



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF MALAYSIA (SUHAKAM)

ORAL STATEMENT

40th Session of the Human Rights Council

Palais des Nations, Geneva

Mr. President,

SUHAKAM acknowledges that the Malaysian Government has improved greatly since its first UPR. Of the 268 recommendations received, Malaysia has accepted 184 and taken note of the remaining 84. We call on the Malaysian Government to give action to those “taken note” as it is very much stated within the new Government’s promises.

Increased efforts to institutionalize engagements with SUHAKAM and civil society is commended, yet for effective UPR implementation, SUHAKAM calls for the establishment of a permanent inter-ministerial tracking system.

SUHAKAM commends Malaysia’s decision to accept recommendations to abolish the death penalty and place a moratorium on it and other restrictive laws, yet the Home Minister’s announcement on the Cabinet’s decision to withdraw the moratorium on laws like the Prevention of Crime Act (Amendment) 2017, Prevention of Terrorism Act, Sedition Act 1948, Special Offences Special Measures Act as well as keeping the death penalty is worrying.

Malaysia must give priority to the accession of all remaining core human rights treaties and is disappointed at its decision not to accede to the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). In a multicultural Malaysia, SUHAKAM reaffirms the right of all peoples to exist without discrimination based on race.

Recommendations to review repressive legislations; to accede to the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Convention Against Torture (UNCAT), as well as to increase the minimum legal age for marriage to 18 years old, were positions publicly endorsed by the government previously and yet these have not been accepted. We believe Malaysia can do better on this.

This historic change in Malaysia enables the Government to seize the opportunity to make lasting changes for the protection of human rights. While there is a growing resistance to human rights, the new Government must reaffirm its commitment to human rights for all, as per their election promises. SUHAKAM stands ready to work with the new Government on improving the state of human rights in Malaysia.

Thank you.

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