

Press Statement, 7 November 2012

String of Harassment against Human Rights Defenders Must Stop!

We, the undersigned NGOs and groups, urge the authorities to immediately cease all forms of harassment against various leaders and members of civil society organisations. The latest developments in this continued persecution and intimidation strategies are the four summons issued to women's rights activist of Persatuan Kesedaran Komuniti Selangor (EMPOWER) and BERSIH 2.0 Steering Committee member Maria Chin Abdullah, President of the Malaysian Bar Lim Chee Wee, opposition Members of Parliament Tian Chua and Tony Pua and civil liberties lawyer Syahredzan Johan.

These individuals were summoned by the Registrar of Societies ("RoS") to assist in their ongoing investigation on SUARAM. We view this as highly irrational as none of them are acquainted with the fact and circumstances regarding SUARAM. The RoS has invoked Section 111 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) to summon the above named individuals to record their statements under Section 112 of the CPC.

We as members of civil society groups have already pledged our full support for SUARAM, a strong defender of human rights in Malaysia which is being investigated relentlessly by various public agencies and detest endless incitement from various government-linked NGOs (GONGOs) to see an end to civil liberties and human rights.

We demand an end to all forms of harassment against human rights defenders. We reiterate that instead of pursuing unnecessary cases against NGOs and as a consequence wasting tax payer's money and time, the government should focus the resources of the tax-payers on the much-needed improvements and strengthening mechanisms and oversights to our public institutions.

Thank you.

Signed by:

1. All Women's Action Society Malaysia (AWAM)
2. Association of Women Lawyers (AWL)
3. Bersihkan Malaysia – Perth
4. Civil Rights Committee of KLSCAH (CRC)
5. Community Action Network (CAN)
6. Global Bersih
7. Himpunan Hijau
8. Institute for Development of Alternative Living (IDEA)
9. Islamic Renaissance Front (IRF)
10. Jaringan Rakyat Tertindas (JERIT)
11. Jingga 13
12. Kill The Bill
13. KLSCAH Youth Section
14. Knowledge and Rights with Young people through Safer Spaces (KRYSS)
15. Lawyers for Liberty (LFL)
16. LLG Cultural Development Centre
17. Malaysia Youth and Students Democratic Movement (DEMA)
18. Mama Bersih
19. Northern Green Youth (NGY)
20. Pahang Raub Ban Cyanide in Gold Mining Action Committee (BCAC)
21. Perak Women for Women (PWW)
22. Persatuan Alumni PBTUSM, KL & Selangor
23. Persatuan Kesedaran Komuniti Selangor (EMPOWER)
24. Persatuan Komuniti Prihatin Selangor & KL (PRIHATIN)
25. Persatuan Masyarakat Selangor dan Wilayah Persekutuan (PERMAS)
26. Pusat Komunikasi Masyarakat (KOMAS)
27. Sabah Women's Action Resource Group (SAWO)
28. Saya Anak Bangsa Malaysia (SABM)
29. Serdang Bharu School Alumni Youth Section
30. Sisters in Islam (SIS)
31. Solidariti Anak Muda Malaysia (SAMM)
32. Solidariti Mahasiswa Malaysia (SMM)
33. Solidarity for Civil Rights in China (SCRC)
34. Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM)
35. Suaram International
36. Tenaganita
37. Women's Aid Organisation (WAO)
38. Women's Centre for Change (WCC)
39. Persatuan Sahabat Wanita Selangor
40. Malaysians Against Death Penalty and Torture (MADPET)