

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.



Bulat Air Kerana Pembentung, Bulat Manusia Kerana Muafakat

SDG 16, which promotes peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, is well reflected in the classical Malay proverb “*Bulat air kerana pembentung, bulat manusia kerana muafakat.*” It means that just as water takes the shape of its container, harmony among people is achieved through consensus and mutual agreement. The proverb underscores the values of participation, unity, and shared responsibility — principles essential for creating trustworthy institutions and ensuring justice for all.

At Universiti Malaya (UM), this spirit is cultivated through transparent governance, ethical leadership, student representation, and platforms that encourage civic dialogue and responsible action by members of the campus community. By fostering a culture of honesty and accountability, UM contributes to the development of strong institutions and peaceful communities in line with the vision of SDG 16.

Evidence-Based Governance for Sustainable Development

In line with SDG 16, UM contributes its expertise to local, regional and national governance through sustained engagement with government ministries and agencies. From legislative reviews such as the Destitute Persons (Amendment) Act to policy discussions at the Malaysia SDG Summit and the launch of PADU, UM provides evidence-based advice that informs decision-making and strengthens institutional frameworks. These collaborations, which span anti-corruption governance, climate change, data management, and biodiversity conservation, underscore UM's role as a trusted knowledge partner in shaping policies that promote transparency, accountability, and sustainable development.

Peace and Data Upkeep for the SDGs

UM is well-positioned to contribute expert insights to the government's ongoing and upcoming initiatives. On 2nd January 2024, the launch of Pangkalan Data Utama (PADU) was held at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC). There, UM was represented by the director of the Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC), Professor Datuk Norma Mansor who attended a forum titled "Driving Transition Through Padu". Joining her as panellists were the Deputy Director-General (ICT) at the Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU), Dr Fazidah Abu Bakar and CEO of CyberSecurity Malaysia (CSM), Datuk Dr Amirudin Abdul Wahab. PADU is a system which aims to improve management efficiency of the country's data including individual and household profiles of citizens and permanent residents in Malaysia. During the forum, Prof Norma said that PADU is poised to be a game changer for the country; therefore, the data within must be regularly updated to prevent it from being static.



Above: Global Intellectual Discourse 2024 officiated by the Prime Minister at UM ([Facebook](#))

She added that the effectiveness of PADU relies on proactive action taken by every participating body such as the National Registration Department, religious offices, and zakat centres to facilitate swift aid to those in need. The ceremony also featured a presentation on PADU by Chief Statistician, Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin before the forum followed by the officiation of the system by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.



Above: Prof Datuk Norma Mansor at the PADU forum ([Bernama](#))

Green Technology Insights for Government Initiatives

UM also shares its expertise via events co-organised with government agencies. Together with the Division of Green and Sustainable Chemistry under the Malaysian Institute of Chemistry (IKM), UM's Nanotechnology and Catalysis Research Centre (NANOCAT) organised a webinar on "Embracing Sustainable Development Goals: Leveraging Synthetic Polymers from Renewable Feedstocks for Biomedical and Pharmaceutical" which was open to all. The talk was delivered by Associate Dean (Research & Consultancy) from the School of Pharmacy International Medical University, Associate Professor ChM Dr Lee Choy Sin on 20th March 2024.

The webinar aimed to discuss opportunities presented by bio-based synthetic polymers with enhanced biodegradability and biocompatibility properties, making great prospects in biomedical and pharmaceutical applications. Crucially, the approaches support global sustainability by fostering responsible consumption and production (SDG 12) and enhancing health and well-being (SDG 3).

Below: Poster for the webinar (NANOCAT)

Embracing Sustainable Development Goals: Leveraging Synthetic Polymers from Renewable Feedstocks for Biomedical and Pharmaceutical

Webinar

Speaker:



**Associate Professor ChM
Dr Lee Choy Sin**
Associate Dean (Research & Consultancy)
School of Pharmacy
International Medical University

Date: 20 March 2024 (Wednesday)
Time: 10:30 am – 11:30 am
MS Team: <https://shorturl.at/cmsN2>

All are welcome. The webinar is free-of-charge.

Synopsis

The global polymers market is expected to reach USD 1 200 billion by 2032, with the medical polymers sector exhibiting a 9.4% CAGR and valued at USD 31 billion by 2027. The renewable chemicals market, including bio-based polymers, is projected to grow significantly, reaching USD 316 billion by 2032 with an 11.2% CAGR. The intersection of these trends presents a unique opportunity for polymers in the biomedical and pharmaceutical industry. In this regard, the use of renewable resources in polymer production offers several advantages, particularly in the conservation of limited resources and the addressing of health and environmental concerns. In this talk, the emergence of synthetic polymers derived from renewable feedstocks and their functional roles in tissue engineering, biomedical coatings, and pharmaceutical excipients will be discussed. Green chemistry approaches are employed in the experimental design of the production of these polymers, and their physico-chemical, thermal, and mechanical properties are being evaluated. This talk aims to discuss the opportunities presented by bio-based synthetic polymers with enhanced biodegradability and biocompatibility properties, making them great prospects in biomedical and pharmaceutical applications. Most importantly, the approaches align with global sustainability goals, contributing to responsible consumption and production, and promoting good health and well-being.

Jointly organized by the Division of Green & Sustainable Chemistry, Malaysian Institute of Chemistry (IKM)

NANOCAT

UNIVERSITI MALAYA

Best wishes
Nanotechnology & Catalysis Research Centre (NANOCAT)
Level 3, Block A, Institute of Postgraduate Studies
University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA
Tel: +603-7967 6959
Fax: +603-7967 6556

Policy Recommendations for Governments Across Asia

UM's expert advice not only extends to local governments but also international governing bodies. From 2nd to 5th May 2024, UM was represented at the 57th Asian Development Bank (ADB) Annual Meeting with the theme "Bridge to the Future". Participants consisting of finance ministers, central bank governors, senior government officials, and representatives from the private sector, academia, media, and civil society from ADB's 68 members convened in Tbilisi, Georgia. Amidst the meeting, UM sent the director of SWRC and President of Malaysia Economic Association (MEA), Professor Dr Norma Mansor as a panellist for the launch of the Asian Development Policy Report 2024: Aging Well in Asia. Joining her to present the report were lead author and Senior Economist from ADB's Economic Research and Development Impact Department, Aiko Kikkawa; Director General and Chief Economist of ADB's Economic Research and Development Impact Department, Albert Park; and Director of Ageing Asia Research Hub from Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing Research, Philip O'Keefe. Among Prof Norma's insights were that more efforts are needed to ensure women prepare to age well, and it requires systems that support their labour force participation and reward social work. The other three panellists agreed that investing in human capital for people of all ages is key to ensuring well-being in old age. With the launch of this policy report, stakeholders can explore key dimensions of wellbeing at old age, including health, employment and retirement, economic security, and social engagement.



Above: *Aging Well in Asia: Asian Development Policy Report (ADB)*

Below: *Prof Datuk Norma Mansor speaking at the launch (SWRC)*



Weathering Climate Issues with METMalaysia

UM engages with government departments through scheduled site visits and monitoring activities. On 29th May 2024, the Malaysian Meteorological Department (METMalaysia) signed an MoU with UM's Institute of Ocean and Earth Sciences (IOES) for climatology studies, air quality modelling, and atmospheric science as well as maintenance for acid disposition and reactive gas equipment. This is following a visit from a METMalaysia delegation on 22nd April 2024 to the Global Atmospheric Watch (GAW) Station at IOES' Bachok Marine Research Station in Kelantan. The MoU signing was attended by the Deputy Director General (Operations) of METMalaysia, Dr Mohd Hisham bin Mohd Anip; Chairman of Frontiers of the Natural World Cluster, Prof Dr Juan Joon Ching; Director for the Atmospheric Science and Cloud Seeding Division of METMalaysia, Dr Ahmad Fairuz bin Jamaluddin; and Executive Director of IOES, Prof Dr Lim Phaik Eem. Through this MoU, METMalaysia and IOES will collaborate to support the government's efforts in tackling climate change issues by providing data on acid disposition and reactive gases which contribute to global warming.



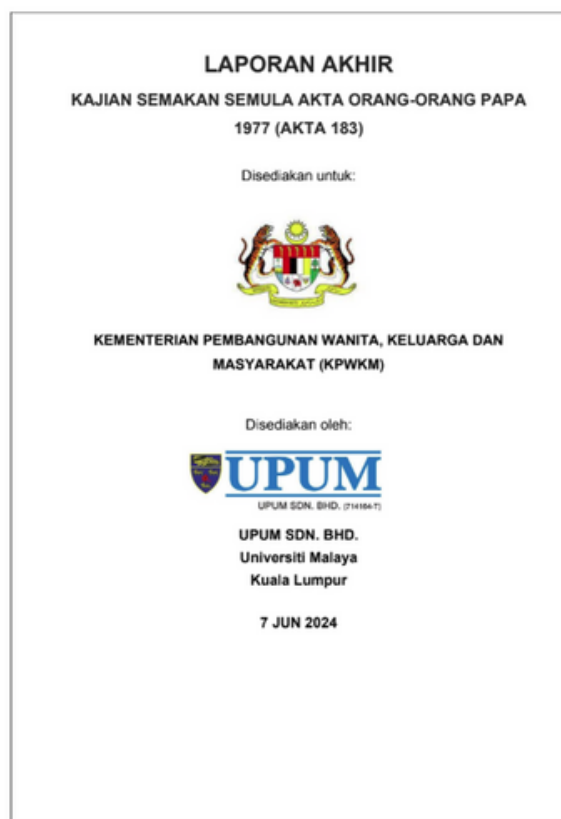
Above: Deputy Director General (Operations) of METMalaysia and Executive Director of IOES (METMalaysia)

Bottom: MoU signing ceremony (IOES)



Maintaining Law & Order with Act Reviews

UM contributes to keeping local laws up to date by providing expert input during government-led reviews. In a report dated 7th June 2024, *Pusat Perundangan Universiti Malaya* also known as UMConsult prepared a review of the Destitute Persons (Amendment) Act 1977 (Act 183). The review was prepared by a team of academicians from UM's Faculty of Law, Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, and the Department of Social Administration and Justice to be sent to the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. The full consultation and research period spanned from 19th September 2022 to 18th June 2024. The review scrutinised the act's existing approaches to enforcement that were deemed irrelevant and needed revising to be more practical. The review also highlights the role of the ministry and other relevant agencies in tackling vagrant issues such as mental health conditions, drug abuse, and illegal immigration.



Above: Cover page of review

Below: Services of *UMConsult* (UMConsult)



Guiding Policies towards Environmental Sustainability



Above: Poster for the programme

Below: Itinerary of the programme



The capacity-building programme “Bridging the Gap: From Policy to Action”, hosted at Rimba Ilmu, UM on 29th June 2024, exemplifies how academic institutions contribute to providing expert advice to government at the local, regional, and national levels. Organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability (NRES), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and myBioD, the programme was designed to strengthen policy implementation by translating national conservation strategies into actionable steps.

Through seminars, herbarium visits, and guided fieldwork along the Rimba Ilmu trail, participants were introduced to evidence-based approaches for biodiversity conservation and the role of botanical gardens as ex-situ conservation centers. These activities directly support NRES’s mandate to maintain Malaysia’s rich biodiversity, while also equipping participants with practical knowledge to bridge science, policy, and community action.

The event demonstrates how UM, via Rimba Ilmu, provides specific expert input and evidence to government-linked programmes, reinforcing Malaysia’s broader environmental governance framework. The involvement of NRES and UNDP highlights a multi-stakeholder partnership where expertise from academia informs national-level decision-making, while also enhancing community-level awareness and engagement. By hosting and facilitating this programme, UM not only supports government policy but also plays a pivotal role in capacity-building, policy guidance, and provision of evidence—ensuring that conservation policies are grounded in science and effectively translated into local action.

Sharing the Government's Goal of Reaching the Summit of Sustainability

UM contributes to SDG 16 by engaging in collaborative initiatives with government agencies, providing research expertise, evidence-based insights, and policy recommendations. UM was represented at the Malaysia SDG Summit 2024 in both a plenary session and the SDG Summit Exhibition. The summit was organised by the Ministry of Economy and co-organised by the National SDG Centre, and held from 17 to 18 September 2024 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC). The Executive Director of UM's International Institute for Public Policy and Management (INPUMA), YBhg. Datuk Dr. Anis Yusal Yusoff, attended the conference.

UM participated in Plenary 3 (Prosperity) – Livability, focusing on “Uplifting and Addressing Socio-Economic Disparities and Livelihood of Urban Dwellers.” Representing UM in this session was Ms. Esther Ezhil Nanggai, recipient of the Women's National Prime Minister's Youth Award 2024 and a first-year student from the Department of International and Strategic Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Joining the plenary as panellists were the Chief Internal Auditor of FGV Holdings Berhad, Ms. Zalily Mohamed Zaman Khan, and former Rector of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and member of the Board of Trustees of Yayasan MySDG, YBhg. Prof. Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkifli bin Abdul Razak.

The three discussed recommendations for action, including the creation of anti-corruption governance frameworks and alignment with the National Education Philosophy to nurture well-rounded, ethical individuals. The summit was attended by government ministers, foreign ambassadors, and UN representatives who were eager to hear perspectives from academicians and industry experts.

At the SDG Summit Exhibition, UM was represented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rosazlin Abdullah (Institute of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science), who served as an invited expert (exhibitor) at the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia – Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) booth, featuring her community farming project.



Above: UMSDC team with Mr. Asfaazam Kasbani (Director, National SDG Centre)

Below: Ms. Esther Ezhil Nanggai (UM) as a panellist at the Summit



Training Policy & Lawmakers Through Outreach & Education

In 2024, UM deepened its outreach to policymakers and lawmakers through a range of initiatives that bridged academia and governance. From engaging in dialogues on foreign policy and leadership development to hosting forums on religion, culture, and global conflicts, UM provided a platform for informed debate and policy exchange.

These activities not only recognised the interlinkages between peace, culture, and leadership but also underscored UM's role in shaping perspectives on pressing global and regional issues. Through such engagements, UM reaffirmed its commitment to fostering inclusive dialogue and contributing to the strengthening of policy frameworks at national and international levels.

Crafting Policies that Acknowledge Retirees and an Ageing Society

UM holds training and education programmes for government officers and policymakers. From 27th to 29th February 2024, the UM SWRC developed, organised, and executed the Pension and Retirement Professional Programme (PRPP). This included a session titled Fundamentals of Social Protection (FSP) which is designed to equip participants with knowledge of social protection, ageing and the basics of retirement planning. The course was held at Wyndham Grand Bangsar Kuala Lumpur and was attended by members of Employment Insurance System (EIS) Office, Social Security Organisation (SOCSO) Kuala Lumpur, SOCSO Putrajaya, Retirement Fund Incorporated (KWAP), Armed Forces Fund Board (LTAT) and the Inland Revenue Board (LHDN).

The modules taught during the programme were delivered by UM academicians such as SWRC visiting expert Dr Amjad Rabi, Professor Dr. Shahrul Bahyah binti Kamaruzzaman from the Faculty of Medicine, and Datin Prof. Dr. Izlin binti Ismail from the Faculty of Business and Economics. The PRPP is a yearly programme by SWRC that provides professionals in Malaysia and the ASEAN region with multi-level certification on social protection.

Below: Speakers of the PRPP (SWRC)



OUR SPEAKERS



Professor Datin Norma Mansor
Visiting Expert, SWRC

She has served as an advisor and a consultant to various organisations, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, International Labor Organisation (ILO), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Union (EU), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and numerous Malaysia public agencies.

As an academic, Professor Mansor has written extensively in books and scholarly journals in the areas of public and social policy, ageing and social protection.

She was awarded Emeritus Professorship by University Malaysia in October 2018. She is also a fellow of the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) and was the President of the Malaysian Economic Association (MEA). Professor Mansor was recently awarded the CUEPAC's Woman Icon of the Year 2024.



Dr Amjad Rabi
Visiting Expert, SWRC

Amjad Rabi is a social security economist with experience across many countries at different stages of development. Currently, he is a visiting expert at Universiti Malaysia's Social Wellbeing Research Center (SWRC).

Prior to joining SWRC, Amjad was the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) on Social Security for the ILO office in Iraq. He had earlier served as the Social Security Advisor to the Employees' Provident Funds Malaysia (EPF). As a social security economist, Amjad has held senior positions in the United Nations (UN) country offices in Malaysia, Nepal, Zimbabwe, Egypt and Argentina, and the UN headquarters in New York and Geneva.

In addition, Amjad has taught at several universities in Canada, Malaysia, the USA, and Palestine. Amjad coached senior officials on social security in many countries and he has delivered specialised training at the ITC-ILG. He holds a Doctorate in International Relations, Master's degrees in the areas of Public Policy, Actuarial Science and Economics.



Dr Halimah Awang
Principal Research Fellow, SWRC

Halimah Awang is a Principal Research Fellow at SWRC. She holds a PhD in Applied Statistics University, from Macquarie University, Australia. Her research interests include social protection, ageing, and mathematics education. She is the project leader for Malaysia Ageing and Retirement Survey (MARS), an ongoing research project partly funded by the Employees' Provident Fund Malaysia (EPF) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Her other research projects include elder abuse and neglect, savings adequacy among EPF members, social protection programmes in the ASEAN region and return-to-work Programme of injured workers for the Social Security Organisation Malaysia (SOCSO). She has served as a consultant for the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, National Population & Family Development Board (NPPF), PLUS Expressways Berhad and the Social Institute of Malaysia.

Prior to joining SWRC, Halimah was a faculty member at the Faculty of Economics and Administration, UM for nearly 30 years. As an academican, she has published extensively in various international journals.



Mark O'Dell
CEO of SO Insurance Association of Malaysia (IAM)

Mark O'Dell has over 44 years of experience in the life and health insurance business, including 30 years in Asia. Mark holds several designations and distinctions, including Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU), Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC), Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and registered Financial Planner (RFP). He was recognised by the Asian Insurance Review as the "Insurance Personality of the Year" in 2006 and received the "Outstanding Leaders in Asia" award from ACES (Asia Corporate Excellence and Sustainability) in 2008.

Before where he is now, Mark held several senior management positions with Manulife and AIA, running country life insurance operations in six countries across Asia for more than 24 years. Mark is currently SWRC's Industry Fellow.

Policy Discussions for ASEAN and Beyond

UM top management also had the honour of receiving the visit from His Excellency Andrey Rudenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. This was in conjunction with his Special Lecture entitled “Russia’s Policy in Asia Pacific Region” on 29th March at AEI. Emphasis was made on the ASEAN-Russia strategic partnership which passed its 6th anniversary mark in 2024 in good shape, showing positive dynamics.

Additionally, a productive meeting was held between UM senate members and the delegation on future driven partnership between UM and the Russian Federation in various impactful sectors. UM’s Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dato' Seri Ir. Dr. Noor Azuan Abu Osman expressed his gratitude in a Facebook post saying “We are looking forward to a deeper level of partnership and collaboration in a forward-looking model of ties that shape the new future of advancement and prosperity,”.



Above: UM Vice-Chancellor escorting His Excellency

Below: Special public lecture by His Excellency



Public Education on Israel-Gaza-Iran: A Call for Action to Policymakers



Above: Poster for the forum

Below: Mdm Reem al-Minawi speaking at the forum and participants of the forum (APIUM)



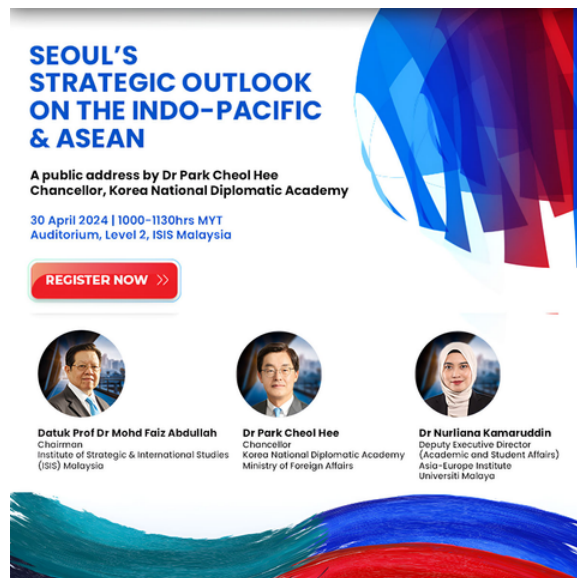
Acknowledging the need for global engagement, UM's communities continue to keep abreast of and exchange views on pressing international issues. On 22nd April 2024, UM's Academy of Islamic Studies (APIUM) hosted a forum titled "West Asian Conflict & Its Effects Towards Global Geopolitics: Israel-Gaza-Iran". The panellists featured Universiti Melaka Malaysia's Dean for their Institute of Graduate Studies and Adjunct Professor of UM, Prof. Dr. Kamaruzaman Yusoff and lecturer from UKM's Centre for International Law and Siyar (CILAS), Prof. Dr. Salawati Mat Basir.

The forum was organised as a part of the academy's Academic Open Week 2024 and received a visit from the family of the Founder and CEO of the non-governmental organisation Cinta Gaza Malaysia (CGM), Tuan Nadir Al-Nuri. The programme uncovered details of Palestine's dark history of occupation, the factors behind Iran's offensive on Gaza, and other related current issues that should be more known, especially for Muslims.

Tuan Nadir's wife, Reem al-Minawi brought their four children from Gaza to the event and shared updates on the latest situation back home, challenges they faced during the ongoing war, and stories of when they survived a collapsing building. This eye-opening session served as an awareness campaign for its attendees as well as a call for action to policymakers and advocates to continue fighting for global peace.

Sharing Perspectives with Policymakers Beyond Borders

UM actively engaged in outreach efforts targeting policy and legislative stakeholders. On 30th April 2024, the Asia-Europe Institute (AEI) attended a public address by the Korea National Diplomatic Academy. The latter's chancellor, Dr Park Cheol Hee, discusses "Seoul's Strategic Outlook on the Indo-Pacific & ASEAN" at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia. Dr Nurliana Kamaruddin represented UM as the Deputy Executive Director (Academic and Student Affairs) of AEI in a session which discussed the core lines of efforts in Seoul's strategic repositioning towards the Indo-Pacific. Dr Park also addresses where ASEAN and Malaysia stand in South Korea's overall Indo-Pacific vision and shares his perspectives on Seoul's major foreign policy directions.



Above: Poster for the public address (AEI)

The Value of Leadership for Peace and Justice

The strength of institutions ultimately depends on the quality of their leadership. On 21st May 2024, UM's Centre for Leadership and Professional Development (UM LEAD) and the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA) announced a collaboration on leadership development. RANEPA's Vice-Rector, Mr. Margolin Andrey Markovich and UM LEAD's Director, Datuk Dr Anis Yusaf Yusoff met in Moscow to announce the signing of the MoU. The gathering was also witnessed by the Malaysian Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Dato' Cheong Loon Lai where discussions were held that could impact the development of leaders of both institutions and countries.

The leaders of both UM and RANEPA believe expanding the current programme will benefit a broader community of existing and aspiring leaders in the private, public, and civil society sectors, thus setting a new standard to contribute to developing the shared potential of UM LEAD and RANEPA.

Below: Vice-Rector of RANEPA with Director of UM LEAD (UM LEAD)



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Notable contributions include studies on:

- The role of language in health care and well-being (SDG 3)
- Language policy and quality education (SDG 4)
- Language in the workplace, law, business. and minority languages (SDG 8)
- Linguistic diversity in modern cities (SDG 11)
- Language in promoting peaceful and inclusive societies while protecting fundamental freedoms (SDG16)



Below: Prof Azirah Hashim as President of AILA (AEI)



The Power of Strong Institutions Collaborating to Embrace Sustainability

UM actively supports and co-organises capacity-building, education, and outreach programmes. Together with Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN), the UM Power Energy Dedicated Advanced Centre (UM PEDAC) co-organised the 2024 International Conference on Sustainable Energy, Infrastructure and Environment (ICSEIE). From 14th to 15th October, the conference was held at Le Méridien Putrajaya and was attended by industry leaders, researchers, policymakers, and experts in sustainability, energy, infrastructure, and environmental protection. With the theme of "Embracing Sustainability: Accelerating Energy Transition for a Greener Tomorrow", the conference aimed to address the challenges and opportunities in the global shift towards clean energy. This included discussions on sustainable infrastructure, renewable energy, environmental policies, and green innovations.

Through its involvement in collaborative outreach programmes such as these, UM hopes to help shape effective policies and practices in Malaysia.



Above: Poster for ICSEIE 2024 (UMPEDAC)

Outreach to Regional Institutes of Justice

UM's pursuit of peace and justice is underscored by its outreach initiatives to other strong institutions. On 1st November 2024, the chancellery welcomed a courtesy visit from the Chief of the Political Department of the Ministry of Justice, His Excellency Mr Huang Yi from the People's Republic of China. He was personally received by UM's Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dato' Seri Ir. Dr. Noor Azuan Abu Osman and other members of top management. UM took the opportunity to present its significant achievements in academic collaborations with China, namely 158 agreements and over 5,597 co-authored publications. Meanwhile, H.E. Mr. Huang Yi outlined his Ministry's vital role in legislative drafting, legal education, and fostering global legal expertise.

Discussions during the visit explored opportunities for collaboration including joint research in international law, faculty and student exchanges, and the incorporation of practical legal training within academic curricula. This engagement highlights UM's commitment to playing a pivotal role in shaping the future of collaboration and international law in the Asia-Pacific region.



Right: H.E Chief of Political Department China with UM's Vice-Chancellor (IRC)

The Role of Culture and Religion in Achieving the SDGs

Any meaningful discussion of peace must also take into account culture and religion. From 1st to 4th December 2024, UM's Faculty of Arts and Social Science hosted the 10th South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion (SSEASR) conference. This represents a regional conference of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR), Member of International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (CIPSH) under the auspices of UNESCO. For the 10th SSEASR, the theme was "Sustainability in Cultural and Religious Traditions in South and Southeast Asia". Scholars, research students, and other relevant social scientists were invited to present their research at the conference or to participate as panels. In addition to the two-day conference, a pre-conference and post-conference tour was held for participants to explore Malacca city and Kuala Lumpur cultural and heritage icons respectively. Throughout the four-day event, participants discussed current global methodological trends for academic study of religion to achieve the SDGs of the 21st century.


THIRD ANNOUNCEMENT
10th SSEASR Conference
Sustainability in Cultural and Religious Traditions in South and Southeast Asia
A Regional Conference of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR), Member of CIPSH under the auspices of UNESCO
 Date : 02-04 December (Monday-Wednesday) 2024
 Host : Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Universiti Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia


UNIVERSITI MALAYA

TOUR FEES AND ACCOMMODATION INFO

Pre-conference Tour 1 December 2024	Post-conference Tour 4 December 2024
Melaka Historical City Taming Sari Tower A Famosa Fort Ruins St. Paul's Church Jonker Street Dutch Square (Red Square) Melaka River Cruise - Baba Nyonya Heritage Museum Christ Church Melaka Melaka Sultanate Palace Mini Malaysia & ASEAN Cultural Park	Kuala Lumpur Cultural & Heritage Icons KLCC Batu Caves Pasar Seni Museum Dataran Merdeka Petaling Street Jamek Mosque Sultan Abdul Samad Building Thean Hou Temple Masjid Wilayah
Pre-Conference Tour fee: USD70 Post-Conference Tour fee: USD50 Combo Package (Pre and Post-Tour) fee: USD100	

Note:
 1. Pre and post-conference tour fees are additional to registration fees.
 2. Tour only includes transportation, tour guide and snacks. Meals and entrance fees to spots are to be borne by participants.
 3. All tour starts and ends at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Universiti Malaysia.
 4. Go to **e-pay UM** and search '10th SSEASR Conference 2024 Tour' to proceed for payment. Kindly state in the description your desired tour package.

ACCOMMODATION RATE

1) HOTEL ARMADA PETALING JAYA ★★★★★ Deluxe Room (Deluxe King/Deluxe Twin) • RM 200.00 nett per room / night with 1 breakfast • RM 250.00 nett per room / night with 2 breakfast	3) URBAN LIVING, MAHSA AVENUE ★★★★★ Standard Queen • Student price: RM100.00 nett per room / night (no breakfast) • Normal: RM200.00 nett per room / night (no breakfast)
2) CITITEL MID VALLEY HOTEL ★★★★★ • All rooms are available with special 10% off discount. • Corporate code is valid only from 25th November to 12th December 2024	

Note:
 1. All paid registered participants will be emailed for accommodation booking code/corporate code to be eligible for shown rate.
 2. All rate shown is excluding Tourism tax RM10.00/room/night.
 3. Transportation to and fro Universiti Malaysia is provided only for the accommodation above.

15 October 2024 | Deadline for registration and payment
View more information here!
<https://sites.google.com/um.edu.my/10thsseasr2024>



FAKULTI SASTERA DAN SAINS SOSIAL
 Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences







Above: Itinerary and accommodation for SSEASR 2024

Below: Sub-themes and dates for SSEASR 2024 (HBRC)

Sub-themes

- Arts, Architecture and Archaeology
- Community based sustainable tourism
- Language and Literature
- Rethinking the Study of Religion in the Region
- Personalities and Organisations

- Malaysian Culture and Religion: Past and Present
- Issues of South and Southeast Asian Diaspora
- Pilgrims and Pilgrimage Centres
- Trade Routes: A Carrier of Culture and Religion

Scholars, early career researchers, research students and other relevant social scientists are invited to participate in the conference and present the findings of your research related to the sub-themes mentioned above. Panels are also welcome.

Submitted papers shall be in either **English language** or **Bahasa Malaysia**.

IMPORTANT DATES

DEADLINE

15 October 2024 | Deadline for panel title and abstract submission
15 October 2024 | Deadline for individual paper title and abstract submission

15 October 2024 | Deadline for registration and payment
02-04 December 2024 | Conference

UM's Contribution to Government-led Research

UM actively contributes to government-led research initiatives that advance national priorities and strengthen policy implementation. Up to 163 UM researchers are spread across various government departments backed by funders including the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), *Institut Penilaian Negara* (INSPEN), and the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MOSTI).

In 2024, UM's participation ranged from anti-corruption studies with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to biodiversity conservation with the Department of Fisheries, poverty eradication strategies with the Ministry of Economy, and clinical trials aligned with national healthcare goals.

These collaborations demonstrate UM's capacity to provide scientific expertise and practical solutions, reinforcing its role as a key research partner in shaping effective, evidence-based policies for Malaysia's sustainable development.

Joint Medical Research Aligned with National Health Policies

UM's participation in government research is also seen in their contribution to clinical trial site services for national research priorities. A team from the Clinical Investigation Centre (CIC) of UM Medical Centre (UMMC) led by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Adlinda Alip achieved remarkable clinical trial success as the top recruitment site for the ASCENT-07 trial, a series of trials investigating drugs to fight breast cancer. This study investigated the efficacy of sacituzumab govitecan, a drug-antibody conjugate compared to the treatment of physician's choice in patients with advanced breast cancer. Activated on 16th February 2024, the trial achieved impressive results with recruitment closing on 24th July 2024. Moreover, the first subject was screened within 5 days of site activation, demonstrating the team's efficiency and dedication.

UMMC successfully recruited 7 subjects in just five months, exceeding the initial target of 3 subjects. UMMC's performance not only established it as the top enroller in Malaysia but also the top enroller across Southeast Asia for ASCENT-07. This milestone demonstrates UM's alignment with national healthcare policies and commitment to improving treatment access for patients in Malaysia.



Right: The team that achieved the South East Asia Top Enroller recognition for the ASCENT-07 trials (CIC)

Something Fishy: Collaborative Research on Invasive Lake Species

UM's participation in government research covers various sectors. Following a previously signed MoU in 2022 with the Malaysian Department of Fisheries (DoF), a juvenile fish releasing event was held at Tasik Varsiti UM on 18th July 2024 in DoF's first-ever initiative on any university campus in Malaysia. This initiative was sparked by findings in Fish Inventory Research, which identified a predominance of invasive species in the lake.

To restore native biodiversity and reduce alien fish impact, up to 36,600 fish consisting of local species were released into the lake. These included 10,000 Terbul (*Osteochilus hasseltii*), 300 juvenile and 24 adult Kelah (*Tor tambroides*), 300 Baung (*Hemibagrus bleekeri*), and a significant number of Lampam Sungai (*Barbonymus schwanenfeldii*), among others. The half-day event was attended by the Deputy Director-General of Fisheries (Management) of DoF, Tuan Haji Wan Muhammad Aznan Abdullah; Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation), Prof. Ir. Dr. Kaharudin Dimiyati; Deputy Vice Chancellor (Development), Prof. Ir. Dr. Ramesh Singh a/l Kuldip Singh; Associate Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Strategy), Prof. Dr. Yahaya Bin Ahmad; and Director of the Eco Campus, UM Sustainable Development Centre (UMSDC) Dr. Muhammad Azzam Ismail; along with staff from both UM and DoF.

Alongside the fish releasing, participants had the opportunity to engage in a brief site visit to booths showcasing year-round photographs of the lake. DoF also held an exhibit showcasing prohibited fishing methods in Malaysia, such as the use of fishing bombs and electric shocks. This partnership can be seen as a catalyst to facilitate further collaborative research activities between UM and DoF, contributing to sustainable development and environmental stewardship in Malaysia.



Above: Highlights from the event (DoF, UMSDC)

Commitment to Anti-Corruption Research with the Government

Besides providing expert advice to the government, UM also regularly participates in government-led research initiatives. UM has formed a research collaboration with the National Governance Planning Division of the MACC, where research grants were awarded by MACC to 10 research entities from 2023 to 2024. From 26th to 27th September 2024, a National Research Conference themed "Confronting the Threat of Corruption: Collective Eradication" was held to present the results of their research.

Approximately 400 participants from a variety of private and public agencies attended the conference which was officiated by YBhg. Tan Sri Dato' Sri Shamsul Azri bin Abu Bakar, the Chief Secretary to the Government (KSN). Among the researchers were two from UM namely Dr. Irene Yong Seok Ching presenting "Risiko Rasuah, Integriti dan Governans dalam Sektor Pertanian di Malaysia" and Prof. Madya Dr. Ervina Alfian presenting "Risiko Rasuah dalam konteks Governans, Integriti dan Antirasuah dalam Sektor Kewangan dan Perbankan".



Above: UM's stance on corruption (*Integrity Unit*)



Left: Presentation 1 from the conference titled 'Risiko Rasuah dalam Konteks Governans, Integriti dan Antirasuah dalam Sektor Kewangan dan Perbankan'

Below: Presentation 4 from the conference titled 'Risiko Rasuah, Integriti dan Governans dalam Sektor Pertanian di Malaysia' (*MACC*)



Researching the Role of the Government in Eradicating Poverty

UM also supports the research and development of effective policies aimed at improving the lives of Malaysians. On 30th September, the 2024 National Symposium: Eradicating Poverty was held at PICC. The symposium was held by the Ministry of Economics and assembled stakeholders and experts to discuss strategies for poverty alleviation in Malaysia. The director of UM SWRC, Professor Datuk Norma Mansor moderated a session titled "The Role and Approach of the Government in Eradicating Poverty: The Need for Restructuring?".

She was joined on stage by CEO Institute for Development Studies Sabah, Associate Professor Datuk Ts Dr Ramzah Dambul and Member of the Policy Advisory Committee to the Prime Minister, Professor Dr Yeah Kim Leng as panellists. The symposium, themed "*Bersama, Berdaya dan Mampan*" (Together, Empowered and Sustainable), outlined five initiatives: enhancing measurement, reforming poverty eradication funds, unifying data, changing attitudes and mindsets, and strengthening efforts to end poverty.



Above: Poster for the symposium (*SWRC*)

Below: Launching ceremony of the symposium (*Ministry of Economy*)

