



**AWARD TO DATIN SRI ROSMAH & PERMATA:
STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS SECRETARY**

20 September 2016

1. On 8 September 2016, Irina Bokova in her capacity as Director General of UNESCO sent letters to Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Tun Razak, his wife Datin Sri Rosmah Mansor and Foreign Minister Dato' Sri Anifah Aman. The letters stated that Datin Sri Rosmah was to be given a special tribute award at an event co-hosted by UNESCO on 22 September 2016. This was in recognition of efforts undertaken by the Government of Malaysia to counter extremism through the educational system, and specifically the approach taken by PERMATA, founded in 2007 by Datin Seri Rosmah.
2. On 18 September 2016, Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations received an email from Professor Tudor Parfitt, Chairman of the Academic Advisory Board of the Organising Committee of the Tribute to Contributors to the Global Campaign against Violent Extremism. Professor Parfitt stated that the award would be deferred to 2017 because of what he called "interventions" from the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times regarding the funding of PERMATA.
3. We can confirm that PERMATA is wholly funded by the Government of Malaysia under an allocation transparently included in our annual Government Budget and approved by Parliament. All expenditures are in accordance with Government financial procedures. This is not only a matter of public record, but could have been immediately explained had we or PERMATA been asked before the award deferment.
4. Neither PERMATA, Datin Sri Rosmah or the Government of Malaysia ever applied for the award. The priority of PERMATA and Datin Sri Rosmah will always be the programmes that have had a positive impact on tens of thousands of young lives. To avoid any further distraction from this important work for the children of Malaysia, PERMATA and Datin Sri Rosmah have declined the proposed deferred award.
5. We deplore attempts to politicise the work of an exemplary organisation whose only aim is to improve the lives of children. And we regret that those who chose to bestow the award have given in to the smears and insinuations of some who are only focussed on their campaign against Malaysia, the Government, and the Prime Minister. Those behind this politically-motivated campaign care nothing for the damage caused by these false allegations to PERMATA, its staff and all the young people they have helped and cared for.
6. Neither PERMATA nor Datin Seri Rosmah will be distracted by people who cast false aspersions to undermine a noble cause. Their focus will remain on making real differences for children today, to help build a better tomorrow for Malaysia.