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## **STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON THE UNITED STATES TRAVEL ADVISORY 2019**

1. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia strongly protests the decision of the US government to subject Malaysia in the newly introduced “K” indicator. This was announced in the travel advisory issued by the US Department of State on 9 April 2019. This reflects the US government’s concern about potential kidnapping or hostage-taking situations in certain areas of eastern Sabah.
2. This new travel advisory lacks objectivity. It does not reflect the reality on the ground particularly the security situation in eastern Sabah which remains safe and protected for tourists. This is borne by the fact that the number of tourist arrivals in Sabah has grown by 5.5 percent, reaching 3.87 million last year. Further, the number of kidnapping incidents has dropped significantly to almost nil. Eastern Sabah continues to attract world-class divers.
3. This success has been the result of proactive measures taken by the Malaysian Government. These include the increased number of patrols, closer security cooperation with neighbouring countries and the strategic positioning of security assets to secure the areas.
4. Given these facts, Malaysia urges the US to be more objective in its assessment. We urge the US to immediately remove Malaysia from the “K” list.
5. The US Ambassador to Malaysia will be summoned to provide clarification about the new travel advisory.

**PUTRAJAYA**  
**14 APRIL 2019**