

Love for M'sia got Malott to push Anwar petition
MalaysiaKini.com
Feb 12, 2015

Former United States ambassador to Malaysia John Malott's "deep concern" for the Malaysian people was what prompted him start the now controversial petition to the White House to act against the Anwar Ibrahim guilty verdict.

The petition has been viewed by some as encouragement for foreign intervention, prompting a counter petition to the White House urging the US to respect Malaysia's sovereignty.

"I believe that words are not enough and the Obama Administration must pay greater attention to human rights and must support the forces of democracy around the world, not just in Malaysia.

"But obviously, I care about Malaysia and the Malaysian people very deeply. Plus Anwar and his family are good friends," Malott said in an email.

Malott (right), whose wife penned a biography of Anwar's wife Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, said his relationship with Malaysia and his support of its democratisation is "not something theoretical or abstract".

"I see real people and real faces, and not just Anwar and Azizah and their family. After 20 years I have many Malaysian friends, in all walks of life. I want them to enjoy the same freedoms that I enjoy as an American."

While he realises the petition does not guarantee Anwar's freedom, he hopes President Barack Obama "can make it clear" to Malaysia that it does not see the political suppression lightly.

In diplomacy, he said, statements must be made to signify that things are not acceptable.

"I don't ever want to see the president of the United States golfing with (Prime Minister) Najib (Abdul Razak) again."

'We're Americans writing to Obama'

Claims that this is interfering with Malaysia's sovereignty are also rubbish, Malott said.

"That is nonsense. I and all the people who are signing this petition are American citizens, speaking to our president. We are not writing to the Malaysian prime minister."

As at midnight on Feb 12, the petition had 31,164 signatures, about a third of the way to its goal of 100,000 signatures required to garner a response from the White House.

The counter-petition urging the White House to butt out of Malaysia's business had 1,669 signatures at midnight.

"We the citizens of Malaysia are outraged by the White House's statement expressing its deep disappointment with Anwar Ibrahim's conviction, questioning the rule of law and Malaysia's judicial system fairness...

"In regard to the reputation of Malaysia, the USA has to first look at their own human rights issue and stop the torture of detainees at Guantanamo Bay.

"We peace-loving Malaysians urge that USA stop interfering in Malaysia's judiciary and rule of law," the second petition reads.

The US Embassy in Kuala Lumpur and the White House have expressed concern over the Federal Court's verdict that Anwar was guilty of sodomising his aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan in 2008.

Anwar, who is PKR de facto leader, has been sentenced to five years in jail.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/289033>