ummah* of Believers has to fulfil its active stewardship (*khilāfah*) and leadership (*imāmah*) role of developing and nurturing the world and human civilisation, to be constructed on the foundations of revealed religious knowledge as **ends** and the scientific knowledge of the secrets of nature (as “signs” of Allah) which would be ethically utilised and competently harnessed as **means** for the proper advancement and holistic progress of human and environmental wellbeing, in conformity with the ***maqāṣid al-sharī`ah***, the Qur’anic vision of the good life (***hayāh ṭayyibah***) and the vision of “A good country with a Forgiving Lord” (***baldah ṭayyibah wa rabbun ghafūr***) as mentioned in *Sūrah Saba’* 34 : 15.

6

INPUT FROM FUTURES STUDIES

In crafting this long-term vision which cuts across a time horizon of six decades – from 2020 until 2080 -- we also benefitted from an exposure to the literature on futures planning from the works of Ziauddin Sardar (*et al*), in particular *Muslim Societies in Postnormal Times: Foresight for trends, Emerging Issues and Scenarios* (2019) and those of Sohail Inayatullah particularly his *What Works: Case Studies in the Practice of Foresight* (2015). We benefit from and are enlightened by some of the important futures concepts and methods discussed in the above works, particularly the 19 trends discussed in detail in Ziauddin’s (*et al*) book (2019). The authors’ analysis of contemporary **TRENDS**, their exploration of **EMERGING ISSUES**, and their development of three different

SCENARIOS, (i. **extended present scenarios**, ii. **familiar futures scenarios**, iii. **unthought futures scenarios**) help us to navigate our own preferred futures for the Muslim *ummah* in Malaysia by 2077. We learn from Dr. Sohail's book on *What Works* (2015) that

the "**fifth scenario technique** has four dimensions: **THE PREFERRED**, the world we want; **THE DISOWNED**, the world that we reject or are unable to negotiate; **THE INTEGRATED**, where owned and disowned are united in a complex fashion; and last is **THE OUTLIER**, the future outside of these categories (Sohail Inayatullah 2017) [highlighted and capitalised by the present writer].

However, for us Muslim Believers, the worldly future is the future that has been ordained and commanded by the Compassionate Master-Sustainer Himself for the Islamic *Ummah* to work towards. We have to mention that by following the guidance and commandments of Allah S.W.T regarding the future vision of the universal Islamic *Ummah*, our philosophical assumptions and conceptualisation of **the past, the present and the future** are different from the theories or conceptions of mainstream futures studies. Let us point out some of our major observations regarding mainstream futures studies.

6.1. The existing futures studies do not go beyond the scope of human life and society on earth which end with physical death, while their perceptions of the future are confined to the life of mankind on planet Earth and anchored only to the temporal world. The future of mankind will end with the destruction or the end – if there is going to be an end -- of the universe in the distant future. There is no conception of life beyond this world of tangible realities or human life after death or the concept of the Hereafter in which human life continues forever in a different form.

6.2. In the secular, naturalistic, humanistic, empirical, materialistic, atheistic or postmodernistic worldviews, ontologies and cosmologies, the Transcendent Order or Power does not exist, and the notion of God as the Living and Active Controller, Master, Sustainer, Owner and Judge of mankind Who rules the whole Cosmos by His will, purpose, power and wisdom is not taken into account in futures thinking or planning. If at all the idea of God is acceptable in some of the existing worldviews, His role is confined only to being the creator of the universe, after which the world is left to operate by itself and human beings run the show without interference of the Creator.

6.3. In the worldview of the Qur'an, The One True God, Allah S.W.T. is not only the Creator of man and the whole Cosmos; He is The Only Owner, The Only Sustainer and the Only Judge of mankind. Not only does He manage the sustainability of the Cosmos and controls all that exists, He also intervenes in human history, giving His blessings, support and protection to His righteous servants and His other creations as the occasion requires. He has made human existence and life on earth as a transitory period of trial (*ibtilā'*) for human beings as His vicegerents on earth to cultivate and establish a civilisation based on His guidances and commandments. Human life, however, does not end upon death; it continues in a different form in the Hereafter.

Having formed 13 IIUM scenario-planning cum research clusters, our futuristic planning, forecasting, foresight, scenario planning and creative imaginations – at micro levels -- would benefit from the recent books of futures studies experts, but at macro levels we are going to be guided by the above-mentioned vision, mission, goals and objectives of

the universal Islamic *Ummah* as provided by The Creator-Master-Sustainer, Allah S.W.T. in His *al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. Therefore as His Believers, we need to fulfil the permanent Qur'anic **Vision** of a) the **Best Ummah** (*Khair Ummah*) produced for mankind, based upon the Principles of Justice, Spiritual-Moral Excellence and Balance as b) the **Middle-Most Community** (*Ummah Wasaṭ*) in order to become Witnesses for Mankind (*Shuhadā' `ala'n-Nās*). Its **Mission** is Calling People to Goodness (*yad`una ila'l-khair*), Enjoining all that is Right and Virtuous, Prohibiting all that is Wrong, Bad, Unjust, Disapproved and Reprehensible. This noble and divinely prescribed mission shall be operationalised and manifested in light of the Prophetic **Method** of “*Wa mā arsalnāka illa Raḥmatan li'l-`Ālamīn.*” (“We have not sent you [O Muhammad] except as a Mercy to all the worlds”

In accordance with the guidance, vision and mission that Allah S.W.T. has given to the Universal *Ummah*, we would certainly hope that the developmental and civilisational growth and progress of the Malaysian Muslim *ummaḥ* in Malaysia and abroad -- all the way to 2077 and beyond -- shall be in harmony with various means towards achieving the society and civilisation of holistic *sejahtera* or *al-falāḥ* and avoiding the misfortunes and miseries of holistic *sengsara* or *al-khusrān* as we have discussed in detail above.

7

THE FOUR SCENARIOS OF THE FUTURE MALAYSIAN MUSLIM UMMAH

6.1. The Disowned Scenario (Least Preferred Scenario): *The Ifrāṭ quality of Muslim Future. This is the Ummah of Malay-Muslim Fundamentalism/Exclusivism/Fanaticism.*

(The Metaphor: “*The Wounded Tiger vs. The Arrogant Dragon and The Aggressive Elephant*”)

This is a scenario of a Malay-Muslim *ummah* dominated by fanatical and fundamentalist religious and political leadership. There is prolonged political and/or inter-religious conflict between Muslim religio-political extremists on the one hand and radical non-Muslim minorities of Chinese, Indian and Indigenous origins on the other hand.

This scenario develops as a reaction to persistent provocations on the part of non-Muslim ethnic or religious extremists. The rise and expansion of Communist China’s geo-political designs in Malaysian economy, politics, media, education, culture, from 2030 onwards led to the growth of pro-China fanatical sentiments, behaviour and public provocative postures. The radical Muslim movements in Asia oppose this new emerging trends by galvanising and gathering Malaysian Muslim NGOs, youth organisations to gain dominance over the Muslim masses. Eventually the mainstream Muslim-Malay community comes under the dominance of Muslim fundamentalism, fanaticism and militancy. The Muslim extremist response is a sign of their ethno-religious protest against the menacing manouvers of the increasingly arrogant “Dragons from China” as well as against the more vocal and more openly-hostile behaviour of fanatical pro-India groups. The anti-Islamic elements of the Indigenous people of Sabah and Sarawak join hands with Chino-Indian extremist groups. A very politically unstable state of affairs which demonstrates the utter failure of national integration dominate the national scene.

6.2. The Liberal-Dominant Scenario (Not Preferred Scenario, but more tolerable than the Disowned Scenario): *The Tafrīṭ Muslim Future.* This is a Muslim Malaysian *ummah* under the dominance and influence of multi-ethnic Muslim Liberalism.

(The Metaphor: “*The Toothless Laughing Tiger*”)

This is the scenario of a Malaysian Muslim *ummah* which is a postnormal community in which the **liberal and secular-oriented** elites, intellectuals, power-holders, media leaders cooperate to suppress the influence of traditional Sunni orthodoxy backed by the Sultans and the King.

The weak and divided Muslim *ummah* exists in a Malaysian state of relative prosperity and non-violent inter-ethnic tension. This scenario has been programmed by the secular forces in the West and in the Orient. The Sunni religious elites are being isolated and marginalised because the Liberal and secular-oriented Muslim groups have been able to control the media, ICT, sports and the entertainment industry and they are being financed by affluent domestic and foreign corporations.

6.3. The Outlier Scenario (Most Unacceptable Scenario/The Unthought Scenario): *The Mustaq`afūn Muslim Future.* This is the *ummah* of very weak and very divided Malay society.

(The Metaphor: “*The Wounded Tiger in The Zoo*”)

This is the scenario of a weak and divided *ummah* under the political domination of non-Muslim minorities backed by Zionist Christian forces around the world, Christian Evangelical Movements in the U.S., and global LGBTQ movements. There is a strong influence of Communist China and Hinduism-dominant India, secular Singapore, Catholic

Philippines as well as Indonesian Christian communities in Malaysian affairs.

As a result of Muslim disunity, inaptitude and wrong political strategies, the Muslim majority becomes a political minority while the non-Muslim minorities becomes a majority political force because they are able to be united under the leadership of a secular socialist-humanist alliance party which draws political and economic assistance from China, India, U.S.A., Europe and Australia. The Muslims are deeply divided with stronger *Shi'ah* presence and impact in Southeast Asia. The *Shi'ah* power base is in Indonesia and more and more *Shi'ah* Indonesian intellectuals and preachers find increasing following among new Muslims and liberal-oriented Muslims.

There is prolonged instability and tension but the Muslim masses are able to continue to perform their fundamental religious responsibilities. This scenario is in a way an extension of an aspect of current Malaysian scenario. There is unresolved tension between Muslim literalism and Muslim spiritualism or deviant mystical movements. In Muslim-Malay politics, there is endless bickering, backstabbing, toxic mudslinging in oppositional and adversarial political culture.

6.4. The Preferred Scenario. (The Scenario of **Ummatic *Wasaṭiyyah*** with the characteristics of ***al-`Adl, al-Khairiyyah, al-Tawāzun*** and of ***al-Amr bi'l-Ma`ruf wa'n-Nahy `an al-Munkar.***) *This is the Ummah of Justice, Excellence/Goodness and Balance, together with several other dimensions of Islamic moderation as described by Dr. Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī (1992, 2002) in several aspects of Muslim life: religious, intellectual, political, economic, social and cultural. With those admirable qualities, the*

Malaysian Muslim ummah, as a whole, could qualify to become good and just witnesses for mankind.

(The Metaphor: “*The Just, Good, Balanced and Compassionate Lion*”)

This is the scenario of the multi-ethnic Muslim community which since 2050 has been able to overcome the negative baggages of the shameful and humiliating past, of senseless political infighting, scheming, *fitnah*, and sickening grandstanding buttressed by the politics of money, racism, cronyism and polarisation. The Malaysian Muslim *ummah* has achieved the long-lost goal of religious and political unity, thanks to the impact of the reformed system of Islamic education, success of Islamic *da`wah* and evolution of consensual and Islamicised political culture .(Please note that in the important goal of Muslim *ummatic* unity in the future, we would like to plan for a consortium of Malaysian universities to work together on this agenda some time in the near future).

The new Islamic God-fearing leaders of integrity and humility, sincerity and competency produced by the transformed Islamic educational system in the previous decades have been able to forge a new political culture freed from the toxic elements of the past — a culture of Islamic democracy, egalitarianism, humanism and compassion. They have also been able to achieve the goals of educational, economic, social, cultural, ICT, reform, reconstruction and renewal. Their regional and global solidarity and networking are excellent. Their *da`wah* strategies and goals based on the method of *Raḥmatan li'l-`Ālamīn* have been successful and many non-Muslim minority groups have embraced Islam.

They have a strong relationship with the self-reformed group of Malay royalty, and in times of economic or environmental disasters or pandemic, the barrier between the ordinary people and the Malay royalty is gone. In its place many royal buildings, gardens, and land have been converted

into educational, humanitarian and philanthropic centres for the benefit of impoverished or economically deprived individuals of all religions and ethnic backgrounds. The Malaysian *Wasatīyyah*-based Muslim community becomes one of the role models of justly-balanced and compassionate communities, at peace with the Compassionate Master-Sustainer, with all human beings, with the “prostrating and glorifying” Signs of God (in their respective *sujūds* and *tasbīhs*) in the natural environments, and with themselves. With these qualities and achievements in the world, they look forward humbly and optimistically to the best future yet to come: *Al-Jannah fi'l-Ākhirah* (Paradise in the Hereafter).

6.5. The Key Success Factor: New Exemplary Ummatic Leadership.

It is obvious that among the four plausible future scenarios of V2077 discussed above, we will choose The Preferred Scenario (6.4.) of the Malaysian Muslim *ummah* by 2077 to be the Scenario of *Ummah Wasat* and *Khair Ummah* as decreed by Allah S.W.T. albeit in the context of socio-political realities of the multi-religious and multi-ethnic Malaysian society at the time.

In planning for the above Preferred Scenario we would like to focus our futuristic strategic thinking and scenario planning on the **KEY SUCCESS FACTOR--the emergence of a new breed and generation of multi-ethnic Malaysian Muslim leaders of high spiritual, moral and intellectual integrity and professional competency** to provide the most desirable and appropriate leadership for the necessary transformation (*iṣlāḥ*, *tajdīd* and *taḥwīl*) in the fields of politics, economics, business, industry, professions, lower education, higher education, governance, ICT, media, diplomacy, public administration, judiciary, etc. We envisage that the new breed of ummatic leadership in

the Malaysian socio-political context would possess, among other noble qualities, the following general attributes of Islamic leaders:

6.5.a) Having professional knowledge and competency in areas of specialisation, with relevant and appropriate skills that the time and changing circumstances call for, in addition to (i) a good understanding of and strong commitment to the *`Aqīdah*, *Sharī`ah* and *Akhlāq* of Islam, as well as the *Maqāṣid al-Sharī`ah* and (ii) having knowledge of the history of the nation with a general understanding of the cultural, social, political, economic and religious diversity problems of Malaysia;

6.5.b) Possessing the integrated personality and characteristics of *Mu`minūn* (Believers) as highlighted in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, characterised by (i) high spiritual quotient (Sp.Q) as the most important quotient, based on the values of *Īmān*, *`Ibadah*, *`Amal Ṣāliḥ*, *Taqwā*, *Khasyatu`LLāh*, *Iḥsān*, *Ḥubbu`LLāh* and *Dhikru`LLāh*; together with (ii) high moral quotient (MO) manifesting in good character (*ḥusn al-khuluq*) and in enjoining the *ma`rūf* and prohibiting the *munkar* coupled with other praiseworthy moral qualities (*ṣifāt maḥmūdah*); (iii) high emotional quotient (EQ); (iv) high social quotient (SQ); (v) good creativity quotient (CQ); (vi) adversity quotient (AQ) and, last but not least, (vii) intellectual quotient (IQ);

6.5.c) Possessing and practising the values of justice (*`adl*), spiritual-moral excellence (*khairiyyah*, *iḥsān*), balance (*tawāzun*, *i`tidāl*), integrity (*amānah*, *istiqāmah*, *ṣidq*), courage (*shajā`ah*), humility (*tawāḍu`*), sincerity (*ikh-lāṣ*), accountability (*mas`ūliyyah*) to Allah S.W.T., propagation (*da`wah*) of Islam and goodness (*khair*) with wisdom (*hikmah*) and goodly exhortation (*mau`izah ḥasanah*); and seeking the good pleasure of Allah S.W.T. (*ibtigha`* and *ittibā` riḍwāni`LLāh*) in addition to the principle of

obedience (*tā`ah*) to Allah S.W.T., to Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w) and to the authorities (*ulu'l-amr*) from among the Believers.

6.5.d) Having strong Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwwah Islāmiyyah*) principles, values and ummatic consciousness which transcend ethnic, linguistic or geographical identities or interests;

6.5.e) Readiness to strive and sacrifice time, money and energy for furthering the cause of Allah S.W.T. (*fi sabīl'LLāh*), as exemplified by the early adherents of Islam and the Companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.), thereby placing public good (*maṣlahah `āmmah*) and ummatic interests above self interest;

6.5.f) Ability to establish and strengthen transnational or ummatic network or collaboration as dictated by the principle of Islamic solidarity and brotherhood (*ukhuwwah Islāmiyyah*), without diminishing the spirit and requirements of citizenship to Malaysia;

6.5.g) Readiness to act, interact, cooperate or work together in peace and harmony, under normal circumstances, with non-Muslims as neighbours, colleagues, co-citizens or foreigners, on the basis of respecting human dignity (*karāmah insāniyyah*) in spite of religious or ethnic differences; observance of the values of tolerance; respect for the rights of non-Muslims to believe in and practise their respective religions; acceptance of inter-religious and inter-cultural diversities; having the attitude of empathy, compassion and mercy to all creatures of Allah S.W.T. – all these noble qualities are based upon the humanistic teachings of Islam (*insāniyyatu'l-Islām*), the compassion of Islam (*raḥmāniyyatu'l-Islām*) and the excellent examples (*sunnah*) of inter-religious communication and humanistic relationship established by the Prophet

(s.a.w.) as well as following the Prophetic mission and method of *Rahmatan li'l-`Ālamīn*.

7

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE 13 CLUSTERS AND MOVING FORWARD

7.1. Our future 2077 plans cover a period of six decades of (1) 2020-2030, (2) 2030-2040, (3) 2040-2050, (4) 2050-2060, (5) 2060-2070, (6) 2070-2080. However, given the very long time horizon, and major constraints within IIUM, we will divide the time-horizon into two phases, namely Phase One from 2020-2050 and Phase Two from 2050-2080. The respective future IIUM members of the 13 or clusters in future will have the liberty to revise, correct, refine, expand or modify the earlier-conceived general narratives covering a) **past failures**, b) **present realities**, c) **emerging trends**, d) **key drivers**, projected e) **obstacles** as well as f) **key success factors** and the g) **unthought** in light of the data available to them and the emerging trends and realities existing or manifesting in their respective time-space and ecosystems. However, the **end-goals** and **The Preferred Scenario** which are derived from the Qur'anic imperatives to be achieved by 2077 – these are the **NON-NEGOTIABLE** issues in Vision2077 -- shall remain constant while the details have to be adapted and adjusted to the Malaysian realities and socio-political contexts.

The Islamic goals and the Preferred Scenario may appear to be idealistic because they are derived from the divine commandments, but they are not utopian. They are achievable if the ummatic leaders and the Muslim *ummah* of Malaysia fulfil certain conditions. Our outlook is one of practical optimism because we strongly believe in the promises and the warnings of Allah S.W.T.

7.2. While the clusters are working and developing their respective future scenarios, we intend to have an internal IIUM Symposium from 2-4 December 2020 whereby all the 13 clusters would be sitting together to exchange ideas, share common interests or problems, towards improving the respective narratives and consolidating them into a single coherent rational General Plan of IIUM's Vision 2077 which would be published as a single publication, by the grace of Allah S.W.T

7.3. It is proposed that the 13 Clusters write their respective narratives for their Preferred Scenario, in the next few months before December 2020, based on The Preferred Scenario of The *Wasatīyyah Ummah* described in 6.4 above, and in line with the Ideological Framework of VISION 2077. Each cluster will have to: a) figure out the implications of The Preferred Scenario especially on the production of the new breed of inter-ethnic Exemplary Ummatic Leaders discussed in 6.5. above; b) write the suitable narratives for The Preferred Scenario in 2077 and focus mainly on the scenarios of Phase One (2020-2050), after we come up with the template in the workshops of 9-11 September 2020; c) discuss the method of BACKCASTING in the writing of the narratives; d) decide on what and how to **Islamicise** (including processes of desecularisation, dewesternisation, dekufrisation, demunkarisation, demolition, integration, reconstruction, adaptation, enculturation, implantation, indigenisation, hybridisation, harmonisation and transformation) some of the existing practices, systems, theories, ideas, institutions, organisations, methods, techniques, habits, customs, conventions, laws, regulations, norms, ideologies, philosophies, worldviews, etc. in Malaysia which need to be changed, discontinued or reviewed – in accordance with the principles of *taghyīr*, *taḥsīn*, *ta'ṣil*, *iṣlāḥ*, *tajdid*, *taḥwīl* and *al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wa'n-*

nahy`an al-munkar; d) identify some of the problems or obstacles faced by members of the respective cluster.

7.4. As this project is a collective trans-kulliyah futuristic construction of V2077, we would expect all the relevant kulliyahs to include in the curriculum elements from V2077 as well as the mission of “Islamicisation of human knowledge” (IOHK) and “Islamicisation of the self” (IOTS) or spiritual-moral purification (*tazkiyatu`n-nafs*), towards producing their graduates as the God-fearing and competent new leaders with integrity, sincerity, honesty, humility and accountability to Allah S.W.T. to lead the Malaysian and international *ummahs* toward a much better future for themselves as well as for mankind.

The kulliyahs and clusters may also seek the participation of relevant domain experts or consultants in Malaysia or from overseas as we go forward from January 2021. With regard to guiding, moulding, inspiring and motivating IIUM students to become leaders and change agents of the future, the academic instructor cum ***murabbī* (spiritual-moral educator)** has to play an important role in the **spiritual-moral *tarbiyah* of the students of IIUM**. The extra efforts and sacrifices made by the academic and administrative staff in this comprehensive *tarbiyah* and ummatic reformist or transformational efforts that V2077 represents will surely be rewarded by Allah S.W.T. in the Hereafter.

8

CONCLUSION

The reformed and transformed multi-ethnic Malaysian *ummah* of the long-term future, we believe, shall be led by *qalb salīm* (sound-hearted) Islamic leaders with *Ulu`l-Albāb* qualities in possession of integrated, holistic and balanced personality characteristics, who combine *fikr* with

dhikr, and – with all their strivings and sacrifices to bring about peaceful *iṣlāḥ* and *tajdīd* in the present world of “enjoyment of deceptions” (*matā` al-ghurūr*, Q. *al-Ḥadīd* 57: 20, *Āl `Imrān* 3: 14) – have their sights fixed to their ultimate end of *al-falāḥ* in the Hereafter. In the end, we earnestly seek the help (*`aun*), *`ināyah* (kind attention and care), *barakāt* (blessings) and *riḍwān* (good approval / pleasure) of Allah *subḥānahū wa ta`ālā* for our humble and imperfect efforts which we take up sincerely for His sake and for the sake of actualising a *falāḥ-sejahtera*-oriented Malaysian Islamic *ummah* by the year 1500 *Hijriyyah*... *Āmīn!*

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