

UNICEF Praises Malaysia's Efforts In Strengthening Child Protection

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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 4 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's ongoing efforts in strengthening child protection was highlighted in the review of domestic laws related to violence against children in ASEAN countries, commissioned by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

Besides legal provisions on child trafficking, child abduction and child prostitution, the review also found that Malaysia's existing laws on abuse at home and within the family were largely compliant with international treaties on child protection.

UNICEF Representative to Malaysia Wivina Belmonte said Malaysia's commitment to creating a strong legal child protection framework was the result of efforts by the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry and the civil society.

"Malaysia's current efforts to revise the Child Act, as well as the recent launch of the missing children's portal, are all steps in the right direction to better protect the lives of children," she said in a statement released by UNICEF today.

The recently-published review, entitled 'Legal Protection from Violence: Analysis of Domestic Laws related to Violence Against Children in ASEAN Member States' was to identify strengths, weaknesses and what was missing in terms of child protection, as measured against international standards.

According to the statement, the review called for some improvement that need to be done by Malaysia, such as legal reform towards expanding the definition of sexual acts criminalised below the age of consent.

It also suggested that the legal definition of rape to be extended, so that it applied to all acts of sexual penetration.

"With regard to online child protection laws, the report highlighted that a more comprehensive definition of child pornography was needed, as well as law that mandated reporting obligations," said the statement, quoting the review.

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