

## **UN rep lauds Putrajaya's stand on Rohingya issue, but...**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Dec 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Alyaa Alhadjri**

Commending Malaysia's efforts to assist the Rohingya who are facing persecution in Myanmar, a United Nations representative said Putrajaya must also be pressured into showing similar concern on the domestic front.

UN special rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association Maina Kiai, among others, alluded to the action taken against those involved in Bersih 5.

"There is no doubt that the Rohingya are going through a terrible time and it is great Malaysia has joined to support them, we should give them credit for that.

"But we should also ask them to have the same amount of concern for other domestic and international issues. Not just about Rohingya," he said in a special lecture at the Institute of Integrity Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur.

"We want the Rohingya to exercise their rights, but we also want Malaysians to exercise their rights.

"We don't want Malaysians to go to the streets but after they are done we hear they are being summoned, summoned and summoned (by the authorities).

"And some are being jailed, being held under terrorism charges," he added, referring to the detention of Bersih chairperson Maria Chin Abdullah under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012.

Maria was [released](#) on Nov 28 after being detained for 10 days.

Meanwhile, Kiai warned that while such actions were meant to inculcate fear, it however always triggered the opposite reaction and resulted in more public anger.

He also noted that the action against Maria tarnished Malaysia's reputation at the international level.

"Because when you pick up a peaceful protestor whose only job was to organise a protest, and you charge her under terrorism charges, everybody knows it is fake.

"Whichever way you look at it. You can't sustain that (action) internationally. That doesn't fly. Everybody will ask, 'why would the government go to such extremes?'" he stressed.

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang and several top Umno leaders yesterday rallied to express their [solidarity](#) for the Rohingya.

Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suhakam) chairperson Razali Ismail, who officiated the function at the Institute of Integrity Malaysia, expressed regret over Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi's stand on the Rohingya issue.

"I am puzzled and disappointed. She was a democratic icon, but now she seems to have forgotten all the principles which she had fought for before," said Razali who played a pivotal role in releasing Suu Kyi from house arrest in May 2002 during his tenure as the UN secretary-general's special envoy to Myanmar.

He, however, disagreed with calls for Suu Kyi to be stripped of her Nobel Peace Prize award, arguing that it was awarded for her past struggles on democracy and human rights.

Copyright © 1999-2016 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd

Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/365228>