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CULTURAL SYMPOSIUM II: AN AGENDA FOR CULTURAL READAPTATION

Peter M. Kedit

INTRODUCTION

The title of this paper spells out my intention and interest in presenting it. Firstly, it is a follow-up of the First Cultural Symposium held in 1988, during our 25th Anniversary of Independence. In the 1988 Symposium, the main theme was: *Cultural Participation for Cultural Unity*. Its aim was to promote cultural awareness, popularize local cultural activities, to achieve cultural identity for different ethnics, and to contribute Sarawak cultural items to the Malaysian Culture.

The programme was then to have a pre-symposium seminar/workshop for the seven communities. Its purpose was for the different communities to discuss their topic/area of interest following the general theme and objectives. After which they brought their reports and recommendations to the symposium for the plenary session, and to participate in the discussion during the presentation of papers over the 5-day symposium.

This year's symposium adopts a slightly different approach. The seven ethnic seminars will be held after the symposium. Participants who will be attending the seminars will have the opportunity first to listen to the papers presented during the symposium. Hopefully they will be able to pick up additional ideas or information for deliberation at their seminar /workshops. After all the seminars have been completed they return to the Symposium in August to give their reports and recommendations at a Plenary Session.

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For this reason, my intention on writing this paper is to outline, (what I understand them to be) — the rationale and concepts for this year's Symposium's three themes. They are namely:

- (1) Cultural Change: Review and Stocktaking;
- (2) Interactive Cultural Elements: Towards Unity; and
- (3) Cultural and Ethnic Aspirations: Vision 2020.

The purpose for this approach is to cast some ideas, in a framework, that may contribute to the seminar and workshop deliberations. Having been closely involved in preparing the first, and this year's symposium; may I say that, this is not a paper that I approach with ease or scholarly detachment, although I try here to pretend to those two ideals.