

DiCaprio told to resign as UN messenger over 1MDB links

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Civil society activists have urged Hollywood superstar Leonardo DiCaprio to resign as United Nation's messenger of peace for climate change if he fails to distance himself from the 1MDB scandal.

At a press conference in London yesterday, activists from Malaysia, UK and Switzerland urged DiCaprio to publicly disown Riza Shahriz Abdul Aziz, stepson of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and flamboyant Malaysian billionaire Jho Low.

Both are key figures in the 1MDB scandal and were also instrumental in funding the production of the film 'The Wolf of Wall Street', allegedly using US\$61 misappropriated from the troubled Malaysian state investment fund.

"Leonardo DiCaprio has consistently refused to explain his close personal and financial ties with key persons of the Malaysian 1MDB scandal.

"This is unacceptable. If DiCaprio fails to distance himself from Malaysian corruption, he should resign as UN Messenger of Peace for climate change.

"We can't save the environment if we fail to stop corruption," declared Switzerland-based Bruno Manser Fund director Lukas Straumann.

Meanwhile, Malaysia's Centre to Combat Corruption and Cronyism (C4) representative Sudhagaran Stanley urged for funds allegedly misappropriated overseas from 1MDB to be returned to Malaysia.

"Leonardo DiCaprio would be in the best position to do that and pay back the millions he received from Jho Low and Riza Aziz.

"The Malaysian taxpayers can't be cheated," he said.

He also urged the international community to initiate criminal proceedings against those involved in the embezzlement and laundering of Malaysian state funds and to pressure the Malaysian government to provide mutual legal assistance to foreign investigative authorities.

Also at the press conference was *Sarawak Report* editor Clare Rewcastle Brown who had been instrumental in first highlighting the 1MDB scandal.

She called for tighter banking rules to be enforced, pointing out that many banks willingly participate in the laundering of 1MDB funds.

An investigation by *The Hollywood Reporter* revealed the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation

benefited from donations made by Jho Low of over US\$2 million in cash and in kind since 2013.

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