



MINISTRY OF WOMEN,  
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## PRESS RELEASE

### **MALAYSIA SUCCESSFULLY PRESENTED REPORTS ON THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)**

Malaysia successfully presented its Combined Third to Fifth Periodic Reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) during the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the CEDAW Committee on 20 February 2018 in Geneva. The Periodic Reports provided an update on policies, initiatives and concrete measures that are being undertaken by the Government of Malaysia to eliminate discrimination against women and to provide space and opportunities for them to thrive with greater achievements in line with the obligations under the CEDAW.

During the constructive dialogue with the Committee, Malaysia provided clarifications on the many issues of interest to the Committee members. These include the issues relating to the dual-legal system practices in Malaysia which they viewed as constituting discrimination against women, particularly the rights of Muslim women under the Syariah laws; specific timeframe to lift the remaining reservations to certain articles of the CEDAW; and timeframe to enact the Gender Equality Bill. Some Committee members were also keen to learn of a timeframe to change the patriarchal norms, as well as gender stereotyping; measures to increase number of women in politics and in decision-making positions; alleged cases of discrimination against LGBTI, and accession to relevant international treaties.

Malaysia maintains its reservations to Articles 9(2) and 16(1) (a), (c), (f) and (g) of the Convention on the basis that the provisions are not in line with the Federal Constitution, Islamic law and national policies. Article 9(2) relates to the nationality of children whilst Article 16(1) (a), (c), (f) and (g) relate to same rights to enter into marriage, same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution, same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children and same personal rights as husband and wife respectively.

With regards to the issue on discrimination against LGBTI, Malaysia upholds the rights and dignity of all persons in accordance with the Malaysian law. On any case of discrimination, due process of the law will be exercised accordingly.

On the claims that Muslim women enjoy far less rights in marriage, divorce, guardianship of the children and inheritance, Malaysia reiterated that the Syariah law provides adequate safeguards and protections to avoid discrimination.

Malaysia assured the CEDAW Committee of its firm commitment to strengthening further the national machinery for gender equality and women empowerment, including through multi-stakeholders engagements. This is in line with the national agenda on women which is reflected through the National Women Policy and Women Empowerment Year 2018.

Malaysia's reports and presentation to the CEDAW Committee could be accessed at [http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1157&Lang=en](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1157&Lang=en).

Malaysia acceded to the CEDAW on 5 July 1995 and since then had submitted two Periodic Reports. The Malaysian delegation yesterday was led by Dato' Suriani Dato' Ahmad, Secretary General of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. The members of the delegation include Dato' Amran Mohamed Zin, Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations and other International Organisations in Geneva, and 14 officials from key government ministries and agencies responsible for ensuring effective domestication of the CEDAW namely, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, the Attorney General's Chambers, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Human Resources, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Rural and Regional Development.

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