Bring the human into governance, urges guest speaker Aziuddin Ahmad

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Bringing human governance into business is the way forward into a sustainable future, according to Aziuddin Ahmad, the first guest speaker of day two of the Responsible Leadership Summit at IMD.

"[The economic crisis] we are seeing today is not just a failure of leadership, but it is also the failure of us being human," said Dr Ahmad, a full-time professor of Risk Management at the Graduate School of Management (GSM), University Putra Malaysia (UPM) since 2007. He is also the co-author of a recent book entitled, *Human Governance: A Paradigm Shift in Governing Corporations.*

Dr Ahmad's perspective is informed by a diverse career that has spanned the fields of engineering, nuclear physics, law and finance. Having come from an Eastern and Islamic background, he said he felt conflicted when he found himself immersed in Western business culture where there was no place for spirituality and where governance was entirely under the rule of the corporate.

The leadership deficits that Dr Ahmad has observed over recent years include: "Leaders with hearts that do not feel, eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear."

Human governance, in contrast to corporate governance, is inside-out rather than outside-in; it is values-based rather than compliance-based; it sees the human as something more than a machine; and it places emphasis on the spirit of the law rather than the letter of the law. It is not meant to replace corporate governance, but rather to drive and inform behaviours.

He said today, as we witness the limitations of corporate governance, we need the transparency found in human governance.

"Integrity, which comes from oneness, is key," he said. "Integrity is doing the right thing even when no-one is looking."

Several participants remarked that the concept of human governance is refreshing and gives hope for a future of responsible, values-based leadership.

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