

Happy Birthday Malaysia
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48 years ago we formed Malaysia in the spirit of unity, justice and liberty; today, Malaysians have much reason for celebration as Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak publicly commits Malaysian government to sowing the seeds of a stronger human rights culture in the country.

Amnesty International Malaysia (AIM) welcomes Najib Tun Razak's announcement during his Malaysia Day 2011 address. History is a vital part of our existence from which we can extract lessons and the time has come for Malaysians to face our future with new hopes and aspirations, placing human rights and justice at the core of our nation's system of administration.

Key reforms which the Prime Minister has announced are:

- The repeal of the Internal Security Act 1960 (ISA);
- The tabling of a motion in both houses of Parliament for the three remaining Emergency declarations to be lifted pursuant to Clause 3, Article 150 of Federal Constitution;
- To review Section 27 of Police Act 1967 with a view to adhering more closely to constitutional provision of Freedom of Assembly in Article 10 of Federal Constitution and international norms;
- The repeal of the Banishment Act 1959;
- The review of the Printing Presses and Publication Act 1984 and that the requirement for annual renewals of permits will be abolished; and
- Review of the Restricted Residence Act 1933.

Najib has stated that ISA will be replaced by two new Acts of Parliament which seek to address subversive threats. Any endeavour taken must have Human Rights at its core and it is necessary for the government to include all stakeholders in the drafting of these Acts. These rights too have to be respected and adhered by all enforcement authorities; human rights based policing need to be incorporated into our policing system.

We urge Najib to always uphold the spirit of our Federal Constitution and Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We need to remember the Proclamation of Independence as read out by Tunku Abdul Rahman that we are a, "...sovereign democratic and independent State founded upon the principles of liberty and justice and ever seeking the welfare and happiness of its people and the maintenance of a just peace among all nations".

AIM extends its support and expertise in assisting the Malaysian government in bringing about these reforms. We hope that the process of reform and its results will be shared transparently with all Malaysians and we look forward to engage with these processes.

This historic moment is a testimony of all the nation could be. It is not a triumph which ought to be attributed to any one party; rather it is a birthday gift from each and every Malaysian to one another.

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