

USBO plans to be first NGO to become BN affiliate
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The United Sabah Bajau Organisation (USBO) has become the first NGO in the country to announce its plans to join BN as an affiliate member.

In welcoming the decision of the BN supreme council to open its doors for direct membership from individuals and associations, USBO president Salleh Said Keruak said USBO had always been supportive of or pro-BN all this while.

"This is a golden opportunity for us in USBO. We feel that as an NGO, it is time to formalise our continued support for the coalition by joining it as an affiliate member.

"We want to help strengthen the coalition in whatever way we can and attract more people, particularly youths, to join the ruling BN," he told Bernama today.

Salleh said USBO also expressed its full support for the leadership of Sabah Chief Minister Musa Aman and Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, who mooted BN's open-door policy and the 1Malaysia concept.

Najib was quoted as saying recently that BN would open itself to direct membership from individuals and organisations.

The prime minister, who is also BN chairperson, said individuals could join the coalition as associate members while associations including NGOs would be accepted as affiliates, and the rights and role of such members would be debated and decided at the BN convention this weekend.

Salleh, a former Sabah chief minister, said the decision to allow direct membership, which provided a platform for those not interested in being members of any of the coalition's 13 component parties but subscribed to the BN spirit and concept, was timely and appropriate, and should be supported by all.

However, he said USBO would scrutinise the terms and conditions of the proposed direct membership before making a final decision.

"If we are eligible, we will not hesitate to submit a formal application to join the coalition as soon as possible," he said.

USBO's membership is open to Bajau, Bajo, Badjau, Jama Mapun or Kagayan, Balangingi, Binadan, Kubang, Sama, Sama Delaut, Simunul, Sibutu, Sikubung, Yakan, Sibaud, Ubian, Suluk and Iranun individuals.

USBO, whose objective is to safeguard the customs, culture and future of this community in the state, was formerly known as Persatuan Sabah Bajau Bersatu (PSBB) formed on June 15, 1964 and changed its name to USBO on Aug 31, 2006.

- Bernama

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