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**Assistant Professor Fatmir Shehu**

International Islamic University Malaysia

shehu.fatmir@gmail.com

## **Inter-Religious Dialogue and Contemporary Peace-Building: From Hostility to Mutual Respect and Better Understanding**

The misunderstanding and misinterpretation of religion and its teachings by its followers and others have given the impression that religion is the sole source of all past and current conflicts faced by humanity. This assumption is perhaps encouraged by the limited knowledge of other religions and the wrong impression spread by peoples' ignorance of their own religions.

The media presents religion with stories focused exclusively on hatred, war-making, and devastation. However, the value of peace has been considered as the core principle in the teachings of major world religions. The ongoing inter-religious activities initiated by both, religious individuals and institutions have shown very clearly that religion stands for peace and not war.

This research sees inter-religious dialogue as the most important element on which the notion of peacebuilding stands. This study attempts to show that inter-religious activities are a great resource for building and sustaining peace between people of different socio-cultural-religious background in the long term.

The paradigm of inter-religious dialogue is to provide people with a better understanding of religion and its teachings and shift their views from hostility and enmity to mutual respect and better understanding. Descriptive and analytical methods will be employed by the researcher with the intention to provide findings that will serve as solid solutions for the contemporary conflicts witnessed by our contemporary societies.

**Key Terms:** Inter-religious dialogue, peacebuilding, change, paradigm, mutual respect, better understanding.

