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Title : BRIEFING TO HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS ON SECURITY SITUATION AND PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TAKEN BY THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT

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Your Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. First of all I would like to wish you a very good afternoon and to thank you for finding the time to be here for this special briefing on the security situation in Malaysia.

2. The objective of this briefing to all Heads of Diplomatic Missions today is two fold: to update and provide clear information on the current security situation in Malaysia including the various steps and action taken by the Government to ensure Malaysia is safe.

to seek the cooperation of the Heads of Diplomatic Missions to make an objective assessment of the security situation in Malaysia.

3. By this briefing, we hope to reiterate to you on how safe Malaysia is. Wisma Putra has hosted such security briefings before but nevertheless we will provide all of you again with some information on the precautionary measures that have been taken by our security agencies in other to prevent, contain and combat threats of terrorism in Malaysia.

4. We have noted that certain countries have reacted to worldwide incidents of terrorism by issuing negative travel advisories against specific countries. Immediately after the 9/11 incident, some countries had issued negative travel advisories advising their citizens to avoid visiting certain countries including Malaysia. After the Bali bomb blast, again Malaysia was lumped together with some other countries and portrayed as a dangerous place for tourists and westerners to visit. The recent bombing in Riyadh and Casablanca had further heightened fears and

anxiety around the world and once again negative travel advisories were issued against Malaysia. We fail to understand why.

5. We deeply regret the issuance of such travel advisories because it does not reflect the genuine security situation in Malaysia nor the reality on the ground here. I would like to point out to the fact that despite the many negative travel advisories against Malaysia, up to the present day, Malaysia has been virtually free of any incidents of violence and terrorism. This only goes to prove that Malaysia is a very safe country for both Malaysian and foreigners alike. Many of you have been in Malaysia for quite some time already and bear witness that Malaysia is safe.

6. There is no single evidence to link the recent terrorist attacks elsewhere with possible threats of terrorism in Malaysia. Hence, it is unfair to lump Malaysia together with some other countries as possible sites for terrorist attacks, merely by generalizations, not backed by genuine and credible information or evidence. There are no threats to our security.

7. Malaysians are peace loving people and has no tolerance for acts of terrorism and extremism. We want to protect and promote our democratic, multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society and the spirit of religious and ethnic tolerance that underlies it. Malaysians want to preserve our commitment to modernization, development and openness to the outside world which have played such an important role in our unprecedented economic growth and prosperity over the past decades.

8. These virtues had and will continue to contribute to the strong bonds of unity, harmony and cooperation among the various races for the common good of the country and people. They will continue to act as a strong foundation for maintaining peace and security in Malaysia and will act as a bulwark against acts of terrorism and extremism in Malaysia.

9. However, this situation has not been readily accepted by some quarters. Baseless fears of perceived terrorist attacks on Malaysia had caused considerable damage by eroding public perception and confidence of the security situation in Malaysia. This has not only affected our tourism industry but had also negatively affect the flow of foreign direct investments (FDIs) to Malaysia, which in turn would affect our economic growth.

10. I can fully understand the concern of certain countries on the safety of their citizens. However, I would like to categorically state that the security situation in Malaysia is under control and that Malaysia remains a safe place for foreigners and visitors. It is an acceptable action to give proper advice provided it is correct and based on facts. Travel advisories issued on Malaysia, if any, should only focus on the situation in Malaysia. It is not fair nor appropriate to lump it together with other countries.

11. Malaysia is acknowledged as one of the most stable countries in Asia. It is also regarded as one of the safest and least volatile democracies in the region. The country's priority on the rule of law, administration of justice and constant vigilance on public security is the foundation of its sustained peace and development in all areas.

12. Malaysians by nature are caring and always hospitable. The comfort and well-being of their guests and visitors are of utmost priority in the longstanding Malaysian tradition of hospitality.

13. The comfort, safety and security of visitors are of priority to Malaysia. Security patrols, particularly in remote resorts are maintained to ensure their safety. All involved in the tourism sector of Malaysia are sensitized and trained on security aspects towards this end.

14. Security and other precautionary measures that are already in place in Malaysia are not only for the benefit of Malaysians, but are extended to all visitors to the country. Tourist police are placed in popular destinations to assist our visitors.

15. These measures are constantly considered and upgraded where appropriate in tandem with developing requirements. This is to afford better safety and security for Malaysians and visitors alike in the country.

16. All acts and forms of terrorism are deplored by Malaysia since its independence as assaults against humanity is detrimental to personal and state security. Applicable national laws are already in place to deter and prevent terrorism and bring the apprehended perpetrators to justice.

17. Malaysia is committed to counter all forms of terrorism that victimized innocent civilians. To address the scourge of terrorism that transcends borders, Malaysia remains in close consultations with all governments that seek its cooperation to prevent, counter, and address it.

18. Prior to and immediately after Independence we have had to battle with the Communist insurgency for over 42 years but we defeated them not only by military means but also by winning their "hearts and minds" and by addressing the root causes of the communist insurgency that plagued Malaysia in that long period of our nation history. This is a strong testament of the capabilities and efficiency of our Government and the security forces in countering armed threats to society and maintaining peace and tranquillity in the country.

19. The Malaysian Government has also long taken preventive and pre-emptive measures against terrorist organisations such as the al-Maunah, the Malaysian Militant Group (KMM) and the Jemaah Islamiah (JI). The Government has no reservations to arrest and detain any person suspected of involvement in acts of

terrorism or extremism. The overriding consideration will be the protection of the nation's democratic institutions, its national interests and internal security, as well as to safeguard the well-being and safety of all Malaysians and our visitors.

20. Instances of untoward incidents are very rare in Malaysia. Street violence and vandalism are deplored by the peace-loving, civil and civic-minded Malaysians. The level of security of the country is borne out by the fact that there is no assault against foreigners visiting Malaysia due to their race, religion or country of origin. All foreigners or visitors are given the full freedom to go about their own business and has been never been harassed or harm. No foreign firms or properties have been targeted in random by irrational acts of violence and vandalism.

21. Malaysia has also taken the lead in the battle against regional terrorism by establishing a South East Asia Centre for Combating Terrorism. The main purpose of this Centre is to provide training and to develop expertise in combating terrorism for government officials in the South East Asia region. On this, we welcome assistance and the sharing of expertise from countries with better experience on combating terrorism such as the United States of America, France and Switzerland.

22. To address global terrorism, a concerted and transparent approach from the governments of the world is needed. On Malaysia's part, we will continue to be proactive in addressing the issue.

23. The safety of Malaysians and foreign citizens in Malaysia will remain a top priority for our Government. Hence, despite the negative travel advisories issued by certain countries, I assure you that the security situation in Malaysia is under effective control and is in no way threatened.

24. Before your country decides to issue such travel advisories, I sincerely hope that they will consult you first as you are here and much more aware of the security atmosphere in Malaysia. I also hope that as a result of this afternoon's briefing, you will convey the accurate picture of the security situation here in Malaysia to your respective capitals.

25. We have an open channel for you to consult and confer with us in the event that you receive genuine intelligence reporting of possible terrorist threats in Malaysia. Our security agencies are here to work with you. Instead of falling into the trap of paranoia and unjustified fears, we welcome any inquiries, information or support from you to help us contain and eliminate threats of terrorism.

26. I hope that after our briefing today you will leave Wisma Putra convinced and reassured that Malaysia remains one of the most welcoming, safe and secure countries for visitors from all regions of the world.

Thank you.