

**Khairy goes for Umno Youth top post**  
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**Andrew Ong**

Umno Youth deputy chief Khairy Jamaluddin today officially announced his decision to contest for the top post of the wing in the December party polls.

He aimed to replace outgoing Youth wing chief Hishammuddin Hussein on a platform that would bring the members and leaders much closer.

He said he intended to bring changes through a 'friendship platform' to strengthen ties between the Umno grassroots and party leaders, as well as with Barisan Nasional component partners.

"I'm contesting as a Malaysian, just as I'm contesting as a Malay for Umno," said Khairy, adding that the Umno Youth chief post was a heavy responsibility as he would also have to lead BN Youth.

He made the announcement in front of about 100 supporters at a function in Rembau. Among them were some 40 Umno Youth division leaders and five Umno Youth state leaders.

Khairy is the member of parliament for the constituency.

Khairy said that Umno Youth must adopt a more inclusive approach towards non-party members and those of other races because the movement also leads Barisan Nasional Youth.

Asked if he would be accepted by Barisan component parties considering his history of making statements which irked them, Khairy said that there were no problems as he knew Barisan Youth leaders well.

"Maybe we require a fresh way of presenting unity in BN Youth. That's what I plan to do. We need someone to articulate the social contract in ways where the young generation can understand.

"We must be inclusive and reach out to the young. Of course Umno Youth are my core constituents, but we must be inclusive. That is the new approach we must bring into Umno Youth," he said.

### **An OK chance**

Asked on his chances, Khairy jokingly said that he stood an "okay chance" but indicated that he had done extensive groundwork nationwide, hence the delay for announcing his candidacy.

He also praised outgoing Umno Youth chief Hishammuddin and intends to build on the latter's achievements.

khairy jamaluddin announce umno youth top post challenge 170908 02" In 1998, Umno Youth was almost destroyed. There was no leader, secretary, treasurer or publicity chief.

Umno was in tatters, but Hishammuddin was successful in uniting the movement.

"Now, we need efforts to spread Umno Youth's influence, not only within the wing, but also serve as a entity which can inspire Malays and all Malaysian youths," he said.

On whether he has a running mate, Khairy replied that the question does not arise, adding that no one has announced that they would be running for deputy or vice Umno Youth chief yet.

He regarded his opponents as friends who are more senior than he was in the movement and believed that regardless of whoever that was elected, that person would be able to serve the movement well due to his individual strength and integrity.

Umno supreme council member and ex-Selangor menteri besar Dr Mohd Khir Toyo had also announced that he would be contesting for the post.

Jerlun MP and Umno Youth exco member Mukhriz Mahathir is also expected to vie for the top post.

Till date, three others who have announced their candidacy for the post are Umno supreme council member and ex-Selangor menteri besar Dr Mohd Khir Toyo, Jerlun MP and Umno Youth exco member Mukhriz Mahathir and Perlis Umno deputy chief Zahidi Zainol Abidin.

Also at the press conference was Umno Youth representatives from some 40 divisions including Federal Territory Umno Youth chief Norza Zakaria, Umno Youth treasurer Abdul Hamid Nasalah, Kota Belud MP Abdul Rahman Dahlan, Umno Youth exco Reezal Merican and Putera Umno chief Azeez Abdul Rahim.

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