

**Suhakam Highly Concerned With Sabah A-G's Statement**  
**Bernama**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 11 (Bernama) -- Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suhakam) is highly concerned and taking a serious view of Sabah attorney-general Datuk Roderic Fernandez' statement that the Sabah Land Ordinance (SLO) of 1930 does not allow for the creation of new native customary rights (NCR) land in the state.

Suhakam chairman Tan Sri Hasmy Agam said Fernandez' statement clearly conflicted with the position of NCR, which is a fundamental right of the Orang Asli and Indigenous people, as enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

"The Commission is shocked at the Sabah attorney-general's comment, as the position he has stated is all together new and conflicts with all existing policies and interpretation of the SLO, in particular with customary Bumiputera laws and perspectives," he said in a statement here Saturday.

He urged the authorities to ensure that any policy decisions by state governments, particularly related to land matters, should be based on meaningful and effective consultations with consensus from communities and interested parties.

He was commenting on Fernandez' statement yesterday that new NCR land could not be created because only the land "still" occupied by natives prior to the date of the SLO enforcement, was recognised with such a status.

Hasmy also called for a postponement of any new policies related to land matters until the completion of the National Inquiry on Orang Asli and Indigenous land.

The terms and reference of the inquiry includes a review of domestic land laws and other policies to handle the problems faced by the Peninsular Malaysia Orang Asli and Sabah and Sarawak Bumiputera's demands for land rights.

The inquiry is headed by Hasmy and commenced in Sabah, June last year, followed by Perak, Kelantan, Pahang, Johor and Selangor.

It is expected to be completed by July and would be presented to Parliament, State Assemblies, and the federal and state governments.

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