



Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah giving his speech at the World Islamic Countries University Leaders Summit 2015 in Putrajaya yesterday. Bernama pic

Moved by refugee plight

SYRIAN CRISIS:

Muslims have a duty to carry out social mission, says sultan

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SULTAN of Perak Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah hopes Muslims can do better in handling the Syrian refugee crisis.

He said over the past few weeks, the world had witnessed the plight of Syrian refugees as they desperately fled to Europe instead of neighbouring Muslim countries.

The ruler said he was deeply moved by the plight of refugees.

Sultan Nazrin said Muslims should learn from their own history, like how the first university in the world, al-Qarawiyyin University, housed Muslims in Europe when they were expelled during the Spanish inquisition in the 15th century.

As a result of the social mission carried out by al-Qarawiyyin, he said the city of Fez in Morocco became a place of refuge for the displaced of that time. Their quarter near the

university in the old city survives to this day, said the ruler.

"A good academy, as shown by our Islamic history, must not forget that it also has a social mission to carry out, just as the al-Qarawiyyin famously did with the poor and the vulnerable in society.

"Let that be to our benefit as we learn from our own history. I hope we will begin to do even better than our pious predecessors," he said.

The ruler said this in his address titled "Reclaiming Education in Muslim Universities for the 21st Century" at the World Islamic Countries University Leaders Summit 2015 here yesterday.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, around 150,000 Syrians have sought asylum in the European Union since the outbreak of the civil war in 2011.

Aside from social mission, Sultan Nazrin also stressed the need for universities to remain strong and independent through capable and trustworthy leaders.

"I cannot but stress to our leaders and administrators who are placed by the public in positions of trust, in that they should act as reliable trustees and carry out their *fardu kifayah* and public duty with integrity and *taqwa*, on behalf of the rest of us and for the sake of all.