

Congratulations, Najib and Malaysia!

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COMMENT The Society for the Promotion of Human Rights or, as it known by its Malay acronym Proham, congratulates the Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and the government for the confidence the UN community has shown in electing Malaysia into the UN Security Council for a two-year period, from January 2015 to December 2016.

This is a timely opportunity for Malaysia to enhance the country's global role through presenting a moderate approach to conflict resolution, especially in the face of rising extremism. Malaysia, through the Global Movement of Moderates, can continue to play a strategic role in this context.

Malaysia is also well suited, as being the chair of Asean in 2015, and this is a critical period in the building of the Asean community - not just economic but also security, which is most critical.

In addition, the building of an Asean community from social and cultural dimensions is an equally important feature of security for the region. Malaysia therefore will be able to enhance Asean during this period of its membership in UN Security Council.

Proham also feels that this is a very important period in the context of the global community through the UN in formulating the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals and its new thrust on Social Development Goals (2016-2030), which incorporates economic, social, environmental and aspects pertaining to human rights, good governance, accountability and sustainability, which are also seen in the context of both human and regional security.

A unique and timely opportunity

This is therefore a unique and timely opportunity for Malaysia, during this very challenging global period, to play a role in setting a new global architecture from an Asean perspective.

Therefore, Proham urges the Malaysian government to use this opportunity to enhance the human rights and sustainable development position in Malaysia as this will provide the credibility to stand tall in the global arena.

In this context, Proham urges the government to:
Formulate and release the National Human Rights Action Plan;

Ratify the core human rights conventions, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD);

Foster a climate that is human rights friendly locally in Malaysia by creating a more democratic society for freedom of speech and expression;

Use this opportunity to orientate and equip the Malaysian civil service on the UN system, Malaysia's global obligations and to be domestically friendly to UN human rights and social development orientation for all communities; and

Engage with all human rights civil society organisations, including Suhakam, and also provide public funds for human rights promotion and protection, work especially in Malaysia and Asean.

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