

# E-NEWSLETTER

EMBASSY OF MALAYSIA, KYIV, UKRAINE  
JANUARY – JUNE 2020



## From the Ambassador's desk

Covid-19 has brought the world to its knees. The world is embracing a new kind of normal. It needs to adapt fast to new ways of living and new ways of work.

As we fight to contain the pandemic, we've hit the fast forward button on many technologies that were already in place. From work from home to virtual meetings and digital events, these technologies have now become essential part of our daily life and are here to stay.

The spread of Covid-19 poses new challenges in our globalized world. Even diplomacy is affected by this pandemic, as meetings and other events are cancelled and postponed.

In this issue, you will find events and engagements undertaken by the Embassy covering the period January-June 2020. The official visit of YB Tan Sri Dato' Mohamad Arif Md Yusof, Speaker of Dewan Rakyat to Georgia in February was one of the highlights during the first half of 2020, marking the first ever high level visit by a Malaysian dignitary to Georgia. The Speaker together with three other Malaysian MPs also became the first Malaysian group to set foot on the disputed territory of the Republic of South Ossetia which is recognized as part of Georgia but controlled by Russia.

While the Embassy has provided consular assistance to several Malaysians stranded in Malaysia and Georgia during the lockdown and successfully repatriated them home, we have also initiated Covid-19 related activities including convening video conference among ASEAN Ambassadors and handing over contribution for purchase of essential food items to needy and poor Muslims in Kyiv who are impacted by the pandemic.

Two-way trade between Malaysia and Ukraine stood at RM 1.7 billion in 2019. Malaysian and Ukraine are ready to ramp up economic cooperation in the second half of 2020 especially in aerospace and defence sectors.

May Allah Subhana Wata'ala gives us strength, perseverance and patience in this time of tribulations and hardships.

*Raja Dato' Reza*

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# OFFICIAL VISIT OF SPEAKER DEWAN RAKYAT TO GEORGIA

17-19 FEBRUARY 2020

YB Tan Sri Dato' Mohamad Ariff Md Yusof, Speaker of Dewan Rakyat undertook an official visit to Georgia from 17-19 February 2020. The Speaker was accompanied by three Members of Parliament (MPs) namely YB William Leong Jee Keen (MP of Selayang), YB Ma'amun Sulaiman (MP of Kalabakan) and YB Muslimin Yahaya (MP of Sungai Besar) who is also the Chairman of the Malaysia-Georgia Parliamentary Friendship Group.

In Tbilisi, the Speaker had bilateral meetings with H.E. Salome Zourabichvili, President of Georgia, H.E. Archil Talakvadze, Chairman of the Georgian Parliament, Mr. David Zalkaliani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia and Ms. Natela Turnava, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia. Both sides discussed and exchanged views on ways to deepen Malaysia-Georgia bilateral relations.

On the last day of the visit, the Malaysian delegation visited the 'occupation line' in the village of Didi Khurvaleti situated at the border of Georgia and the Republic of South Ossetia, about 60 kilometers north-west of Tbilisi to learn more and see first-hand the reality on the ground. They later visited Jumah Mosque built in 1700s by the Ottoman Empire, located in the Old town of Tbilisi, one of the very few mosques in the world, where Sunnis and Shias pray together.

This was the first ever high level visit by a dignitary from Malaysia to Georgia since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1993. The Malaysian Speaker's visit to Georgia augurs well in further cementing Malaysia-Georgia ties.



OFFICIAL VISIT OF SPEAKER DEWAN RAKYAT TO GEORGIA

17-19 FEBRUARY 2020



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## BILATERAL ENGAGEMENT

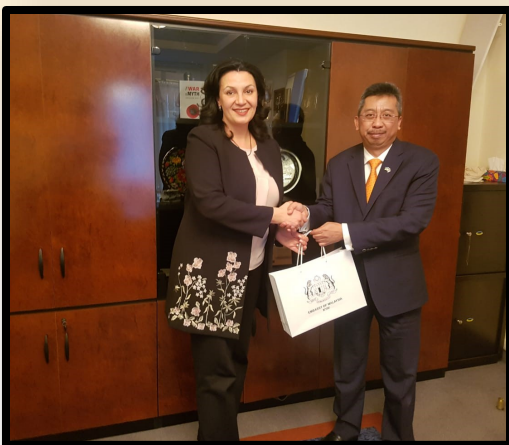
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### MEETING WITH CO-CHAIR OF UKRAINE-MALAYSIA INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

On 13 February 2020, H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah met with Ms. Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, Co-Chair of the Ukraine-Malaysia Inter-Parliamentary Group at the latter's office in Kyiv.

Both discussed and exchanged views on ways to strengthen bilateral relations between Ukraine and Malaysia particularly to intensify economic cooperation and to encourage more exchange of visits between both countries.

Ms. Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze had served as the Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine from April 2016 -August 2019.



### MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN OF FOREIGN POLICY COMMITTEE OF UKRAINIAN PARLIAMENT

On 2 March 2020, H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah met with Mr. Oleksandr Merezhko, Chairman of the Foreign Policy and Inter-parliamentary Committee of the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament of Ukraine) at the latter's office.

They deliberated on a wide range of bilateral issues of mutual interest. H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah also shared with Mr. Merezhko on the latest political developments in Malaysia. Mr. Merezhko is a Member of Parliament from the Servant of People party and is currently one of the Vice Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE).



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## BILATERAL ENGAGEMENT

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### MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN OF STATE SPACE AGENCY OF UKRAINE

H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah met with Mr. Volodymyr Usov, Chairman on the State Space Agency of Ukraine (SSAU) on 24 June 2020 at the headquarters of SSAU in Kyiv. The Malaysian ambassador reiterated Malaysia's readiness and keen interest to establish close cooperation with Ukraine to assist Malaysia develop its space sector. He explained that Malaysia aspires to become a leading space nation in the region in the coming years.

The ambassador noted that in the last one year there have been a series of meeting held in Kyiv between a Malaysian private company and the Ukrainian side as well as three visits made by the company to Ukraine to reach agreement on details of a proposed ambitious and groundbreaking space project. He also praised Ukraine's plan to transform and reinvigorate its space industry including through the adoption of a law by the Ukrainian Parliament last October, allowing private companies to develop, test and launch rockets into space.



### WORKING LUNCH WITH MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT OF UKRAINE

On 11 March 2020, H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah hosted a working luncheon in Kyiv for several Members of Parliament of Ukraine. Present at the lunch were Ms. Tsyba Tetiana Viktorivna and Mr. Halaichuk Vadym Serhiiovych from the Servant of the People's party as well as Ms. Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze from the European Solidarity party.

H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah briefed the Members of Parliament on the recent change of the Malaysian government including the appointment of YAB Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin as the new Prime Minister of Malaysia on 1 March 2020 and the formation of the new Cabinet. In addition, they also exchanged views on issues of mutual interest including trade and investment.



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## BILATERAL ENGAGEMENT

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### Démarche by Ambassadors of MH 17 Joint Investigation Team (JIT)

On 5 March 2020, H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah along with other JIT ambassadors went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (MFA) to present a joint démarche. The démarche was led by Dutch Ambassador Jennes de Mol and also joined by the Ambassadors of Australia and Belgium. They met with Ms. Oksana Zolataryova, Deputy Director-General for International Law of MFA Ukraine and Ms. Kateryna Zelenko, spokesperson of the ministry.

The main purpose of the démarche was primarily to reach out MFA Ukraine with the view to request Ukraine to issue a public statement on the eve of the trial of MH17 case scheduled to commence on 9 March 2020 in The Hague. An Aide Mémoire was later handed over to Ms. Oksana containing elements to be incorporated by Ukraine in the public statement.



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## ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY

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### CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR WITH ORPHANS

On 8 January 2020, the “Orphans Are Our Children” international charity fund organisation held a Christmas and New Year’s celebrations at Kyiv’s Premier Palace Hotel, Kyiv. H.E. Raja Dato’ Reza Raja Zaib Shah was invited as one of the guests of honour to this event which the Embassy of Malaysia has been supporting for many years.

The organization has organised similar celebrations for the past eight years, where orphans from all over Ukraine attended the event, accompanied by their guardians. The entertainment program featured songs, dance and magic show.

H.E. Raja Dato’ Reza Raja Zaib Shah in his remarks noted that orphans’ life is often challenging particularly after leaving the foster system. He encouraged the children to embrace a strong set of values and always stay true to them.



### HELPING THE NEEDY AND VULNERABLE

On 22 April 2020, H.E. Raja Dato’ Reza Raja Zaib Shah met with Sheikh Said Ismagilov, Mufti of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Ukraine and handed over donation from the Embassy’s home based staff to assist Muslims of Ukraine especially orphans, persons with disabilities and the elderly who are severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The money was used to purchase food kits. The Embassy hopes that the modest contribution to the poor and needy Muslims will help to lessen the burden and hardship that they are going through in this challenging time.



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## VIRTUAL MEETINGS

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### VIDEO CONFERENCE ON COVID-19 AMONG ASEAN AMBASSADORS

On 22 April 2020, H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah joined other ASEAN Ambassadors accredited to Ukraine in a video conference to discuss the issue of COVID-19. The main purpose of the video conference was to follow up on the Declaration of the Special ASEAN Summit on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the Special ASEAN Summit held via video conference on 14 April 2020. Specifically, Paragraph 9 (ii) of the said Declaration calls upon the ASEAN Member States to prioritise the well-being of ASEAN peoples in their collective fight against COVID-19 and provide appropriate assistance and support to the nationals of ASEAN Member States affected by the pandemic in each other's country or in third countries.

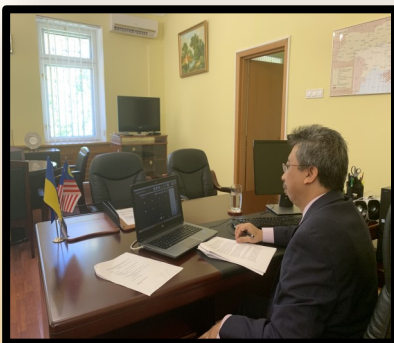


The ambassadors agreed among others to compile data on nationals of ASEAN Members States that do not have diplomatic missions in Kyiv, who are stranded in Ukraine due to the lockdown imposed by Ukraine. In addition, they also decided that the Vietnamese Embassy in Kyiv will be the contact point in Ukraine in the event there are requests from ASEAN Member States for assistance in crisis situations in Ukraine.



### VIDEO CONFERENCE AMONG HEADS OF MISSIONS IN EUROPE

A video conference between Heads of Missions (HOMs) in Europe hosted by H.E. Dato' Dr Azfar Mohamad Mustafar, Ambassador of Malaysia to France was convened on 12 June 2020. The HOMs exchanged views on issues pertinent to Malaysia and the region namely palm oil and Covid-19. Dr Puah Chiew Mei of Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) based in Brussels shared with the HOMs her views on the current state of play of the palm oil issue within EU.



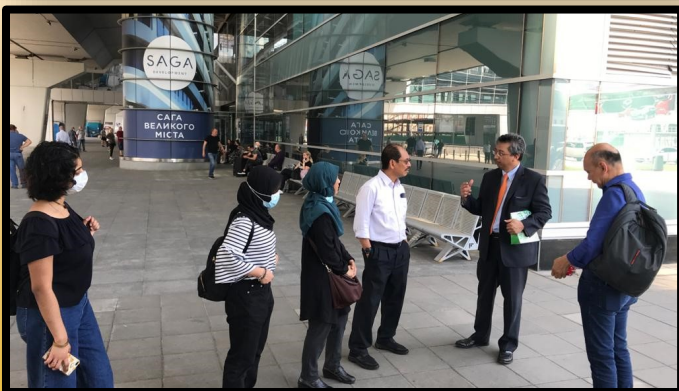
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## REPATRIATION OF STRANDED MALAYSIANS IN UKRAINE AND GEORGIA

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The Embassy of Malaysia in Kyiv had on three separate occasions assisted a number of Malaysians who were stranded in Kyiv and Tbilisi due to Covid-19 lockdowns imposed by the Ukrainian and Georgian authorities respectively.

H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah was present at Kyiv's Boryspil Airport during the repatriation of two groups of Malaysians who were stranded in Ukraine. Meanwhile, our Honorary Consul in Tbilisi and the Embassy of Malaysia in The Hague rendered their assistance during the repatriation of a Malaysian citizen stranded in Georgia.



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## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

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### TRIBUTE TO VICTIMS OF UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT PS752 PLANE CRASH



H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah on 13 January 2020 laid flowers at the makeshift memorial at Boryspil International Airport, Kyiv to pay tribute to the victims of Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752 that crashed in Tehran, Iran on 8 January 2020.

All 176 people on board the plane including nine crew members were killed in the crash.

### BRIEFING ON COVID-19 BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF UKRAINE

A special briefing on Covid-19 was given by Mr. Yehor Bozhok, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on 14 March 2020. H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah attended the briefing alongside with other members of the diplomatic corps. They were briefed among others on Ukraine's plan to close its border checkpoints and international airports to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 pandemic.



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## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

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### KASHMIR SOLIDARITY DAY

On 5 February 2020, H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah attended the Kashmir Solidarity Day organized by the Embassy of Pakistan held at Kyiv Islamic Cultural Centre. Kashmir Solidarity Day is an observance of Pakistan's support of and unity with the people of Indian-administered Kashmir and to pay tribute to the Kashmiris who have died in the conflict.



### FAREWELL DINNER FOR DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER OF UKRAINE

On 23 February 2020, H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah and Datin Roslina Ismail attended a farewell dinner hosted by H.E. Salem Ahmed Al-Kaabi, Ambassador of UAE to Ukraine at the Residence of UAE's Ambassador to bid farewell to H.E. Sergiy Kyslytsya, Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine who has been appointed as the new Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations.



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## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

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### CELEBRATING AIDILFITRI IN THE NEW NORMAL

This year's Aidilfitri was unique as celebrations was kept at a bare minimum due to Covid-19 pandemic. Celebrations were scaled down. Despite the change, the spirit of Aidilfitri remains. H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah and wife, Datin Roslina Ismail hosted a Raya get together at Rumah Malaysia for home-based staff of the Embassy and their family members. Traditional Raya delicacies including Nasi Impit, Satay Ayam, Nasi Minyak, Daging Masak Hitam, Ayam Masak Merah, Dalca, Acar and Serunding Ayam as well as Kuih Bakar, Kuih Loyang/Ros dan Biskut Cornflakes were served.



### FAREWELL LUNCH FOR PUAN AZRA FIRZADH ASANGANY

The Embassy of Malaysia in Kyiv organized a luncheon to bid farewell to Puan Azra Firzadh Asangany, Minister Counsellor on 17 June 2020 held at the Embassy. Puan Azra Firzadh had served with the Embassy since June 2019. She left the Administrative and Diplomatic Service (PTD) and opted for early retirement.



## PERWAKILAN ACTIVITIES

### AMBASSADORS' SPOUSES CLUB OF KYIV (ASCK) COFFEE MORNING

Datin Roslina Ismail, wife of the Malaysian Ambassador along with Madam Velly Elvira, wife of the Ambassador of Indonesia and Madam Pham Bich Loi, wife of the Ambassador of Vietnam co-hosted the Ambassadors' Spouses Club of Kyiv (ASCK) Coffee Morning held on 13 February 2020 at the Residence of the Ambassador of Malaysia in Kyiv.

The guest of honour was Madam Inna Prystaiko, wife of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. The event themed 'ASEAN Cultural and Culinary Showcase' highlighted ASEAN's unique, rich and diverse cultural heritage. Among others, Datin Roslina demonstrated to the guests on how to prepare 'Yee Sang'.

Later the guests were treated to a selection of food and delicacies including Mee Goreng, Satay, Lontong, Sri Kaya and Vietnamese Spring Rolls. A lucky draw was also held in which several prizes were given away to the lucky winners.



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## PERWAKILAN ACTIVITIES

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### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF PERWAKILAN KYIV

On 5 February 2020, H.E. Raja Dato' Reza Raja Zaib Shah officiated PERWAKILAN's Annual General Meeting at the Embassy of Malaysia.

In his opening remarks, the ambassador encouraged PERWAKILAN members to continue their engagement with the local community in Ukraine and organise social, cultural and welfare activities to promote Malaysia's interests. The ambassador believes this will contribute towards the strengthening of people-to-people contact between Malaysia and Ukraine.



### WORLD HIJAB DAY

On 1 February 2020, Perwakilan members including Datin Roslina Ismail participated in the World Hijab Day event organized by Muslim Women's Social Organisation 'Maryam' in Kyiv.

Talks, workshops, fashion show and hijab styling demonstration were some of the highlights of the evening.

World Hijab Day is celebrated around the world on 1 February each year since 2013.



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## PERWAKILAN ACTIVITIES

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### TRIP TO RIVNE

On 13 June 2020, Perwakilan Kyiv organized a day trip to Rivne, a city in the north of the western part of Ukraine, four-hour drive from Kyiv. Their first stop was 'Tunnel of love'. Tourists come to see the famous tree tunnel running through the small town of Klevan, about 7 kilometres from Rivne. The tunnel is an impressive abandoned railway track and is 5 kilometres long, canopied by an arch of lush foliage, forming viridescent tunnel as far as the eye can see. It is believed that if a couple in love can make a wish together and if the love is real then it will come true !

Later the Perwakilan members visited SE Ukrainian Amber. The Ukrainian state enterprise produces pictures and portraits made of amber chips as well as jewelry including necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, pendants and other amber products. There are two major amber deposits on Ukraine's territory and one of them is located in Rivne.



## **DISCOVER UKRAINE**

### *Kyiv Pechersk Lavra*

Pechersk Lavra also known as Kyiv monastery of the caves is a historic Orthodox Christian monastery. The Lavra has been a prominent center of Eastern Orthodox Christianity in Eastern Europe. The word 'Lavra' means senior monastery while 'Pechersk' means cave. Along with St. Sophia Cathedral, the Lavra is inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage site.

The Greek St Antony founded this Lavra in 1051 after Orthodoxy was adopted as Kievan Rus' official religion. He and his follower Feodosy dug out a series of catacombs where they and other reclusive monks worshipped, studied and lived. When they died, their bodies are naturally preserved, without embalming, by the caves' cool temperature and dry surroundings. The mummies survive until today, confirmation for believers that these were true holy men. The Lavra caves are a system of narrow underground corridors (about 1.5 metres wide and 2.5 metres high) along with several living quarters and underground chapels.

The Lavra contains numerous architectural monuments, ranging from bell towers to cathedrals to cave systems and stone fortification walls. The main attractions of the Lavra include Great Lavra Bell Tower and the Dormition Cathedral, destroyed in World War II but was reconstructed in recent years.

Tourists and Orthodox pilgrims flock to the Lavra, set on a hill above the Dnipro river in Pechersk. The monastery's cluster of gold-domed churches is a feast for the eyes. The Lavra monastery complex occupies twenty hectares of land and is located in the very heart of Kyiv.





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