It is inevitable to discuss sociological diversity in its various renditions from a negative perspective, emphasizing the differences, contradiction, contestation and conflict between and within the different social collectives (ethnic, religious, and the like). The overwhelming fear that diversity could cause and end in violence underpinned the negative perspective invites intense study on the various sociological fault lines generated by diversity in the hope a better understanding could be developed and conflicts avoided. Thus very rarely one finds analyses on diversity (cultural, political, religious and the like) and its relation with peace, in the sense that diversity is seen as something positive and possesses and generates internal dynamics which help to build social sustainability and resilience of a society. Using the Malaysian case, this paper argues that although, epistemologically, diversity features ‘difference, dividedness, and distance’, it also contains strong integrative centripetal elements that dilute or negate the potentiality of a breakdown. Good governance, sensible economic management and openness to openness reinforce the positive elements in diversity. Thus a good balance between the negative and the positive in a society endowed with diversity creates peace and social cohesion that, in turn, brings longevity to the society and its social system. Empirical evidence from Malaysia shall be presented to support this argument.

Brief BIODATA

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