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MALAYSIA COMMEMORATES HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2025

KUALA LUMPUR, 11 December 2025 – The Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister’s Department (BHEUU), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM), and the United Nations in Malaysia jointly commemorated Human Rights Day 2025 with a Forum titled “Protecting Our Future Generations: Human Rights for All.”

The programme was officiated by Yang Berhormat Dato’ Sri Azalina Othman Said, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Law and Institutional Reform). In her remarks, YB Dato’ Sri Azalina emphasised that protecting the rights and dignity of every child is not an option, it is the foundation of Malaysia’s moral strength and our shared responsibility to future generations. As harms evolve, she stressed, our laws and institutions must evolve even faster. Human rights can only flourish when systems are credible, transparent, and accountable. No child should suffer in silence, whether online or offline, and policies affecting children must never be made without hearing their voices. YB Dato’ Sri Azalina affirmed the Government’s commitment to building a Malaysia where every child is safe, valued, and empowered to dream boldly and live fully.

In his welcoming address, SUHAKAM Chairman, Yang Berbahagia Dato’ Seri Mohd Hishamudin Yunus, emphasised: “As we reflect on today’s theme, it is important to recognise that protecting future generations requires sustained commitment in policy development, institutional accountability, and public awareness. He underscored that human rights are a shared responsibility involving government agencies, civil society organisations, educators, parents, and the wider community.”

In his Opening Address, Mr. Robert Gass, UN Resident Coordinator a.i., emphasized: "Human rights are lived or denied in the everyday experiences of every child, in the safety of a home, the fairness of a classroom, the justice of a courtroom, and the dignity of a clinic. As Malaysia strengthens its institutions and renews its commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), we are reminded that children are not passive beneficiaries but rights-holders whose futures depend on the choices we make today. Our task is simple but profound: to close the gap between the rights we proclaim and the realities children experience."

Human Rights Day commemorates the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This year's theme, "Human Rights, Our Everyday Essentials," holds particular significance for Malaysia as the nation marks 30 years since acceding to the CRC and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and 15 years since ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). These international commitments have shaped key national reforms, and as Malaysia prepares for its review with the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2026, the Forum reaffirmed the importance of sustaining positive momentum through continued dialogue, capacity-building, and strong inter-institutional cooperation.

The Forum, moderated by Ms. Sitti Najihah Md Rusli from UNICEF Malaysia, featured an in-depth panel discussion titled "Children's Rights in Malaysia: From Commitments to Monitoring and Accountability." The discussion brought together Dr. Farah Nini Dusuki, Chief Children's Commissioner of SUHAKAM; Mr. Asmar Asmadi Bin Abdullah Sani, Undersecretary of the Policy and Strategic Planning Division of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development; YA Datin Paduka Evrol Mariette Peters, Judge of the Court of Appeal representing the Judiciary, YB Syereleena Abdul Rashid, Member of Parliament for Bukit Bendera and Member of the Parliamentary Special Select Committee on Women, Children and Community Development; Mr. Thiyagu Ganesan, Deputy Director General (Law Reform) of BHEUU and Ms. Jessie Lee Jie Xing, youth representative and Member of the Children's Consultative Council (2025–2027), SUHAKAM.

The Forum also witnessed the launching ceremony of SUHAKAM "Belia Peduli Hak" module by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform). This module is a practical resource designed to enhance awareness, empowerment, and meaningful participation among young people across the country.

In her closing remarks, Yang Berbahagia Datin Paduka Anizan Siti Hajjar Adnin, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, underscored that protecting children demands a whole-of-society approach, strengthened through broader partnerships with civil society to enhance transparency and accountability. Yang Berbahagia Datin Paduka Anizan Siti Hajjar Adnin further underlined that this commitment reflects the Malaysia Madani vision, which upholds trust, cooperation and the creation of an inclusive and compassionate society for all Malaysians.

The Forum was attended by more than 450 participants from the Government agencies, the diplomatic corps, youth, academia, the private sector, civil society organisations and the media.

Jointly Prepared by:

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