



1 MALAYSIA

PEOPLE FIRST PERFORMANCE NOW



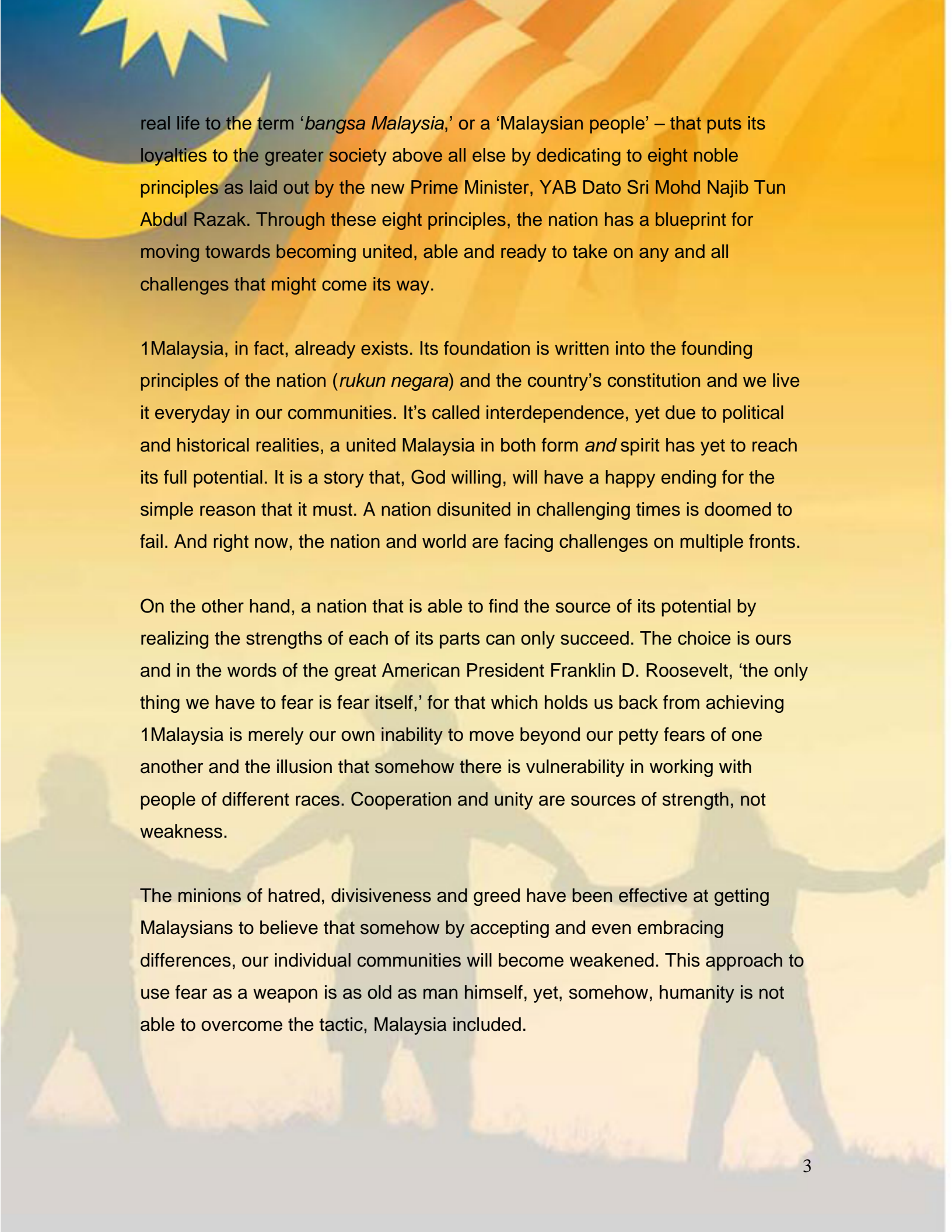


'1 MALAYSIA'

The new initiative put forth by new Prime Minister YAB Dato Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak is called '1 Malaysia.' The new PM has chosen 1 Malaysia as his guide and goal for his premiership, to take this young nation of 27 million to new and greater heights; to forge a new level of nationhood out of the various races that comprise this land. His goal is admirable, yet will not be achieved without greater understanding of what it means to be a nation united, and the sacrifices necessary to achieve it. Despite the last 50 years of rapid development, relative peace and prosperity, Malaysia has miles to go before it can call itself a nation united. There are those that say that the peace that exists is fragile; that all it takes is one major incident to re-ignite the racial riots of 1969. However, it is not fear of such a tragedy that drives the quest for 1 Malaysia. Rather, it is the knowledge that to achieve its goal of being a nation on par with the rest of the global community, Malaysia must rely on its people – all of them – and make full use of its human capital to achieve its potential. Only when this occurs can an achievement like Vision 2020 become a reality.

Interdependence has always been Malaysia's secret to success, however, it has never been truly embraced. Now, with 1 Malaysia, our new Prime Minister has decided that it is time to stop apologizing for who we are as a nation and begin exploiting it as the vehicle to drive the nation to its next phase of success. It is not merely a cliché to say 'unity through diversity.' Malaysia has been doing it for over fifty years. However, more work needs to be done to make it a lasting reality and the very source of success itself.

1Malaysia is designed to re-orient Malaysia toward a new direction geared towards greater unity and success. The days of a nation functioning as independent and separate ethnic and racial communities are gone. The new world we are living in requires the nation to act as one – to live, eat and breath interdependence in everything that we do. The time has come, therefore, to give

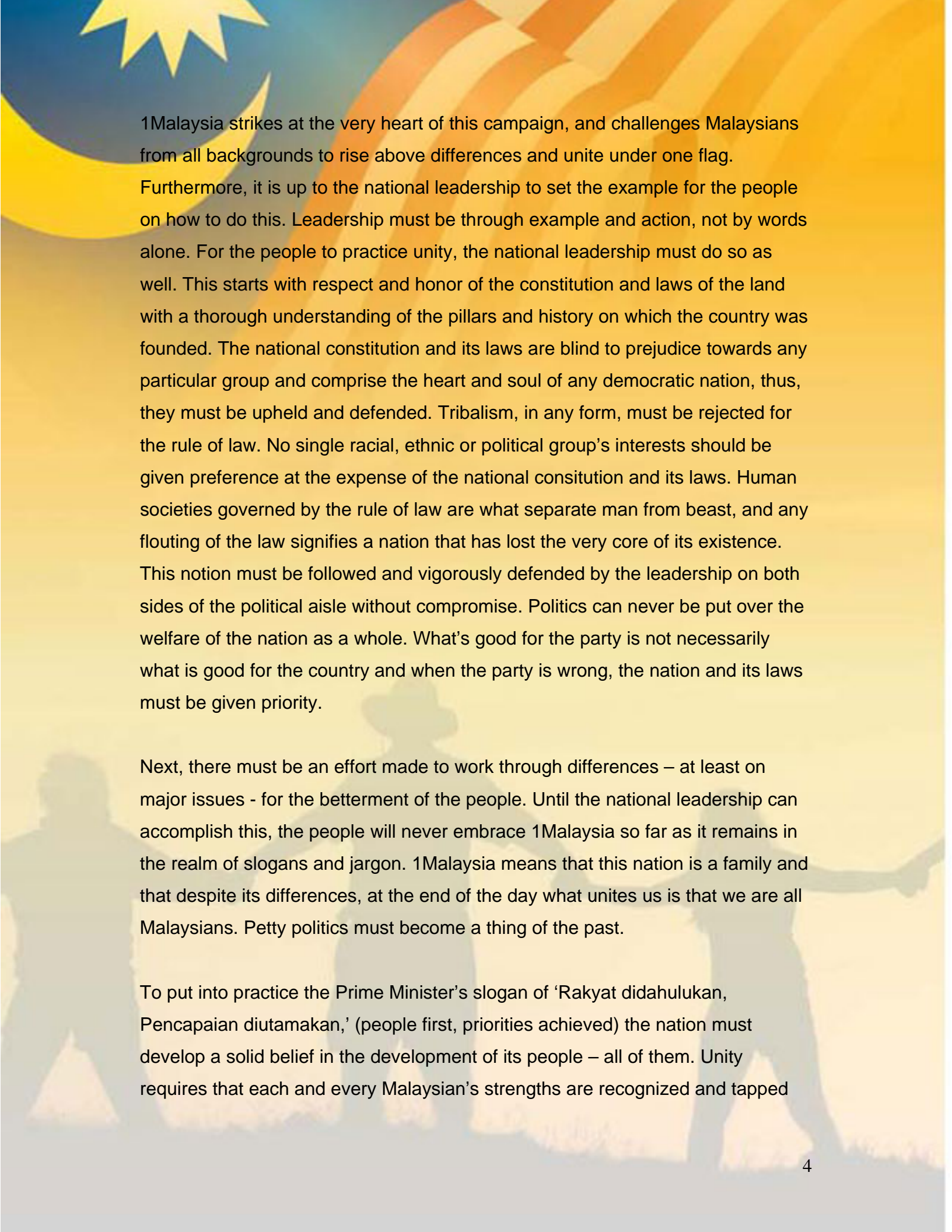


real life to the term '*bangsa Malaysia*,' or a 'Malaysian people' – that puts its loyalties to the greater society above all else by dedicating to eight noble principles as laid out by the new Prime Minister, YAB Dato Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak. Through these eight principles, the nation has a blueprint for moving towards becoming united, able and ready to take on any and all challenges that might come its way.

1Malaysia, in fact, already exists. Its foundation is written into the founding principles of the nation (*rukun negara*) and the country's constitution and we live it everyday in our communities. It's called interdependence, yet due to political and historical realities, a united Malaysia in both form *and* spirit has yet to reach its full potential. It is a story that, God willing, will have a happy ending for the simple reason that it must. A nation disunited in challenging times is doomed to fail. And right now, the nation and world are facing challenges on multiple fronts.

On the other hand, a nation that is able to find the source of its potential by realizing the strengths of each of its parts can only succeed. The choice is ours and in the words of the great American President Franklin D. Roosevelt, 'the only thing we have to fear is fear itself,' for that which holds us back from achieving 1Malaysia is merely our own inability to move beyond our petty fears of one another and the illusion that somehow there is vulnerability in working with people of different races. Cooperation and unity are sources of strength, not weakness.

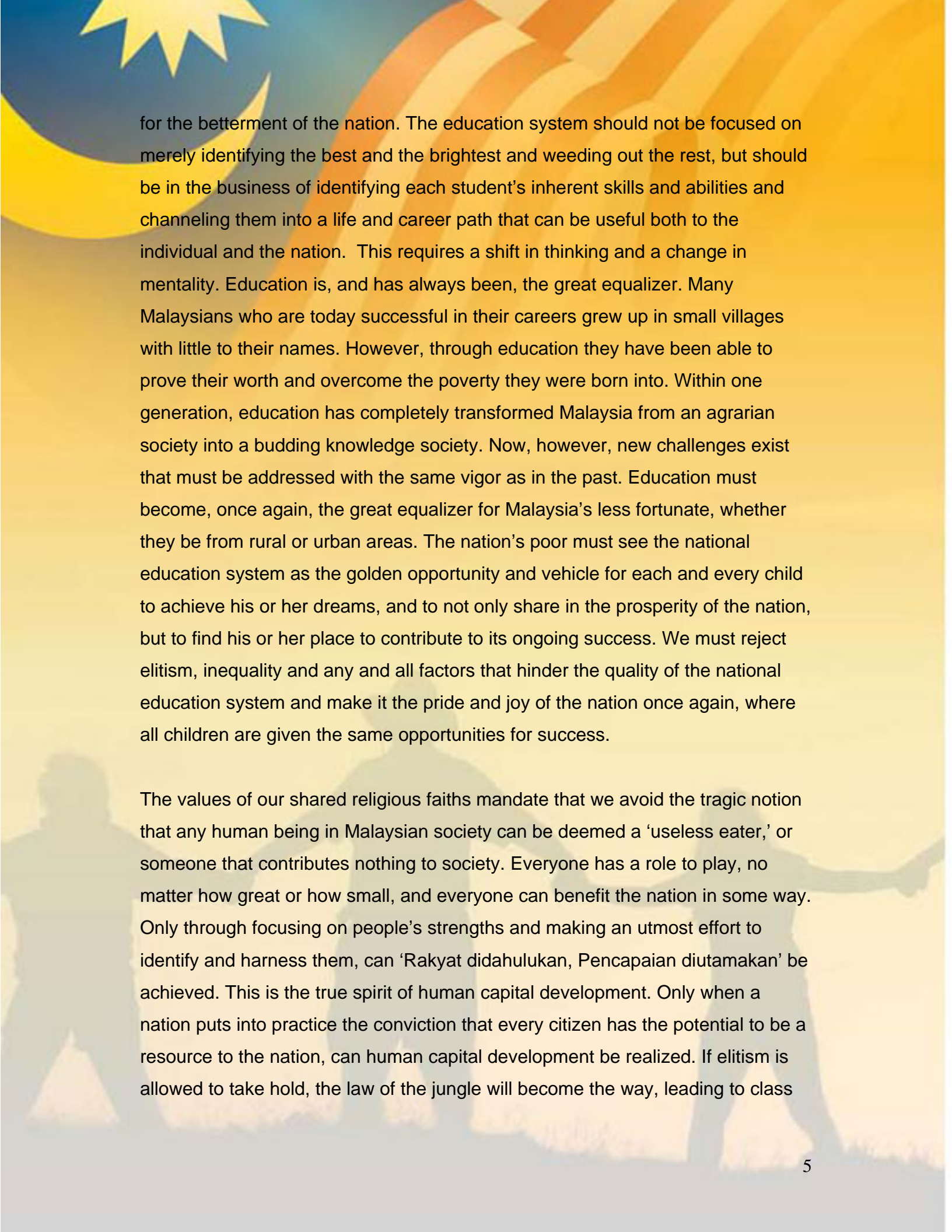
The minions of hatred, divisiveness and greed have been effective at getting Malaysians to believe that somehow by accepting and even embracing differences, our individual communities will become weakened. This approach to use fear as a weapon is as old as man himself, yet, somehow, humanity is not able to overcome the tactic, Malaysia included.



1Malaysia strikes at the very heart of this campaign, and challenges Malaysians from all backgrounds to rise above differences and unite under one flag. Furthermore, it is up to the national leadership to set the example for the people on how to do this. Leadership must be through example and action, not by words alone. For the people to practice unity, the national leadership must do so as well. This starts with respect and honor of the constitution and laws of the land with a thorough understanding of the pillars and history on which the country was founded. The national constitution and its laws are blind to prejudice towards any particular group and comprise the heart and soul of any democratic nation, thus, they must be upheld and defended. Tribalism, in any form, must be rejected for the rule of law. No single racial, ethnic or political group's interests should be given preference at the expense of the national constitution and its laws. Human societies governed by the rule of law are what separate man from beast, and any flouting of the law signifies a nation that has lost the very core of its existence. This notion must be followed and vigorously defended by the leadership on both sides of the political aisle without compromise. Politics can never be put over the welfare of the nation as a whole. What's good for the party is not necessarily what is good for the country and when the party is wrong, the nation and its laws must be given priority.

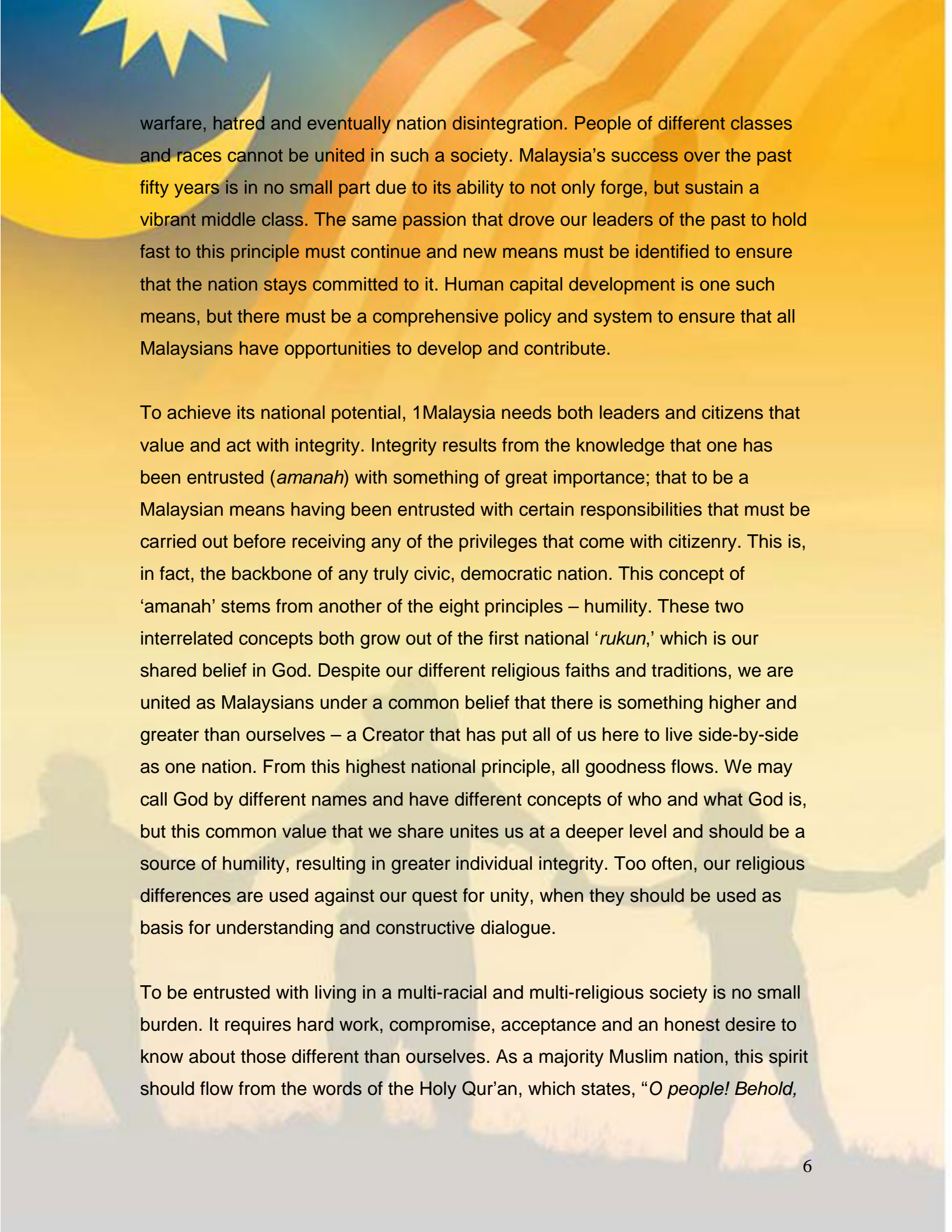
Next, there must be an effort made to work through differences – at least on major issues - for the betterment of the people. Until the national leadership can accomplish this, the people will never embrace 1Malaysia so far as it remains in the realm of slogans and jargon. 1Malaysia means that this nation is a family and that despite its differences, at the end of the day what unites us is that we are all Malaysians. Petty politics must become a thing of the past.

To put into practice the Prime Minister's slogan of 'Rakyat didahulukan, Pencapaian diutamakan,' (people first, priorities achieved) the nation must develop a solid belief in the development of its people – all of them. Unity requires that each and every Malaysian's strengths are recognized and tapped

The background of the page features a stylized representation of the Malaysian flag, with its characteristic blue canton containing a yellow crescent and a 14-pointed star, and the rest of the flag's red and white stripes. The background is a warm gradient of yellow and orange. In the lower portion, there are faint, light-colored silhouettes of several people, possibly in a group or a line, walking or standing. The text is centered and reads:

for the betterment of the nation. The education system should not be focused on merely identifying the best and the brightest and weeding out the rest, but should be in the business of identifying each student's inherent skills and abilities and channeling them into a life and career path that can be useful both to the individual and the nation. This requires a shift in thinking and a change in mentality. Education is, and has always been, the great equalizer. Many Malaysians who are today successful in their careers grew up in small villages with little to their names. However, through education they have been able to prove their worth and overcome the poverty they were born into. Within one generation, education has completely transformed Malaysia from an agrarian society into a budding knowledge society. Now, however, new challenges exist that must be addressed with the same vigor as in the past. Education must become, once again, the great equalizer for Malaysia's less fortunate, whether they be from rural or urban areas. The nation's poor must see the national education system as the golden opportunity and vehicle for each and every child to achieve his or her dreams, and to not only share in the prosperity of the nation, but to find his or her place to contribute to its ongoing success. We must reject elitism, inequality and any and all factors that hinder the quality of the national education system and make it the pride and joy of the nation once again, where all children are given the same opportunities for success.

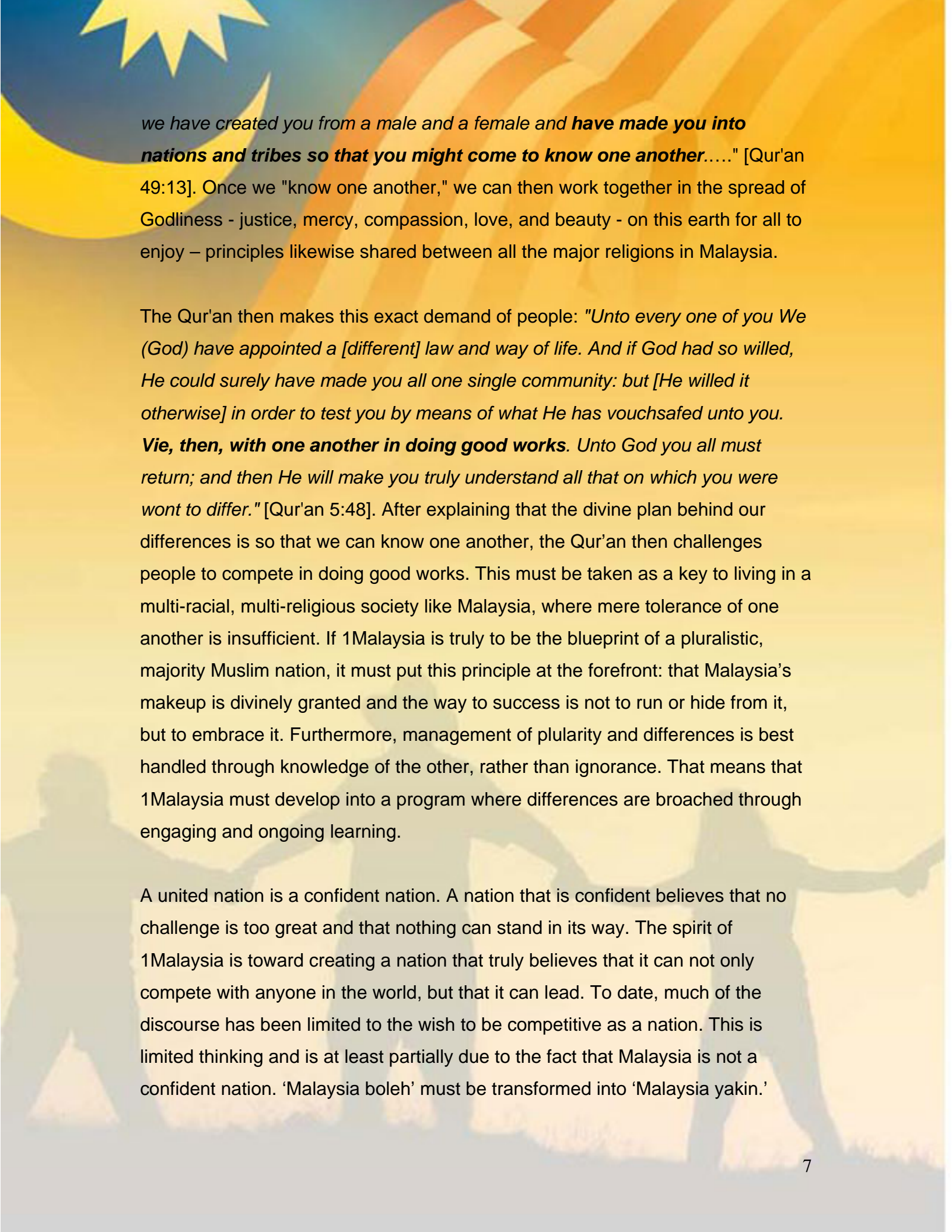
The values of our shared religious faiths mandate that we avoid the tragic notion that any human being in Malaysian society can be deemed a 'useless eater,' or someone that contributes nothing to society. Everyone has a role to play, no matter how great or how small, and everyone can benefit the nation in some way. Only through focusing on people's strengths and making an utmost effort to identify and harness them, can 'Rakyat didahulukan, Pencapaian diutamakan' be achieved. This is the true spirit of human capital development. Only when a nation puts into practice the conviction that every citizen has the potential to be a resource to the nation, can human capital development be realized. If elitism is allowed to take hold, the law of the jungle will become the way, leading to class



warfare, hatred and eventually nation disintegration. People of different classes and races cannot be united in such a society. Malaysia's success over the past fifty years is in no small part due to its ability to not only forge, but sustain a vibrant middle class. The same passion that drove our leaders of the past to hold fast to this principle must continue and new means must be identified to ensure that the nation stays committed to it. Human capital development is one such means, but there must be a comprehensive policy and system to ensure that all Malaysians have opportunities to develop and contribute.

To achieve its national potential, 1Malaysia needs both leaders and citizens that value and act with integrity. Integrity results from the knowledge that one has been entrusted (*amanah*) with something of great importance; that to be a Malaysian means having been entrusted with certain responsibilities that must be carried out before receiving any of the privileges that come with citizenry. This is, in fact, the backbone of any truly civic, democratic nation. This concept of 'amanah' stems from another of the eight principles – humility. These two interrelated concepts both grow out of the first national '*rukun*,' which is our shared belief in God. Despite our different religious faiths and traditions, we are united as Malaysians under a common belief that there is something higher and greater than ourselves – a Creator that has put all of us here to live side-by-side as one nation. From this highest national principle, all goodness flows. We may call God by different names and have different concepts of who and what God is, but this common value that we share unites us at a deeper level and should be a source of humility, resulting in greater individual integrity. Too often, our religious differences are used against our quest for unity, when they should be used as basis for understanding and constructive dialogue.


To be entrusted with living in a multi-racial and multi-religious society is no small burden. It requires hard work, compromise, acceptance and an honest desire to know about those different than ourselves. As a majority Muslim nation, this spirit should flow from the words of the Holy Qur'an, which states, "*O people! Behold,*



*we have created you from a male and a female and **have made you into nations and tribes so that you might come to know one another....***" [Qur'an 49:13]. Once we "know one another," we can then work together in the spread of Godliness - justice, mercy, compassion, love, and beauty - on this earth for all to enjoy – principles likewise shared between all the major religions in Malaysia.

The Qur'an then makes this exact demand of people: *"Unto every one of you We (God) have appointed a [different] law and way of life. And if God had so willed, He could surely have made you all one single community: but [He willed it otherwise] in order to test you by means of what He has vouchsafed unto you. **Vie, then, with one another in doing good works.** Unto God you all must return; and then He will make you truly understand all that on which you were wont to differ."* [Qur'an 5:48]. After explaining that the divine plan behind our differences is so that we can know one another, the Qur'an then challenges people to compete in doing good works. This must be taken as a key to living in a multi-racial, multi-religious society like Malaysia, where mere tolerance of one another is insufficient. If 1Malaysia is truly to be the blueprint of a pluralistic, majority Muslim nation, it must put this principle at the forefront: that Malaysia's makeup is divinely granted and the way to success is not to run or hide from it, but to embrace it. Furthermore, management of plurality and differences is best handled through knowledge of the other, rather than ignorance. That means that 1Malaysia must develop into a program where differences are broached through engaging and ongoing learning.

A united nation is a confident nation. A nation that is confident believes that no challenge is too great and that nothing can stand in its way. The spirit of 1Malaysia is toward creating a nation that truly believes that it can not only compete with anyone in the world, but that it can lead. To date, much of the discourse has been limited to the wish to be competitive as a nation. This is limited thinking and is at least partially due to the fact that Malaysia is not a confident nation. 'Malaysia boleh' must be transformed into 'Malaysia yakin.'

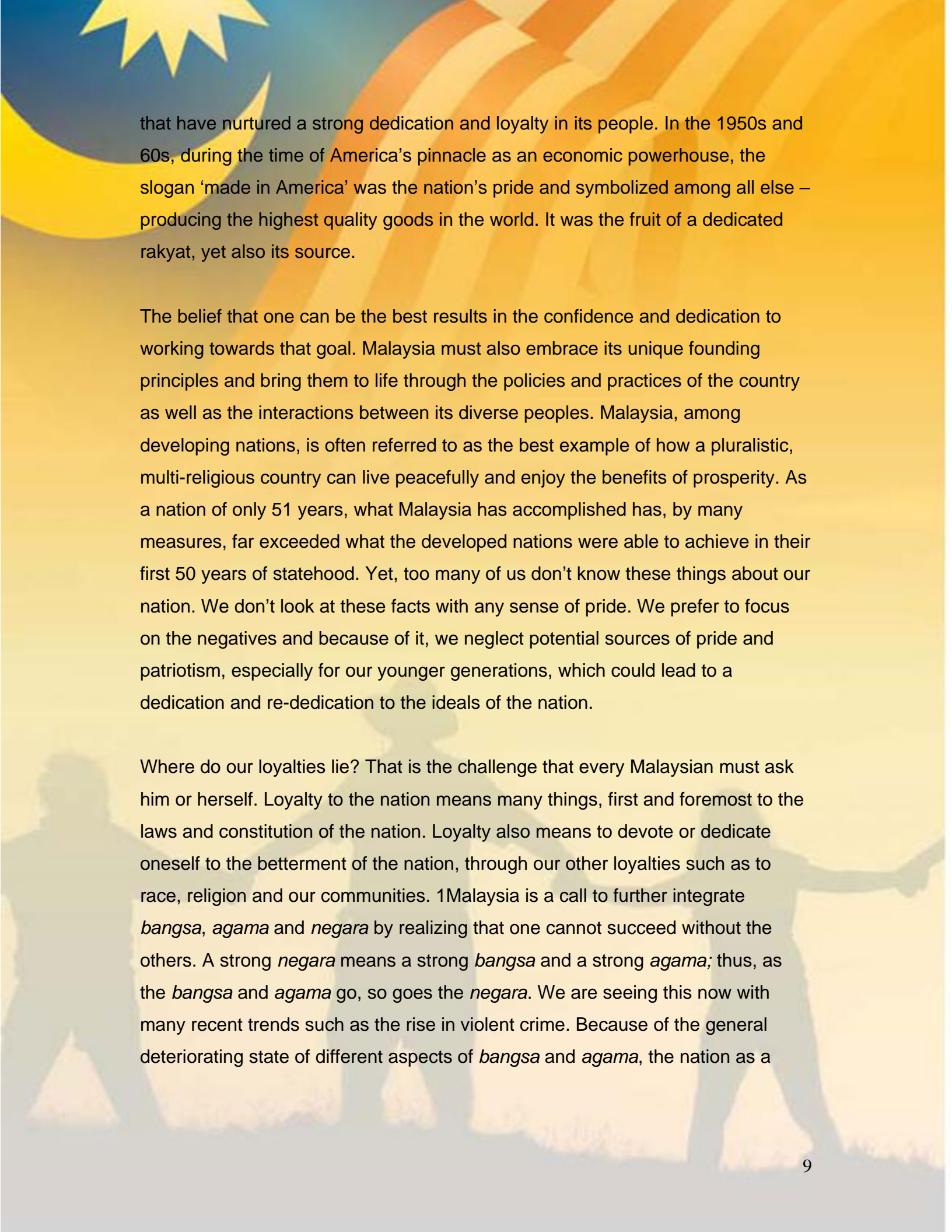


Malaysia yakin will naturally result when we learn that all we need to be successful already exists within our borders, and that we have everything we need to succeed, we only lack the belief and will to do it.

We have the resources, institutions, know-how and human capital to become global leaders in many areas if we can only bring ourselves to believe that it can happen, and then dedicate ourselves to excellence in everything we do. Rather than highlighting each other's weaknesses, by focusing on each other's strengths and learning from one another, through unity and community we can build the nation together. 1Malaysia aims to provide that final piece of the puzzle by creating a society that is aware of its strengths and actively works toward exploiting them, driven by the conviction that we can do anything that we put our collective minds to. Through unity, anything is possible.

Unity is contagious. When people are united in their beliefs, the result can move mountains. History is the best teacher in this regard. Dedication to the nation and its development requires a belief that what one is doing is important and valued. Dedication does not result from fear campaigns, forced labor, propoganda or misinformation. Dedication results from a strong, unwavering belief that what one is doing is important, and that one's efforts will bear fruit. Traditionally, those who have been most dedicated to movements, whether they be political, social or other, have been those who have believed in those movements with all their hearts and souls. Those who have been willing to give everything of themselves, even their lives, for their beliefs in something better.

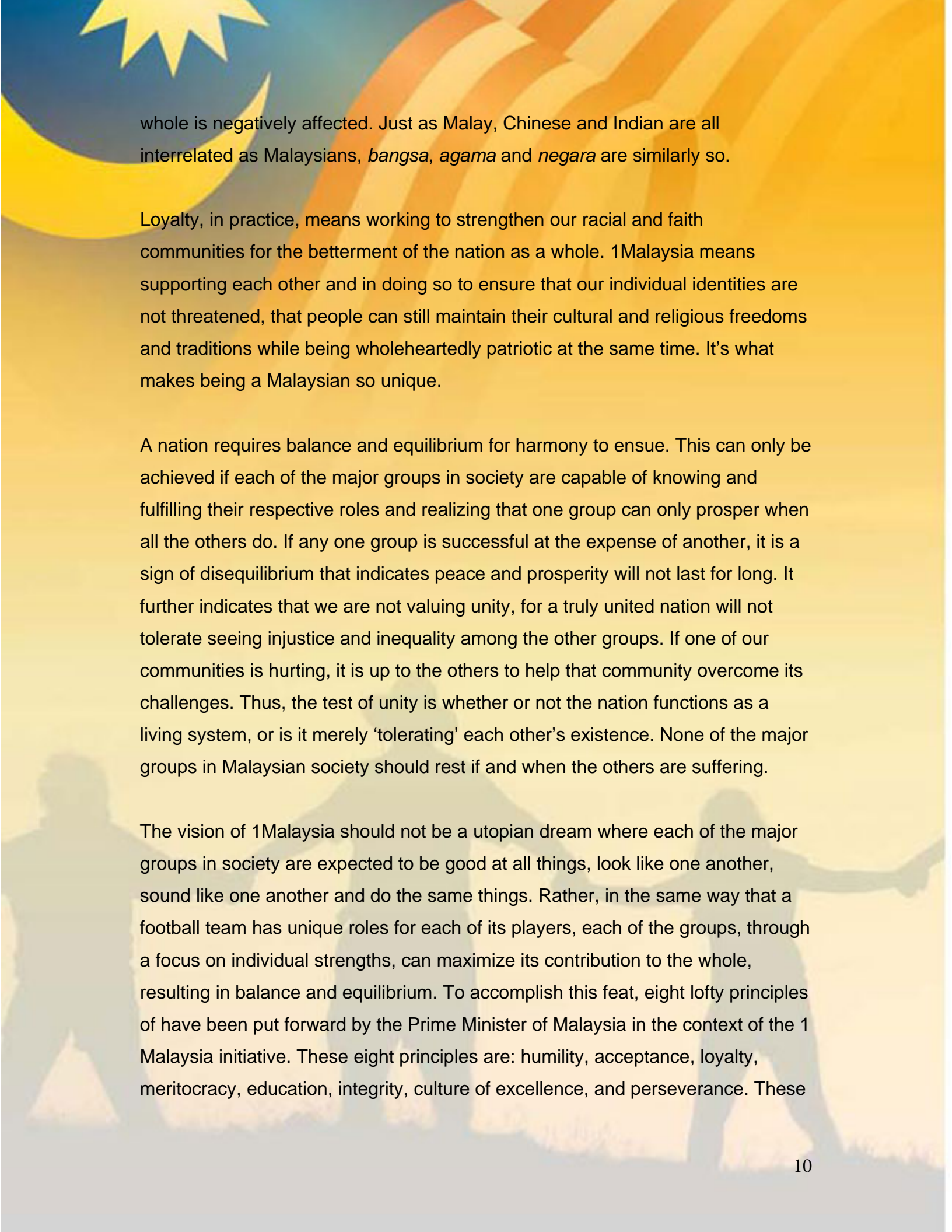
The apex of dedication stems from belief. Americans, for one, have always been held in high esteem for their dedication to their country. It has been said that this dedication is grounded in the founding values and ideals of its Constitution, which includes the principles that all men are created equal and that the government is of the people, for the people and by the people. Though it may only be seen that way to Americans themselves, it is the ideals of America's founding principles



that have nurtured a strong dedication and loyalty in its people. In the 1950s and 60s, during the time of America's pinnacle as an economic powerhouse, the slogan 'made in America' was the nation's pride and symbolized among all else – producing the highest quality goods in the world. It was the fruit of a dedicated rakyat, yet also its source.

The belief that one can be the best results in the confidence and dedication to working towards that goal. Malaysia must also embrace its unique founding principles and bring them to life through the policies and practices of the country as well as the interactions between its diverse peoples. Malaysia, among developing nations, is often referred to as the best example of how a pluralistic, multi-religious country can live peacefully and enjoy the benefits of prosperity. As a nation of only 51 years, what Malaysia has accomplished has, by many measures, far exceeded what the developed nations were able to achieve in their first 50 years of statehood. Yet, too many of us don't know these things about our nation. We don't look at these facts with any sense of pride. We prefer to focus on the negatives and because of it, we neglect potential sources of pride and patriotism, especially for our younger generations, which could lead to a dedication and re-dedication to the ideals of the nation.

Where do our loyalties lie? That is the challenge that every Malaysian must ask him or herself. Loyalty to the nation means many things, first and foremost to the laws and constitution of the nation. Loyalty also means to devote or dedicate oneself to the betterment of the nation, through our other loyalties such as to race, religion and our communities. 1Malaysia is a call to further integrate *bangsa*, *agama* and *negara* by realizing that one cannot succeed without the others. A strong *negara* means a strong *bangsa* and a strong *agama*; thus, as the *bangsa* and *agama* go, so goes the *negara*. We are seeing this now with many recent trends such as the rise in violent crime. Because of the general deteriorating state of different aspects of *bangsa* and *agama*, the nation as a

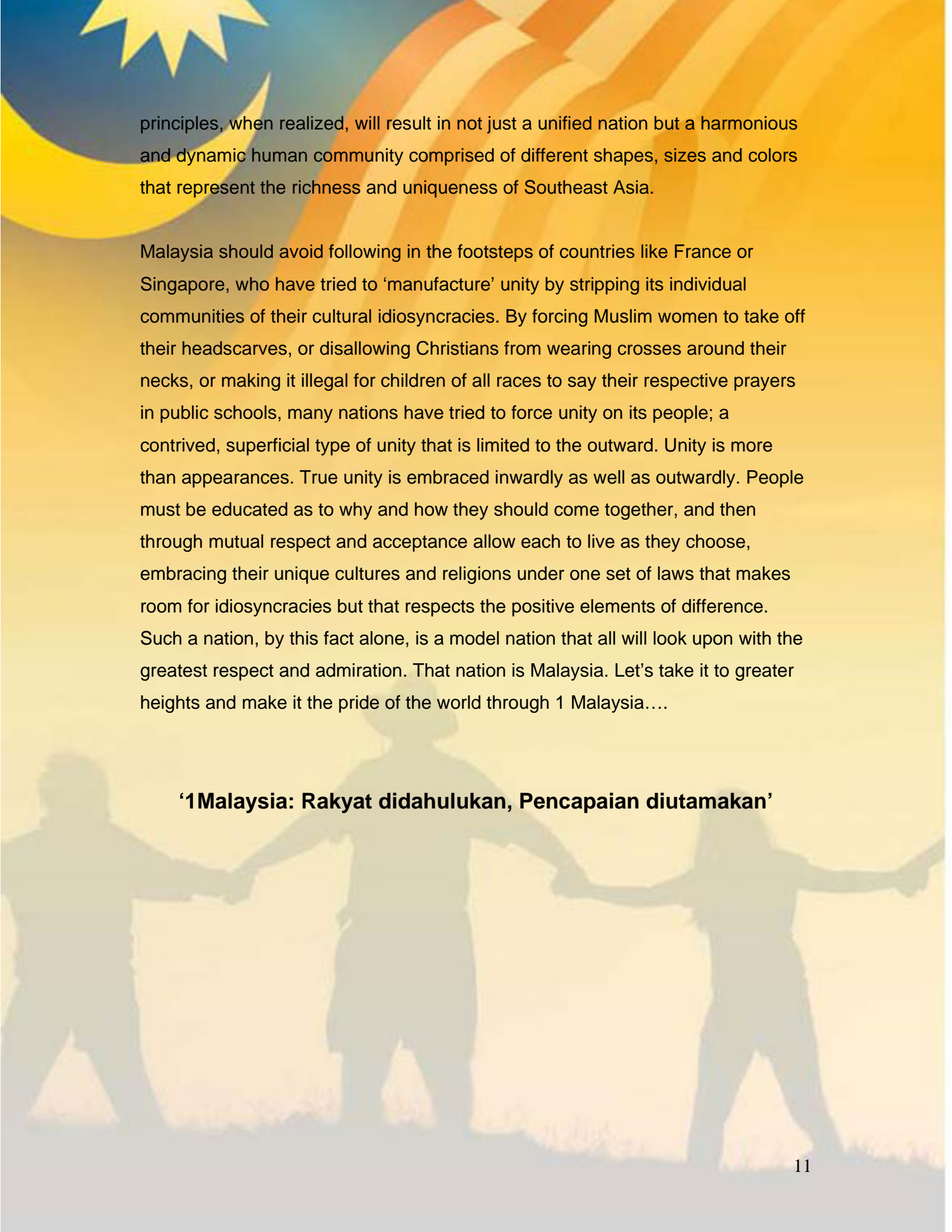


whole is negatively affected. Just as Malay, Chinese and Indian are all interrelated as Malaysians, *bangsa*, *agama* and *negara* are similarly so.

Loyalty, in practice, means working to strengthen our racial and faith communities for the betterment of the nation as a whole. 1Malaysia means supporting each other and in doing so to ensure that our individual identities are not threatened, that people can still maintain their cultural and religious freedoms and traditions while being wholeheartedly patriotic at the same time. It's what makes being a Malaysian so unique.

A nation requires balance and equilibrium for harmony to ensue. This can only be achieved if each of the major groups in society are capable of knowing and fulfilling their respective roles and realizing that one group can only prosper when all the others do. If any one group is successful at the expense of another, it is a sign of disequilibrium that indicates peace and prosperity will not last for long. It further indicates that we are not valuing unity, for a truly united nation will not tolerate seeing injustice and inequality among the other groups. If one of our communities is hurting, it is up to the others to help that community overcome its challenges. Thus, the test of unity is whether or not the nation functions as a living system, or is it merely 'tolerating' each other's existence. None of the major groups in Malaysian society should rest if and when the others are suffering.

The vision of 1Malaysia should not be a utopian dream where each of the major groups in society are expected to be good at all things, look like one another, sound like one another and do the same things. Rather, in the same way that a football team has unique roles for each of its players, each of the groups, through a focus on individual strengths, can maximize its contribution to the whole, resulting in balance and equilibrium. To accomplish this feat, eight lofty principles of have been put forward by the Prime Minister of Malaysia in the context of the 1 Malaysia initiative. These eight principles are: humility, acceptance, loyalty, meritocracy, education, integrity, culture of excellence, and perseverance. These



principles, when realized, will result in not just a unified nation but a harmonious and dynamic human community comprised of different shapes, sizes and colors that represent the richness and uniqueness of Southeast Asia.

Malaysia should avoid following in the footsteps of countries like France or Singapore, who have tried to 'manufacture' unity by stripping its individual communities of their cultural idiosyncracies. By forcing Muslim women to take off their headscarves, or disallowing Christians from wearing crosses around their necks, or making it illegal for children of all races to say their respective prayers in public schools, many nations have tried to force unity on its people; a contrived, superficial type of unity that is limited to the outward. Unity is more than appearances. True unity is embraced inwardly as well as outwardly. People must be educated as to why and how they should come together, and then through mutual respect and acceptance allow each to live as they choose, embracing their unique cultures and religions under one set of laws that makes room for idiosyncracies but that respects the positive elements of difference. Such a nation, by this fact alone, is a model nation that all will look upon with the greatest respect and admiration. That nation is Malaysia. Let's take it to greater heights and make it the pride of the world through 1 Malaysia....

'1Malaysia: Rakyat didahulukan, Pencapaian diutamakan'

