



**UNIVERSITAS INDONESIA**

**RATIONALE FOR CONFERRING**  
**an**  
**HONORARY DOCTORATE**  
**on**  
**HIS MAJESTY SULTAN**  
**HAJI HASSANAL BOLKIAH MU'IZZADDIN WADDAULAH**  
**THE SULTAN AND YANG DI-PERTUAN OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

Degree Conferment Ceremony  
For an Honorary Doctorate in Philosophy of Humanity and Civilization  
Universitas Indonesia  
Depok, 21 April 2011  
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**Reasoning for Conferring  
an Honorary Doctorate in  
Philosophy of Humanity and Civilization  
on His Majesty Sultan  
Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah  
The Sultan And Yang Di-Pertuan Of Brunei Darussalam  
at Universitas Indonesia**

His Majesty "*believes in balanced development,  
which will not only cater for material betterment  
but also spiritual and religious enhancement.*"

(Titah Baginda on July 15, 1996)

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah was born on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 1946 at the Darrusalam Palace in Bandar Brunei (now called Bandar Seri Begawan). The eldest in the family, His Majesty was destined to continue Brunei's 600-year royal dynasty, the oldest in South-east Asia. Yang Teramat Mulia Pengiran Muda Hassanal Bolkiah became Crown Prince in 1961 and on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 1967 assumed his responsibilities as the 29<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Brunei. "On 1<sup>st</sup> August 1968, amidst the full pageantry and splendor of the royal court, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah became His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam."

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah received his early education from private tutors at the *Istana Darul Hana* and attended top institutions in both Brunei and Malaysia before furthering his studies in the United Kingdom. There, he qualified for admission as an officer Cadet at the Sandhurst Royal Military Academy and was commissioned as a Captain in 1967. The Crown Prince left Sandhurst in October of the same year to ascend the throne.

“On 29<sup>th</sup> July 1965, His Majesty who was then the Crown Prince married Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha in a glittering ceremony steeped in tradition with much pomp and splendour.” The royal couple has been blessed with two sons and four daughters. On 28<sup>th</sup> October 1981, His Majesty married Her Royal Highness Pengiran Istri Hajah Mariam Binti Haji Abdul Aziz. This marriage has been blessed with two sons and two daughters.

Besides being the Sultan and Ruler, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah is concurrently the Prime Minister, Defense Minister, Finance Minister, and head of the Moslem faith in Brunei Darussalam. Being a working monarch, he is involved in the conduct of State affairs nationally and internationally. His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has been a living testimony of a wise and great ‘*Pemimpin Era Baru*’ (Leader of a New Era). His Majesty the Sultan is the driving force behind all progress in the nation which enjoys an enviably high standard of living, the most modern amenities and recognition around the world.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Universiti Brunei Darussalam, *Pemimpin Era Baru, Leader of the New Era*, p. 11.



There are several reasons for conferring the degree of Doctor Honoris Causa on His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah. Those we consider the most important are: first, His Majesty's admirable efforts in the promotion of prosperity for his people, civilization, and education; second, a dialogue of civilization in promoting the spirituality of Islam; third, his international and regional political contribution in promoting peace.

### **I. Promotion of Prosperity, Civilization, and Education**

The promotion of prosperity and civilization through a good system of education is one of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah's priorities in dealing with today's clash of cultures and civilizations.

#### **1.1. Promotion of People's Prosperity**

Like his famous father, who is remembered as the "Architect of Modern Brunei," His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, is a caring monarch and tirelessly works for the continued well-being of his people. Under His magnificent leadership, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has brought prosperity and progress to the people of Brunei Darussalam. On ascension to the throne, His Majesty declared: "*I shall endeavor to carry out the policies laid down by my father and make every effort towards maintaining the peace, tranquility and prosperity of the country, as well as enhancing the quality of life of the people.*"<sup>2</sup>

As the leader of Brunei, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah actively partakes in the process of establishing a

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Universiti Brunei Darussalam, *Pemimpin Era Baru, Leader of the New Era*, p. 27.

welfare state in his country, Brunei. The prosperity of Brunei is a result of the Sultan's effort to foster civilization, a way towards the process of full humanization for all. Surrounded from all sides by "Asian Tigers," Brunei is unique both in its state organization, and in its cultural and moral atmosphere.

Another remarkable achievement of His Majesty was the setting up of the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation in 1992. The foundation is a gift of His Majesty to his people and is devoted to, among other things, financing research-based work, particularly in the field of knowledge. His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has used the enormous income from the country's vast reserves of oil and natural gas and has transformed his tiny Sultanate into one of the world's most economically prosperous and socially secure societies.

Furthermore, the setting up of the Tabung Amanah Islam Brunei (TAIB), or the Brunei Islamic Trust Fund, in 1991 signaled His Majesty's deep-rooted commitment to the Islamic faith. Based on Islamic principles, the fund, which is opened to Muslims and non-Muslims alike, offers dividends and bonuses based on profits gained after dividing the payment for *zakat* or tithes.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Universiti Brunei Darussalam, *Pemimpin Era Baru, Leader of The New Era*, p. 39.

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## 1.2. University's Role for Human Civilization

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah contributes greatly to the development of his Kingdom by promoting a social system in which everyone can get a free education and free health care. "His Majesty places a high premium on education. Under His Majesty's government, the literacy rate has increased from 10% in the 1940's to the current rate of 90%. In fact, His Majesty's government has set 100% literacy as the next achievable target. Today, more than 215 schools, technical and vocational institutions have been built."<sup>4</sup>

In connection with this, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has tirelessly engaged in a dialogue on education, Royal politics and philosophy. He has also promoted the long Malay cultural tradition and supported research to promote human civilization. The role of University Brunei Darussalam is to develop human resources through excellence in teaching, research and services in areas of importance to Brunei Darussalam. Even if teaching is the University's primary mission, University Brunei Darussalam also has the responsibility "to produce qualified graduates suitably equipped in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and moral and spiritual values, to support the development needs of the nation as consistent with the national philosophy."

Moreover, University Brunei Darussalam, as the Nation's only university has to undertake creative and important research, particularly applied research, in areas where it has a comparative advantage and in accordance with national needs.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Universiti Brunei Darussalam, *Pemimpin Era Baru, Leader of The New Era*, p. 45.



It traces its roots to the Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Institute of Education. Only in 1988, this Institute of Education was merged into the university.<sup>5</sup> The University's faculty members, highly skilled in a large and growing number of specializations, will make their efforts of values to the community and help to realize the project of human civilization.

### **1.3. Economic Empowerment**

The Sultan of Brunei first came to worldwide attention in the 1980s when the financial press revealed that this ruler of a traditional Islamic monarchy on the northwest coast of Borneo controlled a fortune in excess of \$25 billion. His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has used his money to spearhead many economic and social development projects to improve the standard of living of his people. His Majesty's immediate concerns are for maintaining Brunei's economic stability while reducing its dependence on oil. "Not only is the phenomenal stability of such a small country amazing, it also has the ability to be consistent in maintaining its political course and vindicating its original way of development." Although oil was discovered in Brunei in the 1920s, it did not possess significant wealth until the oil crisis of the 1970's, when natural gas production also began. Profits, royalties, and taxes from petroleum production and shipping are controlled from the beginning by the royal family in partnership with divisions of the Shell Oil Company. Other international businesses are expected to include the sultan's family in their profits as well.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Universiti Brunei Darussalam, *Pemimpin Era Baru, Leader of The New Era*, p. 45.



Oil and natural gas exports to Japan and other countries have given Brunei a per capita income rivaling that of many Western societies. Food, fuel, housing, schooling, and medical care are either free or subsidized, and there is virtually no poverty except for small pockets in small remote villages. Energy reserves are dwindling however, and the government has had limited success in diversifying the economy. The oil and gas sector's contribution to gross domestic product was 39.8 percent in 2003, up from 37.1 percent in 2002 because of higher oil prices. The ongoing dispute with Malaysia over the contested oil-and gas-rich Baram Delta waters off the northern Borneo coast took on a new urgency with the discovery in March 2004 of deepwater oil at Gumusut, near the disputed territory. Negotiations with Malaysia may be more successful under that country's new Prime Minister, Abdullah Badawi.

## **II. Dialogue on Civilization: the Western and Islamic World**

Another important achievement of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah is His tireless efforts in promoting Islamic Values through a dialogue on civilization, supporting the study of Islam, and promoting tolerance.

### **2.1. Promotion of Islamic Values Trough a dialogue on civilization**

Although Brunei Darussalam is a new nation, under the glorious leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, it is now a modern country, one rooted in the faith and values of Islam. The ruling Bolkiah family and particularly His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah have consistently sought to uphold the values of Islam, to encourage the

intellectual life of Muslims, and to work for a more harmonious coexistence in society. Within Brunei Darussalam, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has recognized the enduring qualities of these foundations and has presided over a modernization process which respects and is in consistent with inherited traditions. It is a remarkable achievement of His Majesty to engage actively in creative dialogue with other cultures based on the universal aspects of Islamic values as a part of human civilization. His Majesty believes “in *balanced development, which will not only cater for material betterment but also spiritual and religious enhancement.*”

His Majesty thinks that it is important for a prosperous Brunei Darussalam to not forget its rich cultural past and strong Islamic values. So, while many other nations face the erosion of moral and religious values (which are often incorrectly considered as stumbling blocks to modernity and progress), His Majesty, together with his people, has adhered “to the tenets of the Malay Muslim Monarchy.” This Malay Muslim Monarchy is based on three main principles. Firstly, the good virtues of Malay culture which are to be cherished and nurtured. Secondly, Islam is to be seen as the core way of life for most Bruneians. Thirdly, the monarchy is genuinely respected by its people.<sup>6</sup> The interplay between these three pillars provides the philosophical basis for building a true Bruneian civilization, one that all may admire.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Universiti Brunei Darussalam, *Pemimpin Era Baru, Leader of The New Era*, p. 35.

## 2.2. International Islamic Study Centre

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has established an International Programme for the study of Islamic Civilization. The aim of this centre is to encourage better international relationships based on mutual understanding, respect and co-operation for the common good of all people. This demonstrates a strong commitment towards creating a common basis for dialogue and collaboration. In this context, we agree that:

“Today we are in search of the basis on which human beings from all the various religious traditions could encounter each other in a meaningful way across the entire world, ready to re-appropriate, purify and transform their own historical traditions, but not abandon them. Such common ground for the (plurality of) faiths could only be clarity of thought, truthfulness and a shared basic knowledge. Only these (three elements) would permit that boundless communication in which the wellsprings of faith could draw each other closer, by virtue of their essential commitments.”<sup>7</sup>

Through the Programme of His Centre of Islamic Studies, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has attempted to bridge the divide between civilizations and reduce misunderstanding between the Western and Muslim world as well as between Islam and other faiths. His Majesty wants to build a better understanding between communities especially as a response to the rise of religious intolerance. This provides a way we can

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<sup>7</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Philosophical Faith in the Face of Revelation* (1962).

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build good relations based on our common humanity despite different traditions and religions.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah is actively involved in supporting the centre. The Prince of Wales has granted His Majesty Sultan an award for his efforts to promote greater mutual understanding between the Islamic and Western world. It is a well-deserved recognition for all His Majesty's effort to bring about a fruitful dialogue on civilization, traditions, and cultures. His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has also made significant contribution to the promotion of the arts and cultures of different faiths.

### **2.3. Promotion of Philosophical Thoughts of Religious Tolerance**

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah has worked hard to bring about a better understanding of 'the Islamic World' through a dialogue of civilizations around the world. His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah sees certain aspects as important in pursuing this dialogue. Firstly, His Majesty has brought together theologians and philosophers to exchange views, in order to explore the principles of Islamic philosophy to Brunei's young generation of academics and researchers. His Majesty the Sultan established a philosophy department at the National State University of Brunei in collaboration with the *Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies* (OCIS) as an earnest to promote dialogue between Islamic and Western civilizations.

Secondly, His Majesty has promoted civilizational dialogue by emphasizing "the important role of philosophy in interaction and discussion between cultures as well as its role in respecting other cultural traditions and rituals."



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As part of his efforts, His Majesty gave an award to Prince Charles to recognize his work in this area. "In receiving the award, Prince Charles highlighted that education, understanding and positive thinking are needed for effective dialogue between the communities." The OCIS, as an associated institution of the University of Oxford established in 1985, has encouraged the scholarly study of Islam and the Islamic world and acted as a meeting point for the Western and Islamic worlds of learning. This can be realized through the "encouragement of interest in Islamic cultural heritage through the work of the Prince's foundation, participation in the activities of a number of Islamic organizations, and his tireless work to encourage leaders around the world to maintain and extend such dialogue and partnership." "The award, which has been made every two years since 1998, has seen recipients such as the prominent Muslim scholars Shiekh Youssef Al-Qaradawi, Sheikh Abdul Fattah Abu Ghudda and Adnan Mohd Zarzar.

Beginning in 1990 His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah began efforts to strengthen the role of Islam through the concept of Melayu Islam Beraja (or Malay Islamic Monarchy), which binds the Malay identity, Islam, and the role of the Monarchy in its official ideology.

### III. International Political Involvement for Peace

In addition to the usual day-to-day administration of government and receiving foreign dignitaries, His Majesty the Sultan is always out and about visiting government departments and related institutions, the Bruneian security forces on military maneuvers and villages in

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different parts of the State. This brings him very close to the people who love and revere him.

His Majesty is also deeply involved in the promotion of solidarity and strengthening of relations with the outside world. His Majesty travels widely in Southeast Asia, East Asia, The Middle East, Europe, and the United States. His Majesty addressed the United Nations General Assembly on Brunei Darussalam's admission to the UN in September 1984.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah began increasing Brunei's role in regional affairs. In 1985 Brunei joined ASEAN. The Sultan is active in promoting diplomacy between countries in the region especially with his neighbors Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and China.

On October 31, 2006, in Nanning, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao met His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah on the sidelines of the China-ASEAN Commemorative Summit marking the 15th anniversary of the establishment of Dialogue Relations between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Both sides exchanged views on bilateral ties. Premier Wen said that since China and Brunei established diplomatic ties 15 years earlier, bilateral relations had progressed smoothly and bilateral cooperation in various fields had expanded continuously. Both leaders hoped to enhance exchanges of high-level visits, expand investment, trade and economic cooperation, and facilitate cultural and educational exchanges. This can be seen as one way to realize and pave the way toward improving human resources and strengthening solidarity between the two countries.

Brunei ratified the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) charter in February 2008, and in August the country signed a Free

Trade Agreement with Japan. In keeping with its policy of fostering ties with other Islamic countries, the sultanate began plans to enter a Free Trade Agreement with Pakistan in 2009, and talks began with EU negotiators signaling a Free Trade Agreement could be signed with the EU in 2009 as well. In late August, Brunei offered to lead the peacekeeping efforts in Mindanao in the southern Philippines when Malaysia's agreement came to a close and peace talks deadlocked.

#### **IV. Awards and Honorary Doctorates**

The Sultan holds an honorary commission in the Royal Air Force of the United Kingdom as an Air Chief Marshal. He is also an Honorary Admiral of the Royal Navy of the United Kingdom, a title given to him by Queen Elizabeth II at the passing out parade of the 2001 summer term at Britannia Royal College, Dartmouth, the Royal Navy's officer-trainer school in the UK. On the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2005, he was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Law by the National University of Singapore. In April 2008 he was made an honorary member of the Indonesian *Satgas Atbara* Special Operations Unit. He has been awarded an honorary Doctorate of Law degree from the University of Oxford and an Honorary Doctor of Letters degree from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. He also received an Honorary Doctorate from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

#### **V. Conclusion**

Having considered these achievements we believe His Majesty deserving of this award. In particular, as the Head of State in a country with a Moslem Majority, His Majesty's efforts to engage actively and supportively a creative fruitful dialogue based on Islamic and cultural



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values have been highly influential in building and maintaining a comprehensive view of civilization. We also consider His Majesty's efforts and achievements in developing prosperity both for his people as well as regional and international efforts for peace, should be valued as part of His Majesty's concern in promoting civilization. His efforts towards dialogue between civilizations, between the Western World and the Islamic World have led to a more fruitful collaboration and solidarity that can help prevent the clash of civilizations. His Majesty's efforts and contributions concerning the dialogue of civilization based on Islamic values as universal values and Malay rich tradition are inspiring for all of us.

For these very reasons,  
Universitas Indonesia, along with its concern to promote civilization  
based on our motto  
*Veritas, Probitas, Iustitia,*  
takes great pleasure in conferring on  
His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah,  
The Sultan And Yang Di-Pertuan Of Brunei Darussalam  
*an Honorary Doctorate*  
in  
Philosophy of Humanity and Civilization



**Curriculum Vitae of His Majesty Sultan  
Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah  
The Sultan And Yang Di-Pertuan Of Brunei Darussalam**

**Birth name:** Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah

**Born:** 15 July 1946 Brunei Town (now Bandar Seri Begawan)

**Religion:** Islam

**Issue:** five princes and seven princesses as of 2008



**His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah  
Ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi  
Waddien, The Sultan And Yang Di-Pertuan Of Negara Brunei  
Darussalam**

His Majesty is the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and Minister of Finance.

As the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, His Majesty is the Supreme Executive Authority in Brunei Darussalam. In performing his duties, His Majesty is assisted by the following Councils: the Privy Council, the Council of Succession, the Religious Council, the Council of Ministers and the Legislative Council.

His Majesty was born on 15th July 1946 in Brunei Town (now Bandar Seri Begawan).

His Majesty undertook his early education in Brunei Darussalam and then went on to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to further his studies. His

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Majesty trained as an Officer at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst (United Kingdom) in 1966-67.

His Majesty was installed as The Crown Prince in 1961 at the age of 15. Following the voluntary abdication of his late father, Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, His Majesty was proclaimed as the Sultan of Brunei Darussalam on 5th October 1967.

His Majesty was crowned as the 29th Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on 1st August 1968.

In 1978, His Majesty led a Mission to London for discussions with Her Britannic Majesty's Government on the change of status of Brunei Darussalam to that of a sovereign, independent state. The outcome was the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between Brunei Darussalam and Great Britain under which the British Government relinquished its responsibilities for the conduct of Brunei Darussalam's Foreign Affairs and Defence on 1st January 1984.

His Majesty is married to Her Majesty the Duli Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha. His Majesty has five princes and seven princesses.

His Majesty plays polo, squash and badminton. He is also a qualified pilot of both aeroplanes and helicopters.

His Majesty holds the Sovereign and Chief of the Family Order of the Crown of Brunei (Darjah Kerabat Mahkota Brunei - DKMB) as well as other orders of Brunei Darussalam. In addition, His Majesty has also received foreign orders and decorations.

Source: <http://www.jpm.gov.bn/> [Government Of Brunei Darussalam]

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