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**SUHAKAM CALLS FOR LEGAL RECOGNITION OF FEMICIDE AND STRONGER
ACTION TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

KUALA LUMPUR (20 OCTOBER 2026) - On 15 October 2026, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM), represented by Commissioner Puan Melissa Mohd Akhir briefed the Parliamentary Select Committee on Women, Children and Community Development (PSC) and the Government agencies on the human rights and gender equality position on femicide in the Meeting No. 26 of 2026 of the Fifteenth PSC, chaired by YB Puan Yeo Bee Yin, Member of Parliament for Puchong. Following this engagement, SUHAKAM reiterates its grave concern over gender-based violence against women and girls, particularly its most extreme manifestation, femicide, or the gender-related killing of women and girls. Such violence extends beyond individual acts of criminal conduct and reflects broader patterns of discrimination, gender inequality and shortcomings in preventing and addressing violence against women and girls.

Gender-based violence affects women and girls throughout their lives, from childhood to old age, and takes various forms, including physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence, as well as acts or omissions that may result in death. Femicide may occur within intimate relationships, families or other circumstances involving gender-based hostility, coercion, control or discrimination. These killings constitute grave violations of the rights to life, dignity and equality. Recognising their gender-related nature is essential to understanding the underlying causes, identifying risks and strengthening prevention, protection and accountability measures.

Article 8(2) of the Federal Constitution prohibits discrimination on the ground of gender within its specified scope. Malaysia's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), particularly Article 2, further require the Government to pursue, by all appropriate means and without delay, a policy of eliminating discrimination against women. As elaborated in the CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation No. 35, these obligations extend to addressing gender-based violence through effective legislative, institutional, preventive and protective measures.

SUHAKAM stresses that preventing femicide requires action before violence escalates into the loss of life. The Government must strengthen mechanisms to identify early warning signs, ensure timely intervention, protect women and girls at risk, and hold perpetrators accountable. This requires effective coordination among law enforcement agencies, the judiciary, healthcare and social welfare services, educational institutions, local authorities and civil society organisations.

In this regard, SUHAKAM calls on the Government to undertake the following measures:

i. Recognise femicide within Malaysia's legal framework.

The Government should review existing laws and policies to recognise femicide as a distinct form of gender-based violence, with appropriate legal provisions and accountability mechanisms. Reforms should be guided by criminological research, behavioural science, patterns of gender-related violence and comparative legal practices, while ensuring effective remedies and access to justice for victims' families.

ii. Develop safer and more inclusive cities and communities for women and girls.

The Government, together with state and local authorities, should strengthen women-friendly urban and rural planning through better street lighting, safer public transport, accessible reporting mechanisms and secure school environments. Women and girls, including women's organisations and community groups, should be meaningfully involved in identifying risks and developing appropriate solutions.

iii. Address harmful gender stereotypes and the normalisation of violence against women.

Media organisations and digital platforms should strengthen self-regulatory mechanisms to prevent discriminatory portrayals, victim-blaming and content that normalises gender-based violence. Responsible reporting and public communication are essential to challenging harmful attitudes while respecting freedom of expression.

iv. Establish a coordinated national mechanism to prevent and monitor gender-based violence.

The Government should establish or designate a national body to coordinate, monitor and evaluate measures addressing femicide and gender-based violence across federal, state and local levels. This mechanism should strengthen disaggregated data collection, identify institutional gaps and ensure evidence-based policies aligned with international human rights standards.

v. Ensure adequate and sustained financial and institutional resources.

In line with Malaysia's commitments under CEDAW, the Government must allocate sufficient resources to prevent gender-based violence, protect victims and survivors, ensure effective investigations and prosecutions, and provide remedies. Funding should also support shelters, psychosocial services, legal aid and women's organisations, particularly those serving rural and underserved communities.

SUHAKAM emphasises that femicide is a preventable human rights violation requiring stronger laws, early intervention, accessible protection mechanisms and coordinated action. SUHAKAM urges the Government to adopt a comprehensive, evidence-based and adequately funded response that prioritises prevention, protection, justice and accountability. As we commemorate the International Day of the Girl Child this October, SUHAKAM reaffirms that every woman and girl has the right to live free from violence and fear, and that safeguarding this right is a shared responsibility of the Government and society.

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**Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)
20 October 2026**