



CLOSING ADDRESS

BY

YB DATO SRI DR. HAJI WAN JUNAIDI BIN TUANKU JAAFAR

**MINISTER IN PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT
(PARLIAMENT AND LAW)**

FOR

**HUMAN RIGHTS DAY CELEBRATION 2021
HYBRID FORUM**

**Theme: "Access to Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment as a
Human Right"**

ON

10 DECEMBER 2021 (FRIDAY)

Jointly organised by:

**Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (KLN)
Legal Affairs Division (BHEUU), Prime Minister's Department
The United Nations in Malaysia**

(Salutation)

YB Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah

Minister of Foreign Affairs

YBhg. Tan Sri Othman bin Hashim,

Chairman of Human Rights Commission of Malaysia

HE Karima El Korri

UN Resident Coordinator for Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and Singapore

Ladies and Gentleman,

Assalamualaikum and Salam Sejahtera

1. First of all, I would like to express my utmost gratitude for inviting me to deliver this closing remark at the **Human Rights Day celebration** for the year 2021. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Legal Affairs Division, Prime Minister's Department (BHEUU), Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) and The United Nations Country Team in Malaysia (UNCT) for organising this meaningful event.

2. Human Rights Day is celebrated in conjunction with the official adoption of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights by United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948**. The declaration is an important milestone in the history of mankind as it recognises all human as being **born free and equal in dignity and rights**, regardless of their **race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status**.

3. I very much appreciate the theme of today's forum "**Access to Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment as a Human Right**". This theme is proportionate to the current recognition for the first time by the Human Rights Council that having **a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is a human right**. In resolution 48/13, the Council called on States around the world to work together, and with other partners, to implement this newly recognised right. This is also in line with Malaysia's realignment of its timeframe around the common timeframe for the **National Determined Contribution (NDC) during the recent COP 26**.

4. The issues relating to '**Environment and Human Rights**' or the human rights to a safe and healthy environment are not alien to us.

In fact, almost every day we hear about cases of environmental violations. The failure to realize the importance of environment as a human right has raised questions about **environmental governance** in Malaysia. However, there have been many strong proponents of protecting and improving the environment globally, nationally and locally. As a result of these initiatives, there has been some progress, but it is clear that in all parts of the world, our environment is under threat and that many problems are becoming more serious and severe.

5. I strongly believe that current environmental issues affecting the nation and the world require contemporary approaches. Such approaches need to focus on **governance and accountability** of the people towards the environment. It is also important that we need to uphold the very principles of human rights in all circumstances so that no one are left out.

6. Bold and affirmative actions are required to transform the economic, social and environmental policies to respect the rights to a healthy environment and protect the people and nature we live in. I strongly believe that environmental protection is a social responsibility. Therefore, the effort to address environmental degradation and

improve the protection should be as a matter of human responsibilities and rights. The National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights has identified environment as an important parameter, recognizing the constant violations in this area and the need to mobilize all actors both the state and private sector players to ensure that these violations are addressed as quickly as possible.

Ladies and Gentleman,

7. I hope the discussion and sharing session by the experts today has been very useful to all of you and the forum as a whole has been a fruitful one. Having a platform of esteem panellist and speakers who are able to share their experiences and knowledge is indeed a blessing.

Lastly, allow me to extend my sincere appreciation to all panellist, speakers, the organizing committee and all of you here today for your support in making this event a meaningful one. I humbly call upon each of us to stay united and continue our efforts to uphold **human rights** and the right to ***Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment***

Thank you and stay safe!

Prepared by

***Policy and Research
Legal Affairs Division,
Prime Minister's Department***