



PRESS STATEMENT

KUALA LUMPUR (17 SEPTEMBER 2021) - The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) is deeply concerned with the deterioration of the human rights situation in Afghanistan in recent months. On 16 August 2021, the UN human rights expert had issued a statement urging swift global action to protect human rights and prevent ‘civilian slaughter’ in Afghanistan and the need to protect the most vulnerable in Afghanistan including children, women, and girls, those internally displaced, the disabled, human rights defenders, journalists and the media, educators and civil society actors.

SUHAKAM was apprised of the dire situation in Afghanistan during the 26th Annual General Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institution (APF) held on 15 September 2021. SUHAKAM was informed that there is a lot of chaos and uncertainties since the capital city of Afghanistan, Kabul, was taken over by the Taliban on 15 August 2021 and every member and staff of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) is at risk due to the Commission work on documenting war crimes, crimes against humanity, and violations of international humanitarian law implicated with the Taliban. AIHRC had focused its efforts on evacuating their staff although some of them may have fled to neighbouring countries. At the same time, AIHRC strongly hopes that the Commission will not be dissolved.

AIHRC added that the independent media and human rights activists also face similar threats where they were beaten and tortured by the Taliban. It is worth noting that as of July 2020, a total of seven AIHRC Commissioners and staff members have been killed by the terrorist attacks. AIHRC proposed three immediate actions for the protection of the peoples in Afghanistan as follows:

- i. AIHRC requested for any other countries to provide visas to the peoples of concern including the AIHRC staff and their families to enable them to be evacuated quickly once the commercial flight resumes operations;
- ii. To coordinate a strong statement especially from the Islamic States to support the Afghan women and girls on their human rights such as the rights to employment and education, among others; and
- iii. For governments to support the Human Rights Council to start a Resolution to establish a fact-finding mission for Afghanistan.



**MEDIA STATEMENT
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF MALAYSIA (SUHAKAM)**

SUHAKAM applauds the Malaysian government's efforts in pushing for the 31st special session of the Human Rights Council to recognize the serious human rights concerns and situation in Afghanistan and negotiated a draft on Human Rights Council resolution entitled: Strengthening the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic Afghanistan; and the participation of Minister of Foreign Affairs in a United Nations' High-Level Ministerial Meeting on the Humanitarian Situation in Afghanistan on 13 September 2021, which stressed that the safety, security, human rights and the wellbeing of all Afghan people and other nationals in the country must be protected.

Therefore, SUHAKAM urges all relevant parties and Government of Malaysia to consider favourably the recommendations proposed by AIHRC and commit to undertake whatever means available to aid and support relief for the human rights situation in Afghanistan. SUHAKAM would like to encourage for the Government of Malaysia to bring this matter to the attention of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to coordinate humanitarian assistance for the people of Afghanistan; and to issue a statement to address the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

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Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)

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“Human Rights For All”

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