

**Malaysia Committed To Uphold 16 Core Principles of Commonwealth Charter - Zahid Bernama**  
**Jan 11, 2016**

KOTA KINABALU, Jan 11 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is committed to uphold the 16 core principles of the Commonwealth Charter including democratic governance that over the time have been enhanced and strengthened as well as the important role of the parliament, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He stressed that democratic governance and basic human rights included human rights, peace and security, tolerance and respect, freedom of expression, separation of powers, rule of law and good governance were the pillars of the Commonwealth and had been enshrined in the Malaysian Constitution.

"Central to affirming these principles is a harmonious relationship and cooperation among the branches of the government - executive, legislative and judiciary, as they all derive their authority from the sovereign will of the people and therefore they have to be accountable to them," he said.

Zahid said this when addressing the 23rd Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC) here Monday.

Present at the ceremony were Speaker of the Malaysian Parliament Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia, Chief Minister of Sabah Datuk Seri Musa Aman, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman and Communication and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Dr Salleh Said Keruak.

Therefore, according to Zahid, when democracy was under threat, it was not the responsibility of the executive alone to seek the solutions but the parliament as well should respond collectively as it was an opportunity to renew the abiding faith in the fundamental principles of the Commonwealth.

He said the executive was receptive to Parliament's opinions as discussions on various concerns in parliamentary were reflective of the national mood, and hence the need for both branches of government to work in partnership.

Zahid said Speakers and Presiding Officers were held in high esteem as they were custodian of the parliamentary democracy tradition, a position which symbolised the dignity and power of the House over which he or she was presiding.

According to Zahid through the position of the Speakers and Presiding Officers it provided leaderships to enable representation, legislative and oversight functions through the concept of fair and inclusive development.

He said through dialogues and consensus-building efforts, Parliaments were able to constructively engage the electorate for their views and the Speakers' and Presiding Officers' responsiveness and willingness to listen to the voice of the people was one of the great strengths of the parliamentary system.

"The voice of the 2.2 billion people gives the Commonwealth the legitimacy to articulate on global importance. The strength of the Commonwealth lies in its shared values and diversity. Each member has an equal say, regardless of their size or economic stature," Zahid added.

Zahid also said that new approaches were needed to raise the Parliament's roles above the political divide and placed the needs and aspirations of the people first as traditions were proving to be inadequate to the challenges faced by the institution.

In this regard, Zahid said Malaysia had proposed Parliament reforms to ensure that the House conducted its business more efficiently and effectively and the executive fully supported the reforms.

"We firmly believe the more balance the legislative-executive relation is, the more effective the parliamentary democracy system will become. It is the recipe for good governance and progression towards a mature democracy," Zahid added.

--BERNAMA

Copyright © 2015 BERNAMA

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1205897>