

**Opening Address by President of Muis
Mr Mohamad Alami Musa
Inaugural Abdul Aleem Siddique Memorial Lecture
Singapore Islamic Hub Theatre
Tuesday 22 November 2011**

Mufti of Singapore
Dr Mohamed Fatris Bakaram

Respected Religious Leaders

Muis Council Members

Harmony Centre Board Members

Community, organizational, youth and student leaders

Ladies and gentlemen

Good evening to all and Assalamualaikum Wr Wb to our Muslim audience

Welcome to the inaugural Abdul Aleem Siddique Memorial Lecture. On behalf of the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore and the Harmony Centre, I wish to extend my sincere thank to all present this evening for your generosity and having taken time to attend this inaugural Lecture.

The Abdul Aleem Siddique Memorial Lecture is a new programme by the Harmony Centre to provide the opportunity for leaders of the religious communities in Singapore to share their perspectives and insights into contemporary, national or global issues or trends affecting humanity. This annual lecture is an initiative to allow for deeper understanding of each faith

community views and thinking on these issues. This interest to understand each faith beyond the basics is something that we found when the Harmony Centre was carrying out a review of its programmes as it enters into its fifth year of operations. We felt that a programme like the Abdul Aleem Siddique Memorial Lecture would afford a good opportunity for people to understand the thinking and perspectives of each faith as it relates to contemporary issues.

The name Abdul Aleem Siddique may be obvious to some in the religious fraternity but may not be familiar to many others. We have chosen to name the lecture as such as the late Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddique was a person who had been instrumental in the founding of the Inter- Religious Organisation of Singapore. His passion to spread the message of peace and unity within his own Muslim community as well as between different faith groups took him to all corners of the world. This commitment also earned him the title the “Ambassador of Peace”. To honour and recognize his mammoth achievements in galvanizing humanity, we thought it befitting to name the Memorial Lecture series after him.

The Mufti of Singapore, Dr Mohamed Fatris Bakaram will shortly deliver the inaugural lecture. To make this truly an interfaith event, we are happy that Mr Ashvin Desai, President of the Inter-Religious Organisation of Singapore, has kindly agreed to be the moderator for this inaugural Lecture. We aim to make this an annual event. Ideally the subsequent lecture should be held in July in conjunction with the Racial Harmony

Month. The subsequent speaker will be from a different faith community. We will work with all the faith leaders to make this series a success.

Another element deserving mention about this Abdul Aleem Siddique Memorial Lecture is its focus on youth. Unlike other lecture series that we have, we hope to attract more youth of all faith communities to attend the Lecture. We would like them to remember the legacy and to be inspired by the work of the late Abdul Aleem Siddique. We want our youth leaders to also play an active role in jealously safeguarding and promoting the religious harmony that we have taken for granted for so many decades.

For this reason, I am extremely happy and wish to thank everyone who has been responsible in convening and inspiring the youth to be present here this evening. I wish all of you a good lecture. As is popularly spoken, the lecture is only as good as your engagement and participation in it, especially during the question and answer session.

On that note, I hand you back to our Masters of Ceremony. Thank you.