

WELCOMING SPEECH BY

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**ON THE OCCASSION OF "MPN UMS-SUHAKAM SPECIAL
LECTURE ON "HUMAN RIGHTS IN MALAYSIA AND THE
REGION"**

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RECITAL HALL
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, ARTS AND HERITAGE**

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and
Salam Sejahtera

Salutations (TBD)

First of all, let us thank to Allah SWT for his
Greatness that enables us to meet here today, at
the MPN UMS-SUHAKAM Special Lecture on
'Human Rights in Malaysia and ASEAN'.

On behalf of Universiti Malaysia Sabah and the Majlis Professor Negara Chapter UMS, I would like to thank and welcome the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) delegates led by YBhg. Tan Sri Razali Ismail, the Chairman of Human Rights Commission of Malaysia for coming to our University Malaysia Sabah and sharing his thought with us today.

For the record, this is the second time Tan Sri Razali Ismail has come to UMS to share his thoughts and experiences on human rights. We hope this event is a continuing activity. In fact, we hope SUHAKAM and UMS can work together to further enhance human rights knowledge and practice in Malaysia. Here, I would like to thank all those that have taken the time to come and enrich their knowledge on human rights.

This includes the civil servants, NGOs, and students who are attending this special lecture on Human Rights in Malaysia and ASEAN organized by the Majlis Professor Negara UMS Chapter as part of its Lecture Series. It is an honour and privilege for us to have Tan Sri Razali Ismail to talk about human rights in Malaysia and ASEAN. Indeed, in today's trouble world, human rights is something that we cannot take for granted?

In fact, we have to be vigilant at all time to ensure our rights as human beings are not being trampled upon. SUHAKAM, as a national human rights institution which monitors human rights standard and advice the government of Malaysia pertaining to human rights, is the right institution to update us on human rights developments and issues in our beloved nation and in the ASEAN. I am personally keen to update myself with human rights issues affecting our security and wellbeing.

We are very lucky because today we have the Chairman of SUHAKAM himself sharing his thought on the issue. I would like to put it in record that UMS is active in engaging nongovernmental organizations for its academic programme as well as its social activities. The SUHAKAM Sabah branch had earlier met us to discuss some important idea for the promotion of human rights awareness in higher learning institution.

I hope there will be a follow up on the discussed agendas for implementation.

For Tan Sri's information, UMS is offering a subject on Human Rights. It is an elective course under our International Relations, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Heritage. Recently, UMS student has participated in human rights debates organized by ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in Bangkok, Thailand.

In order to bring awareness among university's students about human rights, I believe it is timely that this subject be made accessible to other faculties' students too.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Malaysia is a developing and democratic country with high aspiration on human right standard and practice.

Of course, there's up and down in the way we adjust our life with regard to human rights in Malaysia. Improvement is always the end objective that we seek to reach towards collective social benefits.

The barometer of democratic society is measured by the fundamental liberty enjoys by its people. The right to live for instance is very fundamental to human existence, without it, an individual is put under threat.

I believe that fundamental liberty in Malaysia has been incorporated in the supreme law of the country. For example, Part II of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia comprising article 5 to 13 guarantees this liberty, which briefly summarized into liberty of the person (Article 5); freedom from slavery and forced labour (Article 6); protection against retrospective criminal laws and repeated trials (Article 7); equality (Article 8); prohibition of banishment and freedom of movement (Article 9);

freedom of speech, assembly and association (Article 10); freedom of religion (Article 11); rights in respect of education (Article 12) and rights to property (Article 13).

We should ensure that these already enshrined human rights elements in our Federal Constitution be known to our citizens as a guarantee to upholding human rights in Malaysia. Also, to ensure that it is consonant to the International Human Rights Declaration.

I believe that these guarantees are fundamental to every citizen of Malaysia. They are institutionalized into monitoring mechanisms and embodied into specific legal instruments to protect our rights from abuse. Many of us speak the language of rights without knowing within 'rights' there is element of responsibility one needs to deliver. I will not indulge myself into this as our distinguished speaker will deliberate on this issue.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I hope that today's event will enlighten us more on the current issues of human rights in Malaysia and the ASEAN. Our audiences, I am sure will take this opportunity to ask pertinent questions during the question and answer session.

Once again, my many thank to Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM), Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Heritage (FKSW), the Majlis Profesor Negara UMS Chapter and the moderator for their valuable contribution to this event. I wish you had a valuable session and success in achieving your desired aims through your attendance at this special lecture.

Thank you.