

Peaceful Coexistence and its Implication to *Al-Falah* – Human Salvation, Happiness and Well-being

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to describe the Islamic teachings regarding peaceful coexistence and human bonding, and their indispensability to *al-Falah* (human success and development). The study is divided into two parts. The first part is on peaceful coexistence as one of the distinctive characteristics of the Muslim *ummah*. It is divided into six sections dealing with the meaning of coexistence, the need for peaceful coexistence, the necessary requirements for peaceful coexistence, peaceful coexistence of various ethnic and racial groups in Islam, peaceful coexistence of various religious groups, and coexistence with nature. The second part of this study delineates the concept of Muslim *ummah* and describes its other distinctive characteristics, namely a community distinguished by the following attributes: non-territoriality and boundlessness, a common faith, i.e. *shahadah* or the testimony of Allah's Oneness and the messengership of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), a single brotherhood, a common goal, duty consciousness and exemplariness, and *wasatiyyah*. The study contends that: first, coexistence and human bonding are vital part of human success and development; second, human beings are relational beings, meaning they have a natural tendency to live in society harmoniously with others; third, human beings share common goals and objectives that necessitate coexistence with one another; fourth, one of the biggest problems faced by the Muslim *ummah* today is disharmony; fifth, there are many obstacles to peaceful coexistence of various ethnic, racial and religious groups in our communities today that should be addressed. Hence, further studies on peaceful coexistence are deemed significant. The methodology used in this study, which is qualitative in nature, is the critical and descriptive analysis of some of the existing literature on peaceful coexistence, social cohesion and the characteristics of the Muslim *ummah*. The translation of the *ayat* (verses) of the Qur'an related to this study is extracted from the work of Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text and Translation*. After reading this paper, one should be able to: first, have some idea of what it means to peacefully coexist with one another; second, distinguish between the Muslim *ummah* and other *umam* (nations); third, understand the reasons why human beings should coexist with one another.

Keywords: coexistence, *al-Falah*, *wasatiyyah*, Muslim *ummah*, human bonding