

**A CRITICAL STUDY ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERFAITH  
COMMISSION FROM THE LEGAL PERSPECTIVE IN MALAYSIA**

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The students/authors confirm that the work submitted is their own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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## **ABSTRACT**

In Malaysia, the importance of having a harmonious society is a vital component to maintain a stable country. This is due to the fact that Malaysia consists from society with various background, cultures, races and religions. Thus, tolerance and mutual understanding are needed among the society in order to create respect and to preserve peace and harmony. The establishment of the Interfaith Commission is closely related with religious and racial issues. Therefore there is a need to examine the establishment of the Commission from many aspects such as the concept of the Commission, the jurisdiction of powers and the extent of powers, so as to determine the legal as well as social impacts to the country. The establishment of the Interfaith Commission is a proposal initiated by the Bar Council and the National Rights Society (HAKAM) in order to settle any disputes or acts that constitute an infringement of religious freedom by means of mediation, negotiation and conciliation. The Commission will comprise of representatives from all religions to voice out their ideas and rights, to uphold its objective in promoting a better understanding between religious sects. Hence throughout the dialogue, it can resolve problems faced by the nation especially concerning their perspectives toward others' beliefs and faiths. The Interfaith Commission of Malaysia Bill 2005 had been passed to the Parliament for discussion, however it was never tabled and put on hold as the government was in the opinion that the issue was very sensitive and will create more interreligious problems. This project paper composed of in-depth study of the functions and powers of the Commission as provided in the Bill and also the consequences of the establishment of the Commission from legal and social contexts. Towards the end, this study will determine on whether or not the Interfaith Commission is relevant to be applied effectively in Malaysia.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgement	i
Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iii

### CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0	Background	1
1.1	Problem Statement	3
1.2	Objectives of the Study	5
1.3	Significance of the Study	5
1.4	Scope and Limitation	6
1.5	Methodology	6
1.6	Provisional Plan of Research	7
1.7	Conclusion	8

### CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0	Introduction	9
2.1	The Idea of Interfaith Commission	9
	2.1.1 The Role of Interfaith Commission	9
	2.1.2 Interfaith Commission to Solve Interfaith Conflicts	11
	2.1.3 The Approach by Interfaith Commission	13
2.2	Reactions to Interfaith Commission	15
	2.2.1 Tolerance by Society	15
	2.2.2 Grounds for Muslims' Objections	16
2.3	Possible Implications	19
2.4	Conclusion	20

