

**FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK  
OF THE **NEW MALAYSIA****  
Change in Continuity

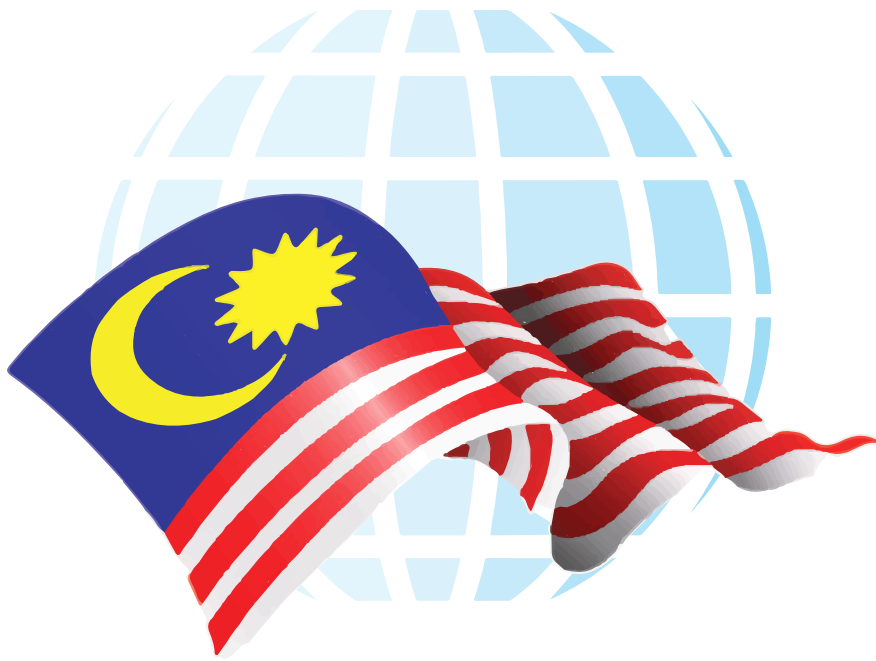


**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
MALAYSIA**



**JABATAN  
PENERANGAN  
MALAYSIA**





**FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK**  
**OF THE NEW MALAYSIA**  
Change in Continuity

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## **FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK OF THE NEW MALAYSIA Change in Continuity**

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**FOREWORD BY**  
**YAB Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad**  
Prime Minister



I would like to commend Wisma Putra for preparing the Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia. I am pleased that the Framework, entitled 'Change in Continuity' has captured the foreign policy direction and emphasis that I had made in my speech at the 73<sup>rd</sup> United Nations General Assembly in New York last year.

Coming up with this Framework is indeed a bold step as it is not easy to predict how the international arena will pan out. This is particularly true for a country like Malaysia that does not have much control over what transpires internationally.

While we may not have much say, it should not stop us from speaking out loud on issues that are against humanity, justice and freedom. In short, Malaysia must never shy away from speaking out against oppression.

I am happy to note that this Framework has managed to outline the principles and priorities of this government.

A new era for Malaysia began after the 14<sup>th</sup> General Election on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Malaysians voted for change and placed their faith in the Alliance of Hope (*Pakatan Harapan*) to form the new federal government.

I believe the change they want is not confined to domestic matters but extends into our participation on the international stage.

As much as they were ashamed that Malaysia was reduced to being a kleptocracy by the previous administration, they are definitely hopeful that

Malaysia will re-discover its position as the voice of conscience for the South and developing nations.

While Malaysia wants to be friends with all countries regardless of their ideological beliefs, we must continue to speak against injustices and in defending the rights of the oppressed.

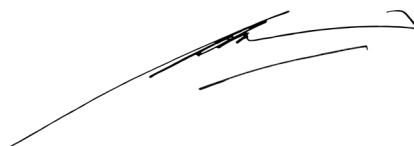
Malaysia must be effective in influencing and making decisions that impact our national interests. Moreover, we must be proactive in shaping discourses on emerging international issues that will someday confront us.

As highlighted in this Framework, issues on inter-agencies co-ordination and empowerment of Wisma Putra must be given attention. Both are essential elements for efficient and effective foreign policy machinery.

Foreign policy covers a myriad of complex issues. While Wisma Putra is the lead agency, it requires the co-operation of all ministries and all agencies to ensure Malaysia's diplomatic initiatives are well coordinated and capable of ensuring that we achieve our desired objectives.

I wish also to congratulate Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Wisma Putra on this publication. I sincerely hope that this Framework will contribute towards a foreign policy that will continue to make Malaysia's voice heard and taken seriously.

Thank you.



**TUN DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD**  
PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA



## MESSAGE BY

**YB Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

9<sup>th</sup> May 2018 was a historic day. It was the day *Malaysia Baharu* (New Malaysia) was born. The New Malaysia, which is a peace-loving, harmonious multi-racial and multi-religious nation that upholds democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law, is now ready to take a more proactive role internationally to contribute in making the world more peaceful, fair and prosperous.

This Framework entitled 'Change in Continuity' takes its cue from the speech of Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

Malaysia will continue implementing the broad principles of international relations that have guided its diplomatic practice over the years. Malaysia will continue to maintain friendly relations with all. It will also continue to pursue a foreign policy that upholds the broad national interests which are: the physical survival and security of its people; the nation's economic well-being; and protection of the Malaysian identity which includes the country's good name, honour and respect towards its position in the international community.

There will also be changes. New emphasis on governance, human rights, justice and fairness in the domestic realm will be mirrored by Malaysia in its international conduct. Malaysia will adopt some new approaches in pursuing its foreign policy. This government aspires to be more active and vocal in championing issues of interest, for example global justice and fairness, economic diplomacy, and sharing of ideas such as *Maqasid Syari'ah* (higher objectives of the *Syari'ah*) and the concept of Muslim Democrats, to name a few.

This Framework is people-centric, prepared through a consultative process involving a diverse group of stakeholders and discussed at the Parliament and Cabinet. It signals the change in foreign policy-making of this government, that is, to get members of the public more involved in the process. In relation to this, the Framework proposes the establishment of a Parliamentary Select Committee and Parliamentary Caucuses on foreign policy.

Lastly, I wish to express my gratitude to the Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his leadership and support in this endeavour. I also wish to record my sincere thanks to all my colleagues in the Cabinet, the *Pakatan Harapan*, and my friends amongst the academia and CSOs for their valuable input. The members of the Consultative Council on Foreign Policy (CCFP) too have been exceptionally helpful. My sincere appreciation also goes to all officials of Wisma Putra who have been instrumental in the process of producing this Framework.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Saifuddin', with a long horizontal line underneath it.

**DATO' SAIFUDDIN ABDULLAH**  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



## MESSAGE BY

**Dato' Sri Shahrul Ikram Yaakob**  
Secretary-General  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The publication of this Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia represents a significant new direction in foreign policy-making for Wisma Putra. It embraces the spirit of the New Malaysia that cherishes inclusivity and transparency, bringing foreign policy closer to the people.

Wisma Putra has a strong tradition of engaging stakeholders and co-opting technical experts as advisers in international negotiations. However, it has always been dependent on the needs and issues at hand. This Framework signifies a notable progress in this respect. It is a bold attempt by the Ministry towards foreign policy that is broader based. This Framework has been prepared through a consultative process involving a wide range of stakeholders. They include not only of senior government officials but also among others, the academia, former diplomats, private sector, civil society organisations (CSOs) and youth groups. This is a step in line with the democratic ideals espoused by the New Malaysia, which uphold transparency and accountability to the people.

Hopefully, the publication of this Framework will encourage more Malaysians to take a keener interest in Malaysia's foreign policy and have better understandings of what Wisma Putra does. In this day and age, when information flows almost instantaneously across the globe, most people have developed greater interests in international issues. Better informed Malaysians have higher expectations on the government, including in the conduct of its foreign policy.

This Framework entitled 'Change in Continuity' elucidates the long-standing fundamental principles upon which Malaysia's foreign policy is based. Most important among them is the protection of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Another fundamental principle is that Malaysia is a

peace-loving nation and wants to maintain good and friendly relations with all other friendly nations. In addition, Malaysia remains a trading country and believes in free and fair trade. In general, these are the points of continuity that people can expect to see in the foreign policy of the New Malaysia.

Furthermore, the Framework also indicates the 'changes' that will be implemented by the government of the New Malaysia. The changes in approaches and direction are essential to translate the ethos of the new government into practicality. In terms of approach, as illustrated, Wisma Putra has embarked on efforts to be more inclusive in its foreign policy formulation. As regard to policy contents, the philosophy of the New Malaysia will be translated into greater emphases on issues of justice and fairness. The New Malaysia will be more vocal on issues of rights in general, especially those of the oppressed.

This Framework also highlights the importance of smooth co-ordination among the ministries and agencies in implementing the nation's foreign policy. While Wisma Putra is the custodian of the country's foreign policy, many issues that we handle cut across multiple sectors of the government. Thus, co-ordination between ministries and agencies is vital for the effective implementation of foreign policy. In addition, Wisma Putra needs to be strengthened. This not only relates to its human resource capability but includes all kinds of resources that the Ministry requires to carry out its functions and programmes effectively.

I hope the Framework will be a good reference for those who are seeking clarity on the direction of the New Malaysia's foreign policy. It is conceived for the benefit of our fellow government officials, the Malaysian public as well as our international partners. Wisma Putra looks forward to having more conversations with our stakeholders, both local and international on the foreign policy of the New Malaysia as outlined by this Framework.

Lastly, I wish to record my deepest appreciation to YB Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, Foreign Minister who has been the main driver of this initiative. The Foreign Minister's ideas, vision and guidance have been instrumental in ensuring the successful production of this Framework. I am also deeply appreciative of the support the Ministry has received from Prime Minister YAB Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad throughout the process of drawing up this Framework.



**DATO' SRI MUHAMMAD SHAHRUL IKRAM YAAKOB**  
SECRETARY-GENERAL  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Framework is broadly based on the articulation of foreign policy priorities and direction by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the first Malaysian Prime Minister of the *Pakatan Harapan* - PH (Alliance of Hope) administration at the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Subsequently, on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018 Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs tabled a Motion at the House of Representatives for the speech of the Prime Minister at the UN be made the basis of the foreign policy of the New Malaysia. The Motion was debated and approved unanimously.

This Framework has been prepared via an extensive consultative process. It involved the participation of the Cabinet ministers, PH leaders, senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), parliamentarians, academia, former diplomats, entrepreneurs and corporate representatives, professionals and members of civil societies (including youth and women). This Framework is truly a people-centric document.

The New Malaysia, which is a peace-loving, harmonious multi-racial and multi-religious nation that upholds democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law, is now ready to take a more proactive role internationally to contribute in making the world more peaceful, fair and prosperous.

This Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia consists of four components:

- i. Direction of Foreign Policy;
- ii. Empowering the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - MOFA (Wisma Putra);
- iii. Enhancing Inter-Agency Collaboration; and
- iv. Increasing Public and Civil Society Participation.

The central theme of this Framework is 'Change in Continuity'. Continuity refers to the broad security, economic and identity interests of the country that will remain consistent as the main foreign policy motivation of this administration. The change that this administration will introduce will mainly be in terms of approach and the emphasis on certain specific issues. This change is a reflection of the will of the Malaysian people, who have expressed their aspirations and concerns very clearly in the 14<sup>th</sup> General Election (GE14). GE14 created history because it led to an unprecedented change of the federal government and the birth of the 'New Malaysia'.

In outlining the areas where changes in emphasis will be made, this Framework adopts the three broad categories of national interests, which are

security, economic and identity. In terms of security, this Framework highlights the changes in issues pertaining to territorial dispute and the South China Sea, migration and irregular movement of people, cyber security and terrorism. In the economic dimension, this Framework discusses changes in emphasis that will be affected in issues related to Industrial Revolution 4.0, digital economy, ASEAN and fairer systems of international trade and finance. In the context of identity, this Framework elaborates on the changes in emphasis that will happen with regard to issues of human rights, assistance in post-conflict and post-disaster situations, memberships in international organisations, the Muslim world, South - South Cooperation, relations with major powers and international treaties and agreements.

In terms of approach, this administration will initiate new processes of public consultation, in line with its emphasis on good governance in administration. An example is the Consultative Council on Foreign Policy, comprising experts from various backgrounds. Another proposal is a Parliamentary Select Committee on Foreign Affairs. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) will also take steps to promote the development of a vibrant community consisting of scholars, observers and practitioners of foreign policy, to encourage the free flow of exchanges of ideas on foreign policy.

This administration will also adopt a more proactive approach in its foreign policy. This means influencing decisions even in processes that the country is not officially a party, as well as shaping opinions on emerging global issues.

The New Malaysia will also be vocal in advocating specific issues of interests. Being more vocal and prominent means taking a leadership role in advocating issues of interests.

Notably, the New Malaysia will put greater emphasis on issues of justice and fairness. This will be very apparent in relation to political conflicts for example in Palestine and Rakhine, as well as economic issues like global trade and investment arrangements.

In connection to the global effort to fight terrorism, Malaysia believes that it is important to address the root causes of terrorism. In this regard, this administration believes that terrorism has no link to any specific region, religion or community, and recognises the need to tackle the matter through a strong and genuine political will.

Malaysia will strive to position itself as an exemplary Islamic country, which is inclusive, developed and progressive. In doing so, Malaysia can demonstrate to the world, the goodness of Islam and the *ummah* in line with the principle of "*rahmatan lil alamin*" (mercy for all).

Malaysia will lead in championing reform of international organisations of which it is a member, to make these organisations more efficient and

effective. These include the UN and ASEAN. In the case of the UN, Malaysia will push for a reform in the arrangement to exercise the veto power. As regard ASEAN, Malaysia will propose for its meetings to be streamlined and reduced to a manageable number.

Malaysia will continue to give priority to ASEAN economic integration. This administration will support intra-ASEAN trade more aggressively. This administration will also promote the idea of turning ASEAN into a 'Producer Region'.

South - South Cooperation will be given renewed emphasis. Malaysia will promote and lead in collaborations among the 'South' countries, particularly at international bodies like the UN, Commonwealth, Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and others.

This administration will empower MOFA to ensure that it will be able to play its role effectively, as the lead ministry for international relations. A major priority will be the ministry's human capital development. MOFA will also make efforts to strengthen the collaboration between relevant ministries and agencies in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy.

While the government will endeavour to achieve the country's foreign policy objectives fully, there are many factors that will influence the extent of its success. The international system has become increasingly complex and challenging for foreign policy actors.

Ultimately, the success of Malaysia's foreign policy can be gauged via the protection of Malaysia's national interests. These can be broadly defined in terms of security, economic and identity achievements.

Success in terms of security means that the country's territorial integrity is protected and the country remains peaceful and not at war with any other country.

Success in terms of economic interests is generally evaluated through growth in exports, foreign direct investment (FDI) and other relevant indicators.

Success in the efforts to protect and promote positive national identity may be less tangible. Nevertheless, it can still be estimated according to international impressions about the country through media coverage, selection of the country or its representatives to important positions in international fora or bodies, as well as positions of the country in prestigious and credible international rankings, among others.

# INTRODUCTION



# 1 INTRODUCTION

In the 14<sup>th</sup> General Election (GE14) on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018, Malaysians made a historic change in choosing a new federal government. The outgoing Federal Government had been in power since the independence of Malaya in 1957. GE14 is akin to a second independence and re-establishment of Malaysia. It gave birth to what is now known as the New Malaysia, a nation that is moving towards a matured democracy.



Against all odds: *Pakatan Harapan* won the 14<sup>th</sup> General Election. (PHOTO: BERNAMA)

During the GE14, *Pakatan Harapan* (PH) or the Alliance of Hope won the majority of seats in the House of Representatives and subsequently formed the Federal Government. The Government is committed to implement the Manifesto of *Pakatan Harapan* as promised in GE14. This includes implementing the tasks and responsibilities of foreign policy. These tasks and responsibilities are enshrined in this Foreign Policy Framework.

This framework is broadly based on the indications of foreign policy direction that were articulated by the first Prime Minister of the PH government, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in his speech at the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Subsequently, on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018 Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs tabled a Motion at the House of Representatives for the speech of

the Prime Minister at the UN to be made the basis of the foreign policy of the New Malaysia. The Motion was debated and approved unanimously. Thereafter, the proposed Framework received the approval of the Cabinet in its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

The Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia consists of four components:

- i. Direction of Foreign Policy;
- ii. Empowering the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - MOFA (Wisma Putra);
- iii. Enhancing Inter-Agency Collaboration; and
- iv. Increasing Public and Civil Society Participation.

Two important aspects of the identity of the New Malaysia are influential in drawing up this Framework. Firstly, the country's aspiration to achieve the status of a developed nation by 2025. Secondly, the New Malaysia is a maturing democracy.

The purpose of the Framework is to set the direction, aims and priorities of foreign policy, which can be shared and appreciated by all domestic stakeholders, regardless of background. Hopefully, the Framework can also satisfy the curiosity of international observers on the direction of the foreign policy of the New Malaysia.

Internationally, the New Malaysia will play a leadership role in specific issues of interests. In doing so, the country will reflect its new image as a maturing democracy that fights for a fairer, more equitable, peaceful and sustainable world.

This Framework has been prepared via an extensive consultative process. It involved the participation of the Cabinet Ministers, leaders of *Pakatan Harapan*, senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), parliamentarians, academia, former diplomats, entrepreneurs and corporate representatives, professionals and members of civil societies (including youth and women). The Framework is truly a people-centric document.

Malaysian voters inked: 14<sup>th</sup> Malaysia General Election, Kuala Lumpur, 9 May 2018. (PHOTO: BERNAMA)



A 'New Malaysia' was born, Kuala Lumpur, 10 May 2018. (PHOTO: BERNAMA)



The people: Cheers of victory to celebrate after *Pakatan Harapan* won the 14<sup>th</sup> Malaysia General Election, Petaling Jaya, 10 May 2018. (PHOTO: BERNAMA)



Historical moment: Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad sworn in as the 7<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, 10 May 2018. (PHOTO: AWANI)



# THE NEW MALAYSIA



## 2 THE NEW MALAYSIA

'New Malaysia' is the term given by the people of Malaysia. It refers to the country after the change of government post-GE14. Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir provided some descriptions of the New Malaysia in his UN speech, as follows:



Back in familiar territory: The 7<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad outlined the foreign policy direction of the New Malaysia at the 73<sup>rd</sup> UN General Assembly, New York, September 2018. (PHOTO: JABATAN PENERANGAN)

*"...to ensure that every Malaysian has an equitable share in the prosperity and wealth of the nation...We did this because the immediate past government indulged in the politics of hatred, of racial and religious bigotry, as well as widespread corruption."*

*"Malaysians want a new Malaysia that upholds the principles of fairness, good governance, integrity and the rule of law. They want a Malaysia that is a friend to all and enemy of none. A Malaysia that remains neutral and non-aligned. A Malaysia that detests and abhors wars and violence. They also want a Malaysia that will speak its mind on what is right and wrong, without fear or favour. A new Malaysia that believes in cooperation based on mutual respect, for mutual gain. The new Malaysia that offers a partnership based on our*

*philosophy of 'prosper-thy-neighbour'. We believe in the goodness of cooperation, that a prosperous and stable neighbour would contribute to our own prosperity and stability."*

*"The new Malaysia will firmly espouse the principles promoted by the UN in our international engagements. These include the principles of truth, human rights, the rule of law, justice, fairness, responsibility and accountability, as well as sustainability...the new government of Malaysia has pledged to ratify all remaining core UN instruments related to the protection of human rights. It will not be easy for us because Malaysia is multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-lingual. We will accord space and time for all to deliberate and to decide freely based on democracy."*

The descriptions of the New Malaysia by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad are in line with the philosophies enshrined in the GE14 Manifesto of the *Pakatan Harapan*.

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## 2.1 Philosophies and Goals of *Pakatan Harapan (PH) Administration*

The philosophies of the Government are based on the philosophies and principles of the Federal Constitution and the *Rukun Negara*. They also draw on the vision of national leaders, the spirit of continuous reform agenda and developmental ideas that are progressive and democratic. Importantly, they must be in cognisant of the realities of the modern day and help to prepare the country in countering future challenges.



The Government is resolved to be united in driving the continuous reform agenda to shape a better future for all in a New Malaysia that is developed, prosperous and happy. In this regard, the administration will advocate fundamental universal values that appreciate among others, democracy, peace, freedom, respect, dignity, unity, civility, transparency, integrity, truth, justice, knowledge, meritocracy and prosperity.

This administration is also determined to build a Malaysian nation that is based on the spirit of trust and solidarity that underpins *Rukun Negara* and Vision 2020.

Under the Government, a vital reference in charting the nation's development strategy is the concept of *Maqasid Syari'ah*, which can be translated as the higher *Syari'ah* goals. Under the *Maqasid Syari'ah*, the primary objective of development is to ultimately deliver

goodness and fairness to all. To achieve this goal, it is important for development programmes to adopt and adhere to universal principles like inclusivity and good governance. The hope and ambitions of the New Malaysia can only be achieved if the national leadership espouse the principles encapsulated in the *Maqasid Syari'ah*.

The Agreement of the *Pakatan Harapan*, which was signed on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016 (and is reiterated in the PH manifesto) remains the guiding principles of the administration. The Agreement outlines that the administration will:

- uphold the Federal Constitution, Islam as the religion of the Federation (while other religions are free to be practised in peace and harmony in line with Article 3 of the Constitution), as well as protect the status of the Malays and *Bumiputeras* of Sabah and Sarawak and the interests of other races (in accordance with Article 153 of the Constitution).
- preserve the role and responsibility of the Constitutional Monarchy.

- enhance the usage of the Malay Language in accordance with Article 152 of the Constitution. Moreover, PH will endeavour to spread the Malay Language as the regional language of knowledge and lingua franca. At the same time, it will protect and strengthen the usage of the mother tongue of all races. It will also promote the mastery of the English Language, which is critical for Malaysia's competitiveness.
- acknowledge and recognise the status of Sabah and Sarawak in the Federation of Malaysia in line with the provisions and spirit of the 1963 Malaysia Agreement.

In summary, the New Malaysia, which is a peace-loving, harmonious multi-racial and multi-religious nation that upholds democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law, is now ready to take a more proactive role internationally to contribute in making the world more peaceful, fair and prosperous.

# **DIRECTION OF FOREIGN POLICY**



# 3 DIRECTION OF FOREIGN POLICY

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## 3.1 The Meaning of Foreign Policy

In general, foreign policy refers to the set of rules and principles that guide a country in its foreign or external relations.

There are three important elements that can be distinguished in the conduct of foreign policy. Firstly, foreign policy actions are purposive in nature. They are underpinned by certain motivations, which are generally referred to as 'the national interests' of the country and intended to achieve certain objectives or goals. Secondly, foreign policy actions involve foreign policy actors. They are entities that are active in the international arena and bear some impact on international relations, directly or indirectly. Finally, the conduct of foreign policy or the execution of foreign policy takes place in the international environment.

## 3.2 Trends and Challenges in the International Environment

The realm of foreign policy that is the international environment has become more and more complex over the last few decades. Technological advancement has brought about the phenomenon of globalisation, which has drastically transformed modern day realities,

particularly through the compression of time and space. For instance, modern communication and media technologies have enabled news and ideas to be disseminated at unprecedented speed across the globe. Also, the world has become much more interconnected in many ways. Movement of people, goods and services are much easier, cheaper and faster. Today, a company can manufacture different parts of one product in different parts of the world, to minimise its costs. This significant development in our time has impacted people all over the world, which have affected many governments and to some extent, their external relations.

One impact of the free flow of ideas in the globalised world is the rise in democratisation processes across the world since the 1990s. Many observers focus their attention on five 'new' democracies - India, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey and Indonesia (IBSATI) - that had emerged from colonisation, apartheid or military dictatorship. Each one had gone through a significant event that marks its transition; Brazil in 1985, India in 1991, South Africa in 1994, Indonesia in 1998 and Turkey in 2002.

Similar to countries of IBSATI, Malaysia underwent a historical democratic transition in 2018. It is indeed a momentous achievement



**Neighbourly pact:** Former Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman at the signing ceremony of the establishment of Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia (MAPHILINDO), 5 August 1963. (PHOTO: NATIONAL LIBRARY OF THE PHILIPPINES)



**Officiating centuries-old relationship:** Former Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak visited China in 1974. (PHOTO: THE STAR)



**Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir and South African leader, Nelson Mandela waving to the audience during the latter's visit to Malaysia in 1990. (PHOTO: AP)**



**Reaffirming bilateral ties:** Former Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi met former US President George W. Bush at the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly - New York, 18 September 2006. (PHOTO: REY S. BANZQUET)

that all Malaysians should celebrate and be proud of. However, each of the much referred IBSATI has been facing complex challenges in its transition process to full democracy. In this regard, Malaysians must also be mindful of the challenges that lie ahead for their country in this transitional process.

The challenge in maintaining the course of democratic reform can be illustrated by the current rise in the backlash against democracy. It is extremely worrying that this trend can be observed particularly, in countries that are considered advanced democracies. For example, the rise of stronger ultra-nationalist sentiment and the disintegration of national or regional communities.

Globalisation promises improved economic growth, better international trade and a level playing field for all. Unfortunately, there are numerous discontents on globalisation where its objectives are not met. Some international laws and regulations remain biased and unfair to some, for example developing countries.

### **3.3 Foreign Policy Begins at Home**

While the realm of foreign policy is the international sphere, it cannot be detached from the domestic realities. Foreign policy choices of a country in any given time typically reflects the concerns and aspirations of the domestic constituents, or at least the leaders' impressions of them. This can be illustrated by the shift in the US policies on trade with China, which, according to President Trump, is crucial due to what he perceives as

the anger of Americans on the balance of trade between the two countries that hugely favours China.

Many leaders rationalise their foreign policy decisions on the basis of 'the national interests'. This rather vague concept gives the impression that the leader has taken into account domestic concerns and what would be best for their people, in making foreign policy decision. Thus, foreign policy is an extension of the domestic that it aims to protect and promote the well-being of the citizens.

In reverse, many outcomes of foreign policy have direct impact in the domestic environment. For example, ratifying international conventions would normally entail certain obligations, which can only be fulfilled in the domestic setting. To illustrate, by being a party to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Malaysia has to draw up and implement its own climate action plan as agreed during the Paris Summit on Climate Change in 2015. Another example is the adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) principles in preparing the 11<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan (RMKe-11). In this regard, the success of implementing the SDGs through RMKe-11 can also be considered as a foreign policy success in terms of Malaysia's compliance with the UN agenda.

In short, a foreign policy cannot be effective if it contradicts the expectations and realities in the domestic environment. In such a scenario, the government will either be held accountable by its constituents or may be accused of 'double speak' by its international partners.

### 3.4 Actors in Foreign Policy

As mentioned earlier, globalisation has made the world become increasingly interconnected. While the international sphere was traditionally reserved as a domain for the elites, more and more people are now interacting in the international sphere and impact the foreign relations of their countries. This is true in the case of Malaysia as well. Over the last few decades, Malaysians

#### The Government

The Government entity refers to those who are officially accredited to act on foreign policy. At the very top is His Majesty the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*, the King of Malaysia. As the Head of the Malaysian State, the power and authority to conduct relations with other states rests with His Majesty. In a constitutional monarchy system, His Majesty confers the power of the administration of the country, which includes its external relations, to the Executive, of which the Prime Minister is the Head.

In the Executive branch or the Cabinet, the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* on the advice of the Prime Minister, appoints the Minister of Foreign Affairs to take charge of external affairs. The Minister of Foreign Affairs heads the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) or widely known as Wisma Putra in Malaysia. He is assisted by a team of professional bureaucrats or diplomats. Amongst them are Ambassadors or High Commissioners of Malaysia to countries all over the world, where Malaysia has established their resident diplomatic presence. These Ambassadors and High Commissioners are accredited by His Majesty the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* as his emissaries to those countries. In addition, Malaysia also accredits some of its professional diplomats as representatives to international organisations like the United Nations.

At this juncture, it is important to note that the scope of

Malaysia's external affairs is listed in the Federal Constitution in the Ninth Schedule (List 1), as follows:

- ◆ Treaties, agreements and conventions with other countries and all matters, which bring the Federation into relations with any other country.
- ◆ Implementation of treaties, agreements and conventions with other countries.
- ◆ Diplomatic, consular and trade representation.
- ◆ International organisations; participation in international bodies and implementation of decisions taken thereat.
- ◆ Extradition; fugitive offenders; admission into, and emigration and expulsion from, the Federation.
- ◆ Passports; visas; permits of entry or other certificates; quarantine.
- ◆ Foreign and extra-territorial jurisdiction.
- ◆ Pilgrimages to places outside Malaysia.

In general terms, the matters listed above can be regarded as the purview of responsibilities of the official diplomatic agents of the country.

In the government system, although MOFA is the custodian of the country's foreign relations, most of the other

ministries and agencies also deal to varying extents, with specific international issues according to their respective areas of responsibilities. Most notably are the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC). The officials from these Ministries are also formal agents of the government, executing the country's foreign policy in their respective specialised areas when they are acting in their official capacities in the international arena.

In addition to the official diplomatic agents described above, the Government has also initiated new frameworks within the government system to increase the participation of non-government stakeholders in foreign policy formulation. The first initiative is the Consultative Council on Foreign Policy (CCFP) established by MOFA to solicit views, insights and proposals relating to foreign policy from representatives of different backgrounds. Secondly, MOFA has proposed to set up a Parliamentary Select Committee on Foreign Affairs. Both frameworks are expected to enhance foreign policy formulation and decision-making by ensuring views from a wider scope of the Malaysian public are considered in the process.

are travelling more, whether for business, leisure or study. Malaysian businesses are venturing to trade and invest in more foreign lands. In reverse, Malaysia has been receiving an increasing number of foreign tourists, business travellers as well as students. There has also been a rise in foreign investments. Therefore, in this highly interconnected world, foreign affairs are no longer the exclusive domain of the appointed few.

Politics	Commerce	Civil Society
<p>Political actors also bear impact on foreign relations especially when they establish links with similar entities in other countries. For example, connections between political parties can be extremely influential in foreign policy, especially when leaders of the political parties are also leaders of the governments in their respective countries. In such circumstances, understandings at the party-to-party level can easily be translated into the policies of respective governments.</p> <p>Parliamentarians from different countries also establish associations, groups or caucuses based on some common attributes. They can participate actively in some international frameworks to pursue specific agendas. They can also shape opinions and consensus in their circles on specific issues. In fact, parliamentarians, including Malaysians, regularly attend international meetings and conferences where they network and discuss issues of interest with representatives from other countries.</p>	<p>The private sector is probably the most active, other than government officials, interacting and collaborating across borders. Businessmen acting on their own or in groups, get involved in the complex network of inter-state relations when they trade, invest and collaborate in foreign territories. Therefore, trade organisations established by the corporate sectors of different countries can be influential in the formulation and execution of foreign policy. As Malaysia's economic priorities become more and more pronounced in its foreign policy, it can be expected that inputs from business associations established bilaterally (for example Malaysia-China, Malaysia-India or Malaysia-Thailand) or multilaterally (for example ASEAN Business Advisory Council or APEC Business Advisory Council) will be given more weight in foreign policy decisions.</p>	<p>As explained earlier, aided by advanced communication and media technologies, people from different parts of the world find it easier to join forces to champion any common issue of concern. Groups such as Greenpeace and Amnesty International have attained global status as their influences in global environmental issues and human rights are well accepted. Similar to many other parts of the world, the growth of civil society in Malaysia has been encouraging over the past couple of decades.</p> <p>The Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections or BERSIH has been very successful in galvanising support from Malaysians around the world to raise the profile of the movement and its agenda abroad, to the extent that it became one of the most problematic foreign policy issues of the previous Malaysian government. There are in fact numerous other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), that are active in the Malaysian political and social landscapes, and have networks or are active abroad as well. Their areas of activism are wide ranging, from political, religious, humanitarian to cultural and the arts. Although their interactions are mainly at the people-to-people level, they too have the potential to impact on Malaysia's foreign relations as exemplified by the BERSIH experience.</p>

## 3.5 Continuity in Foreign Policy

### 3.5.1 The 'National Interests'

Most leaders will invoke the 'national interests' when explaining or defending their foreign policy decisions. As the motivation that underpins foreign policy, national interests can be categorised into three broad components, as follows:

- The physical survival of the country and its people, which can be termed as the security motivation. It relates to the protection of the country's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.
- Economic well-being or prosperity of the country and its people.
- Identity of the country and its people, which include the country's good name, honour and respect towards its position in the international community, as well as esteem in terms of the country's positive contribution to the international community.

In the case of Malaysia, all three broad components of the national interest represent long-standing foreign policy motivations and will remain unchanged under the New Malaysia. For example, the New Malaysia will continue to pursue a foreign policy that will aim to protect the security of the country and its people. The economic motivation will remain unchanged in the sense that Malaysia will continue to seek economic prosperity for the country and its people.

There will also be continuity in terms of the motivation concerning the identity of the country as the New Malaysia will also promote a positive image and ensure that the country's good name and honour will always be protected and respected in the international community. Thus, in terms of the broad definition of the national interests, it can be said that Malaysia's national interests, which



Malaysia's former Permanent Representative to the UN, Tan Sri Razali Ismail presided over a UN Special Session, New York, 23 June 1997. (PHOTO: UN)

underpin its foreign policy motivation remain unchanged. However, in the pursuit of these broad national interests, the Government will introduce some changes in its foreign policy direction and emphasis. This will be illustrated in greater detail later.

### 3.5.2 Fundamental Principles

There will also be continuity in terms of the fundamental principles that form the basis of Malaysia's foreign policy. These guiding principles of international relations are enshrined in the UN Charter. They include maintaining friendly bilateral relations with all countries, a preference for peaceful resolutions of disputes and non-intervention or non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.



Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Wan Azizah Wan Ismail visited the Thai Red Cross Children's Home in Bangkok, Thailand, 24 January 2019. (PHOTO: BERNAMA)

Malaysia strongly believes in maintaining friendly relations with all countries. Preserving good bilateral relations with all countries is one of the long-standing principles of Malaysia's foreign policy. As a trading nation, this also means that Malaysia wants to have good and mutually beneficial trade and economic relations with all countries.

Although the broad foreign policy goals and fundamental principles will remain unchanged, some changes in the conduct of foreign policy of the New Malaysia will be apparent particularly in terms of approach and direction.

### 3.6 Change in Foreign Policy

Since becoming Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has articulated some new directions of foreign policy to be pursued by the new government. The Prime

Minister did this especially in his UN speech. As explained, there will be some continuity in terms of the general motivations based on the broadly defined national interests that will remain constant. In addition, the fundamental principles that guide Malaysia's foreign policy also remain unchanged. However, there will be changes in terms of approaches, direction and emphases.

#### 3.6.1 Change in Approach

##### Consultation in Foreign Policy Formulation

The days of the patriarchal government that assumes that it is everything for the people and knows what is best for them, are over. People are now more educated and thus, more conscious of their roles and responsibilities in the society. The world is highly interconnected and there is a free



Deputy Foreign Minister, Dato' Marzuki Hj. Yahya at the 18<sup>th</sup> Session of the D-8 Council of Ministers, Antalya, Turkey, 3 November 2018. (PHOTO: FARZAMIE SARKAWI)

flow of information across borders, creating mass awareness of events, issues and ideas globally. As a result, more and more governments are realising the importance of getting the buy-in from the public or specific stakeholders through consultation, before making any policy decision. In more and more countries today, the private sector and civil societies play increasing roles, alongside the governments and contribute significantly in the countries' political, social and economic development.

Bearing this in mind, the government of the New Malaysia will take a more consultative approach in the formulation of its foreign policy. As a first step, a Consultative Council on Foreign Policy (CCFP) has been set up consisting of representatives of diverse backgrounds. It is hoped

that the CCFP can provide relevant inputs and insights from the varied perspectives of the stakeholders. MOFA will regularly identify and engage relevant experts and stakeholders depending on issues, to ensure that foreign policy decisions are taken after thorough consideration of its possible impact to the country. MOFA will also engage the media more actively to get the public more interested in foreign policy matters. These efforts are taken to increase public's awareness in foreign affairs and hopefully will encourage public discourse and participation in foreign policy formulation.

### **Proactive in Foreign Policy Conduct**

The New Malaysia will undertake a more proactive strategies in identifying international issues that have direct impact on our national

interests. Further, the country's foreign policy practitioners will endeavour to engage more actively in the processes to shape opinions and build consensus. Such activities can be taken in the following ways:

- to participate by making decisions, including to lead discussions and/or sponsor resolutions in organisations or frameworks where Malaysia is already a member.
- to engage and participate in the discourse to influence decisions, in organisations or frameworks where Malaysia is not a member.
- to participate by shaping the discourse in emerging issues, in which international awareness is still low.

Despite its size, Malaysia can still play an influential role in determining international laws,

conventions, rules and norms. For example, Malaysia should strive to be an example for democratic and economic development for other similar countries. The New Malaysia should play an active role in setting and shaping international laws, rules, conventions and structures in areas of international governance whether in politics, security or economy.

### **More Vocal in Advocating Issues of Interests**

The New Malaysia will also be vocal in advocating specific issues of interests. Whether in areas of international security or economy, the New Malaysia will be a strong and prominent champion of justice and fairness. Being more vocal and prominent means taking a leadership role in advocating such issues of interests. In this regard, the New Malaysia will champion more



Wisma Putra hosted a working dinner for the Group of Latin America and Caribbean (GRULAC) Ambassadors, Putrajaya, 12 February 2019. (PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)

prominently the political rights of the oppressed for example, Palestinians, Rohingyas and minorities, as well as the economic rights of developing countries of the 'South'. The New Malaysia will also advocate very strongly the issues of democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law, in general.

### **3.6.2 Change in Foreign Policy Direction and Emphasis**

#### **SECURITY**

As the defender of the realm at the international platform, it is of paramount importance for MOFA to defend and protect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Malaysia.

Due to its strategic location at the heart of Southeast Asia, Malaysia continues to face a set of security challenges, notwithstanding the change of federal government in May 2018. Malaysia's security is undeniably dependent on the regional stability of Southeast Asia.

#### **Territorial Disputes and the South China Sea**

From the perspective of the 'traditional' security threats, one of the major challenges for Malaysia include territorial disputes with neighbouring countries, which include overlapping claims in the South China Sea. So far, such threats have been well contained and effectively managed diplomatically, aided especially by good relations between the leaders. However, there are some flashpoints which might beget crisis or war if not properly handled.

There are a number of mechanisms, either bilateral, regional or multilateral in nature, where potential disputes could be effectively managed towards reaching amicable and long-lasting solutions.

In dealing with security dispute in the South China Sea, Malaysia will continue to cooperate closely with other ASEAN Member States and the major powers in ensuring that security and stability can be maintained. Malaysia believes that continuous dialogue between the claimant states is a move in the right direction. Early conclusion of the Code of Conduct (COC) under the framework of ASEAN will be one of the top priorities for Malaysia.

The Prime Minister of Malaysia has proposed for the non-militarisation of the South China Sea and for the regional waters to be turned to a region of peace, friendship and trade. Essentially, the South China Sea should be a sea of cooperation, connectivity and community-building and not confrontation or conflict. This is in line with the spirit of Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN). Malaysia will actively promote this vision in ASEAN.

ASEAN is the cornerstone of Malaysia's foreign policy and it provides Malaysia with important platforms to address security issues. As one of the founding members of ASEAN, Malaysia ascribes to the central role of the regional body in promoting peace and security in the region. ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) for example, is a major

component of the regional security architecture. Moreover, although the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and ASEAN + 3 focus more on economic cooperation, they too indirectly affect regional security. This is because economic prosperity is vital for the peace and stability in the region.

In addition, Malaysia also faces 'non-traditional' security threats, which can potentially undermine the country's stability. Such threats normally emanate from non-state actors. In connection to this, issues such as irregular movement of people, human trafficking and terrorism are now confronting Malaysia. These threats are transnational in scope and therefore, national solutions may be inadequate. Regional and multilateral cooperation is necessary to address these threats satisfactorily. This administration will step up efforts to cooperate with relevant international partners to address these problems. The government will also consider very seriously becoming party to international frameworks that will help the country address these problems more effectively.

### **Migration and Irregular Movement of People**

A case in point would be the problems of irregular movement of people and large influx of illegal immigrants into Malaysia that could adversely impact Malaysia's internal security. Migrant labour is necessary for the Malaysian economy but their employment must be according to

the needs of the economy. More importantly, their entry and exit must be regulated strictly according to the laws to avoid any form of malpractice and mistreatment. The presence of large immigrant communities consisting of mostly illegal migrants have created many social problems including crime, spread of infectious diseases and other social problems.

### **Cyber Security**

As the reliance on information technology (IT), particularly the internet becomes greater, Malaysia is aware of the great risks involved in possible cyber attacks. Subversive, criminal or terrorist elements may cause crises and disruptions via unauthorised access or attacks to the related hardware, networks, programmes and data, owned by the government, businesses or private individuals. Therefore, there is an urgent need for attention to be given to cyber security.

### **Terrorism**

Terrorism is a highly complex problem. The complexity of the problem has been compounded by the usage of sophisticated and up-to-date technology in the spread of its radical ideology and strategising terror attacks. This poses a bigger challenge to governments around the world to track and circumvent terrorists' activities. In their anti-terror efforts, some governments face backlash from their citizens because they are seen to be high-handed and go against the guarantee of individuals' liberty and freedom.

Malaysia will continue to be a strong and active participant in global efforts to fight terrorism and violent extremism, in all its forms and manifestations. Malaysia firmly believes that terrorism has no link to any specific religion. The threat of radicalism, violent extremism and militancy exists in any religion and community.

It is recognised and acknowledged that terrorism is a complex issue. Nevertheless, this Government strongly believes that addressing the root causes of terrorism is vital in tackling the issue of terrorism.

Resolving the problem of terrorism requires a strong and genuine political will. It also requires a holistic plan of action, clear and systematic line of authority, the effective involvement of non-state actors, as well as transparent sharing of information.

In this regard, Malaysia will play an active role in the region and beyond. Within the ASEAN context, Malaysia will utilise among others, the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR). Malaysia will also promote the role of the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) as an ASEAN project. SEARCCT should build its reputation as a reference point on counter-terrorism, violent extremism and militancy issues in the region. A wider and deeper form of collaboration with other entities within the region and beyond would be pursued aggressively by SEARCCT.

## **ECONOMIC**

Malaysia is an important trading nation. It relies heavily on exports for its revenue and foreign direct investments (FDI) to support its industries. Given the globalised nature of Malaysia's economy and its dependence on trade for national economic development, Malaysia has a keen interest in ensuring the continued success and stability of the external trading, investment and economic environment. With a view to promoting and protecting the national economic interest at the international level, Malaysia will reinvigorate the pursuit of its economic diplomacy objectives, among which include free and fair trade for all. Hence, the primacy of economic objectives will be more pronounced in the foreign policy of this administration, as it pushes ahead in its efforts to promote and protect the country's economic interests in the international sphere, as well as improve the country's finances and economic standing.

### **Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0)**

For Malaysia to remain competitive, it is vital for the country to be up to speed with global trends in technology innovation. The world is currently in the midst of technological transformation that will fundamentally change the way we live and work. Such change should be seen as an opportunity. Rapid adoption of technology, high levels of mobile usage and rising rates of internet penetration, coupled with an increasingly urban, literate young population have

created a new economic landscape, driven by technology.

Malaysia must be able to participate and harness the potential of these megatrends if its economic future is to be assured. As such, it is imperative that Malaysia takes cognisance of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0) wave and responds accordingly to latest developments such as fintech, among others. This administration will therefore take proactive steps internationally to identify opportunities and position Malaysia and its industry in the most advantageous position to reap the benefits of this latest phase of global technological transformation.

### **Digital Economy**

Undoubtedly, the emergence of new global technological and economic trends such as the IR 4.0 and the related growth in digital economy and e-commerce have opened up a massive new area for innovation and economic activities. People and companies all over the world are competing to reap the opportunities provided by the digital economy to establish the first mover advantage. Malaysia must not be left behind. In this regard, this administration through its foreign policy will also be very aggressive in finding opportunities for Malaysia and its private sector to aggressively partake in this global growth trend in the digital economy.

However, due to massive variations in internet connectivity and accessibility to information and communication technology across



Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad delivered Malaysia's statement at the APEC CEO Summit, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 17 November 2018. (PHOTO: BERNAMA)

the globe, there is also the possibility that the astounding growth of the digital economy may lead to new types of global inequality and disparity. In this regard, Malaysia will be vocal in highlighting the risk of global digital inequality and call for the international community to address this looming threat.

### **ASEAN**

At the regional level, Malaysia feels that the ASEAN Community has yet to maximise its full economic potential. Malaysia will continue to give priority to ASEAN economic integration with the view of accelerating the realisation of a fully integrated ASEAN economy. More importantly, this administration will push for transformation of the ASEAN economy into a 'Producer Region'. This simply means turning ASEAN into a hub of production of all kinds of consumer goods, for the

regional and world market. Toward this end, Malaysia will propose for ASEAN economies to collaborate even more closely in production, maximising on each country's economic advantage and ASEAN's strategic location.

Malaysia believes that regional economic integration is a means of responding to the aspirations of the people in ASEAN who yearn for development, economic growth and better living standards. Malaysia therefore will urge its partners in ASEAN to be more proactive, including by treating its combined 640 million population as the 'domestic market' and pursue intra-ASEAN trade more aggressively.

Malaysia will also increase its efforts to assist in capacity building of other ASEAN Member States, for example to develop indigenous capacities to produce goods and services. This is in line with Malaysia's philosophy of 'prosper-thy-neighbour' and to ensure that the growth in intra-ASEAN trade will bring benefit to all. In this connection also, Malaysia will step up its collaboration with other ASEAN Member States to help nurture a region-wide entrepreneurial community. Such efforts are essential to ensure as many ASEAN citizens as possible will be in the right position to take advantage of ASEAN economic integration.

## **Fairer Systems of International Trade and Finance**

Malaysia under the PH Government will take a more active role internationally to pursue a fairer international trade and financial system. While the country firmly believes in free trade, it also strongly champions fairer trade. In sum, Malaysia feels that trade should not only be free but also fair.

Thus, Malaysia will take a leading role in calling for a fairer multilateral trading system. It will do this in its participations in the various multilateral frameworks on international trade and finance.

Malaysia will also engage all partners and stakeholders, including the private sector and business community at all levels, in calling for fairer international trade and financial systems. Malaysia also believes that international trade and financial institutions must support fairer global trade and financial arrangements, so that the interests of smaller and poorer economies are also being protected.

## **IDENTITY**

With regard to the direction and emphasis in foreign policy, change can be clearly detected in policies, which are primarily based on identity or recognition motives. This is related to recent experiences in the domestic environment. One of the significant factors that helped the new PH administration to secure the historic victory against the previous BN administration was the people's discontent against



Malaysia's commitment to UN Peacekeeping Operations - The deployment of Royal Malaysian Army and Royal Malaysian Police in various UN Peacekeeping Operations is a manifestation of Malaysia's strong commitment to share responsibilities towards early and peaceful resolution of conflict. (PHOTO: UN)

widespread corruption and the old regime's practices of politics of race or racial based politics. Hence, the New Malaysia strives to adopt more rigorously the principles of good governance in its administration.

The New Malaysia will also pursue policies that would promote non-discrimination and inclusiveness, giving great emphasis to basic human rights, for example minorities' and religious rights. Such changes in domestic policies will naturally be reflected in foreign policy as well. The New Malaysia can be expected to be a strong proponent of democratic ideals, good governance and human rights. This change in direction in foreign policy can also be attributed to the negative global reputation that the country has suffered because of the 1MDB scandal. Thus, it will be a mission of the new government to fix Malaysia's international image, from a country riddled with a massive

corruption scandal to a country that is known for its clean and fair government that upholds the rule of law.

### Human Rights

Issues pertaining to human rights have become more and more pertinent in the discourse of Malaysia's domestic politics. While there remains many challenges in finding consensus on specific issues of human rights in Malaysia, the Government is resolute in making human rights an important agenda in its administration. The New Malaysia will uphold and promote human rights without compromising the fundamental tenets of the Federal Constitution and this will also be reflected in its foreign policy.

Malaysia will advocate human rights more strongly internationally and speak on behalf of groups that suffer from mistreatment,

discrimination, suppression and injustices. Malaysia will be vocal in calling for the perpetrators of crimes against humanity, genocide, war crimes and crimes of aggression, to be brought to justice. Malaysia will also begin the process towards ratifying relevant UN conventions on human rights. The process will be inclusive, to ensure that views from all domestic stakeholders will be taken into account. In addition, Malaysia will play an active international role in proposing ideas and opinions that can improve the laws, regulations, structures and systems related to the protection of human rights in the world.

### **Assistance in Post-Conflict and Post-Disaster Situations**

Related to the shift towards the promotion and protection of human rights in its foreign policy, the New Malaysia will also be more active in humanitarian missions in post-conflict or post-disaster situations around the world. This administration will do this partly by engaging Malaysian Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). In connection to this, the government will adopt a strategy to equip the relevant Malaysian CSOs with the right skills and resources to increase their capabilities to operate in post-conflict or post-disaster zones.

As regard conflict areas, Malaysia will look seriously at the possibility of playing a positive mediation role towards an amicable and sustainable resolution. Malaysia already has a good track record in this respect with regard to conflicts in the region. In post-conflict and post-disaster situations, Malaysia will engage actively with the host

country to participate in a positive manner in relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction processes.

### **Memberships in International Organisations**



Malaysia will review its involvement in international organisations and prioritise organisations that can help the country attain its foreign policy goals, based on its national interests. The UN will remain the key organisation in which Malaysia will pursue its foreign policy agenda. In terms of the substance of its policy, greater emphasis will be placed on UN organisations and international structures that deal with issues of good governance, human rights, climate change and SDGs. In this connection, Malaysia will prominently highlight the achievements of the country in achieving the standards and commitments it has made in these areas.

Malaysia will enhance its role in the UN and other major international organisations, by among others, contesting for seats in the governing councils of strategic organisations or nominating Malaysians in strategic posts in these organisations.

Malaysia will also be more vocal in championing the reform of the UN.

In this regard, Malaysia's foreign policy will focus on how to make the organisations more efficient and effective. For example, Malaysia proposes that the use of veto must be supported by at least two permanent members and three non-permanent members of the UN Security Council, as well as simple majority at the General Assembly (GA).

Malaysia will continue to focus on ASEAN as the most important regional organisation. Malaysia, as one of the founding members will play an increasing leadership role in ASEAN. In this connection, Malaysia will put forth a reform agenda that would make ASEAN more efficient and effective. Crucially, ASEAN can streamline and reduce the number of its approximately 1,200 meetings annually to a much more manageable number.

### **The Muslim World**

The Muslim world continues to be in crisis. To illustrate, the Palestinian issue remains unresolved and there is a protracted sectarian conflict in the Middle East, which is worsening and continues to divide the *ummah*. Furthermore, Muslim minorities in many countries continue to suffer from mistreatment and marginalisation. The sentiment of Islamophobia is not receding but instead, growing around the world. To worsen the already dire situation, there continues to be a rise of Islam-linked violent radicalism and militancy. There are also persistent problems of poverty and lack of development in many Muslim communities. To illustrate further, there is also a glaring absence of

any Muslim country in any prestigious global ranking.

Malaysia will play a prominent role in the OIC to improve the condition of the *ummah*. There must be unity in OIC for it to have more clout and be more effective in championing the causes of the Muslim world. Malaysia will lead in promoting the concepts of *Maqasid Syari'ah* (higher objectives of the *syariah*) and Muslim Democrats within the organisation.

Malaysia will strive to position itself as an exemplary Islamic country, which is inclusive, developed and progressive. In doing so, Malaysia can demonstrate to the world, the goodness of Islam and the *ummah* in line with the principle of "*rahmatan lil alamin*" (mercy for all). In formulating its foreign policy, Malaysia will be cognisant and make fair assessments on the roles and contributions of various Islamic movements, without any prejudice.



**Unwavering solidarity: Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad with the late Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat. (PHOTO: GOOGLE IMAGE)**

Malaysia will also lead the efforts to improve the fortune and image of Muslim countries and the *ummah* by, among others, promoting the role of successful Malaysian Islamic institutions for example, in higher learning, as well as finance and banking; and unique experiences of the Malay World.

### **South - South Cooperation**

South - South Cooperation will be given renewed emphasis. This is because the leadership of the New Malaysia believes that a sustained global peace could not be achieved until there is greater equality in the world.

Therefore, the New Malaysia will be more vocal in championing the rights of small and less developed countries of the 'South'. Malaysia also will promote and lead in collaborations among the South countries. Malaysia will do this in various international bodies that it is a member including the UN, Commonwealth, Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and others.

In addition, Malaysia will revise its existing assistance programmes such as the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) to fully optimise its potential. In this connection, Malaysia will look into creating a new Visitors Programme (perhaps named Putrajaya Fellowship) in grooming a new generation of leaders from friendly countries of the 'South'.

### **Relations with the Major Powers**

Malaysia wants to have good and mutually beneficial relations with all

countries including the major powers. In its relations with major powers, Malaysia will practise the non-aligned policy and approach. Malaysia will cooperate with all like-minded countries who share its non-aligned philosophy to ensure that the world is free and fair for all countries to participate on equal basis, without pressure from any major power.

### **International Treaties and Agreements**

Malaysia will assess its participation in international treaties in accordance with its national interests. In this regard, this administration will decide whether to continue, revise or withdraw from commitments of treaties or agreements that Malaysia is currently a party to.

In the future, Malaysia will ensure that thorough and comprehensive internal processes will take place before concluding any new international agreement or ratifying any treaty. This is to guarantee that the action will be beneficial to Malaysia and not jeopardise its interests. Malaysia will only enter into international agreements or treaties as equal partners, with fair terms and conditions.

The government will ensure that Malaysian representatives in negotiations of international agreements and treaties consist of experienced experts in the specific areas. They can be expert civil servants and former civil servants, professionals, academics and representatives of relevant CSOs.



**Malayan Flag Raised at UN Headquarters**

Malaya was unanimously admitted to membership in the United Nations (UN) on the opening day of the 12<sup>th</sup> regular session of the UN General Assembly. Sir Leslie Munro of New Zealand (right) congratulated Malaya's permanent representative, Dr. Ismail bin Dato' Abdul Rahman after the flag raising ceremony, 15 October 1957. (PHOTO: UN)



Former Foreign Minister Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar and Former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice exchanged the ASEAN-US Enhanced Partnership Agreement, Kuala Lumpur, 27 July 2006. (PHOTO: WISMA PUTRA)



Former Foreign Minister Tan Sri Dr. Rais Yatim delivered Malaysia's Statement at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly New York, 27 September 2008. (PHOTO: UN)



Former Foreign Minister Dato' Sri Anifah Aman and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarifat sharing a light moment at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Istanbul, Turkey 1 August 2017. (PHOTO: WISMA PUTRA)

# EMPOWERING MOFA



# 4 EMPOWERING MOFA

Notwithstanding the advantages brought about by globalisation, particularly advances in communications and transportation leading to greater intensity of inter-state relations, the effective conduct of diplomacy remains the differentiating factor that distinguishes successful countries from mediocre ones.



As such, countries still attach significant priority to the continued development and enhancement of talent in their respective foreign ministries, alongside ensuring adequate, consistent and sustainable funding for programmes and activities geared towards the promotion and protection of their national interests through foreign policy.

At the organisational level, this administration will take suitable measures to ensure that MOFA comprises world-class diplomats. In order to do so, a Knowledge Culture

must first be inculcated amongst the foreign service officials. This culture of knowledge is based on three principles, as follows:

- Knowledge and persons with knowledge will be accorded the highest level of priority;
- Prioritising the continuous pursuit of knowledge at all levels of the Ministry; and
- Decision and action will adhere to the principle of informed decision-making.



Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, received a visit from Brig. Gen. Jonathan P. Braga, U.S Army, Kuala Lumpur, 18 January 2019. (PHOTO: SEARCCT)

In supporting the development of a knowledge culture within MOFA, steps will be taken to implement Knowledge Management (KM) principles and best practices. Its focus will be on three main components; human, technology and process. MOFA will harness both explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge (including institutional memory) available within the Ministry.

Implementation of KM within MOFA through specific, comprehensive and systematic knowledge management initiatives will allow the ministry to develop organically and eventually become a learning organisation.

Taking into account the central importance and role played by MOFA officials in the formulation and execution of Malaysia's foreign policy, this administration will prioritise the ministry's human capital development. Among

efforts that will be undertaken to enhance the capabilities of MOFA officials include:

- train, develop and nurture foreign policy experts in specific areas / fields;
- promote proficiency and mastery of English across the Ministry;
- develop proficiency of third languages (Arabic, Mandarin, French, Russian and Spanish), particularly for officials posted abroad; and
- enhance and strengthen the negotiation skills amongst the officials.

With a view to ensuring a sustainable and consistent supply of capable diplomats, the government will enhance support for the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) and turn it into a leading diplomatic training centre in the region.

The government will also elevate the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) as a prominent institution within the region, with the ultimate goal of cementing its status as a key ASEAN project. In order to achieve this goal, SEARCCT will need to step up to the plate and build its reputation as the reference point on counter-terrorism issues in the region.

Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia is to be a respected and world-class think tank. It shall maintain its independence and will be empowered to research, debate and share its findings on trends, policies and global architectures that impact the world and our foreign policy.

In addition to the abovementioned agencies, Malaysia also possesses a

potentially game-changing tool in the form of external development assistance programmes, specifically the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP).

To assist the work of MOFA, the government may establish and deploy task forces on specific issues or assignments, from time to time according to requirements.

Another key element to empower MOFA concerns the outreach or public diplomacy aspect. In the current digital era, with near instantaneous reporting of news and events, the need for MOFA to engage and be seen engaging with all its partners and stakeholders is a key requirement of the current age of digital diplomacy.



Patron of *Persatuan Wanita Kementerian Luar Negeri (PERWAKILAN)*, Datin Norlin Shamsul Bahri (left) and President of *PERWAKILAN*, Datin Sri Izdina Izaidin (centre) presented appreciation certificates to the 2017/2018 *PERWAKILAN* committee members, Putrajaya. (PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)



Officials at the Embassy of Malaysia in Kuwait together with Malaysian diaspora at the Family Day event, Kuwait City, 19 January 2019. (PHOTO: MUHAMMAD NUR ANUAR NORDIN)

In this respect, MOFA shall leverage on latest available media technologies including social media platforms to maximise outreach to all segments of Malaysian society, as well as external partners and stakeholders.

MOFA will enhance its public diplomacy initiatives by, among others:

- improving channels for two-way communication with the public;
- organising regular dialogues, seminars and fora with stakeholders on specific issues;
- regularly showcasing Malaysia's unique cultural identity and contribution to the international community;
- increasing collaboration with academic and cultural institutions (universities, cultural groups, think tanks); and
- engaging in sports diplomacy.

The ultimate aim of such broad based and continuous engagement is to ensure sustained goodwill, buy-in and support, generally for Malaysia's foreign policy agenda and specifically, for MOFA.

Along similar lines, Malaysia will strengthen engagement with its diaspora abroad and mobilise them to also play a positive role in promoting the country's good image abroad. In this vein, MOFA is committed to improving consular services to all Malaysians abroad.

It goes without saying that sufficient funding is a prerequisite for an effective diplomatic machinery. That notwithstanding, and taking into account the precarious state of the nation's finances, MOFA will explore creative ways and means towards executing the government's foreign policy agenda, all the while remaining deeply conscious of the need to do more with less.

**Future diplomats: Diploma in Diplomacy Graduation Ceremony, Kuala Lumpur, 22 November 2018.**  
(PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)



**Maritime affairs: Workshop on Law of the Sea by the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations, Kuala Lumpur, 26-28 November 2018.**  
(PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)



**Wisma Putra cares: An Iftar hosted by Wisma Putra for the orphans of *Rumah Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Peribadi Mulia*, Kajang, 17 May 2019.**  
(PHOTO: MUHAMMAD SYAZWAN CHE YAACUB)



**Preserving nature: Foreign Ministry Deputy Secretary-General Dato' Nor'Aini Abd Hamid leading Wisma Putra at a mangrove tree planting CSR activity, Port Dickson, 9 March 2019.**  
(PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)



# Malaysia's Global Presence



LATIN AMERICA 7

6 NORTH AMERICA

AFRICA 12

## LATIN AMERICA

Buenos Aires, Brasilia, Caracas, Havana, Lima, Mexico City, Santiago.

## NORTH AMERICA

Los Angeles, New York, Ottawa, Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the UN, Vancouver, Washington DC.

## AFRICA

Algiers, Accra, Abuja, Cairo, Conakry, Dakar, Harare, Khartoum, Nairobi, Pretoria, Rabat, Windhoek.

## MIDDLE EAST

Abu Dhabi, Ankara, Amman, Baku, Beirut, Doha, Dubai, Jeddah, Kuwait, Manama, Muscat, Riyadh, Tehran.



## EUROPE

Berlin, Budapest, Brussels, Bucharest, Belgrade, Berne, Dublin, Frankfurt, Geneva, Helsinki, Holy See, Kiev, London, Madrid, Moscow, Paris, Prague, Stockholm, Sarajevo, The Hague, Vienna, Warsaw, Zagreb.

## OCEANIA

Canberra, Melbourne, Perth, Port Moresby, Suva, Wellington.

## ASIA

Ashgabat, Bangkok, Beijing, Bandar Seri Begawan, Chennai, Colombo, Dili, Dhaka, Davao City, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Islamabad, Jakarta, Kunming, Karachi, Kathmandu, Manila, Medan, Mumbai, Nanning, New Delhi, Nur-Sultan, Pekan Baru, Permanent Mission of Malaysia to ASEAN Jakarta, Pyongyang, Phnom Penh, Pontianak, Songkhla, Singapore, Seoul, Shanghai, Tashkent, Taipei, Tokyo, Vientiane, Xi'an, Yangon.

# Malaysia's Multilateral Memberships



**IORA**

Indian Ocean Rim Association



**UN**

United Nations



**ASEM**

Asia-Europe Meeting



**OIC**

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation



**NAM**

Non-Aligned Movement



**ASEAN**

Association of Southeast Asian Nations



**FEALAC**

**FEALAC**

Forum for East Asia-Latin  
America Cooperation





**AMED**

Asia-Middle East Dialogue



**G-15**

Group of 15



**G-77**

Group of Seventy Seven



**D-8**

Developing Eight



**COMMONWEALTH**



**APEC**

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation



**ACD**

Asia Cooperation Dialogue



# **ENHANCING INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION**



# 5 ENHANCING INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

**Although each ministry and government agency has its own specific area of responsibilities, their scope of work more often than not, overlaps. In this interconnected modern world, government agencies encounter more and more cross-cutting issues that require the attention of several government agencies. This is especially true with MOFA, which handles issues of external affairs.**

Consistent with the broad mandate entrusted to MOFA by the Federal Constitution in promoting and protecting Malaysia's interests abroad, MOFA will make efforts to strengthen the collaboration between relevant ministries and agencies in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy, with MOFA playing the central role. Essentially, MOFA through its various diplomatic missions around the globe coordinates and supervises all efforts with the sole purpose of safeguarding the national interests, particularly in protecting the country's security, economic well-being and good name.

There are a number of ministries and government agencies that have significant presence abroad such as MITI, MINDEF, MOTAC, MATRADE, MIDA, Immigration Department, Education Malaysia and a few others. Each of the said ministries and agencies has its own specific mandate. The presence of these agencies abroad is under one set up that is the diplomatic mission of Malaysia, although each has a different mandate to achieve specific objectives separately.



Forum on Understanding Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Malaysia by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), 15 November 2018. (PHOTO: SEARCCT)

Under *Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negeri – SPKM* (the Malaysian Government Administrative System Abroad), which was recently revised in 2018, all offices of the ministries and agencies abroad are managed as parts of the diplomatic missions of Malaysia headed by the Ambassadors, High Commissioners or Consuls-General. This system reflects the singular purpose and main goal of their presence in the foreign land, which is to protect and promote Malaysia's national interests in their respective areas of responsibilities. MOFA in collaboration with other ministries and agencies, has started an exercise to review and rationalise the representation of these offices abroad, with the aim of finding the most cost-effective arrangement.



**Enhancing inter-agency cooperation: Foreign Minister, Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah (5<sup>th</sup> from left) and International Trade and Industry Minister, Datuk Darell Leiking (4<sup>th</sup> from left) led a special inter-agency meeting between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Putrajaya, 14 February 2019. (PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)**

The cross-cutting nature of diplomatic work is especially evident in the area of international trade. In the context of economic diplomacy, MOFA and MITI will increase its collaboration and further streamline their activities. Similarly, as regard defence and security issues, MOFA will further strengthen its cooperation and coordination with MINDEF and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

MOFA will continue to hold the Inter-Agency Joint Committee Meeting (IJCM) on a regular basis to improve the coordination and level of cooperation between ministries and agencies. Such a coordination framework will also be established at Malaysian diplomatic missions around the globe.



Exchange of minds: Foreign Minister, Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah hosted a working lunch for ministers and senior officials from Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI), Ministry of Water, Land and Natural resources (KATS) and Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment & Climate Change (MESTECC), Putrajaya, 30 January 2019. (PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)



Foreign Minister, Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah and Datuk Seri Dr. Mujahid Yusof, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office (Religion) discussed on *Maqasid Syari'ah* and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2030), Putrajaya, 27 May 2019. (PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)



Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), National Security Council (NSC) and Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA) at the National Workshop on Maritime Single Point of Contact, Putrajaya, 6 June 2018. (PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)



Inter-agency Workshop on Developing a Whole-of-Government Soft Power Response to Terrorism and Extremism organised by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), Kuala Lumpur 31 July - 2 August 2018. (PHOTO: SEARCCT)

# **INCREASING PUBLIC AND CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION**



# 6 INCREASING PUBLIC AND CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION



The Consultative Council on Foreign Policy (CCFP) (Seated from left) Dato' Hazimah Zainuddin, YM Raja Dato' Nushirwan Zainal, Deputy Secretary-General (Bilateral Affairs), Dato' Marzuki Hj. Yahya, Deputy Foreign Minister, Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, Foreign Minister, Dato' Seri Ramlan Ibrahim, former Secretary-General, Dato' Kennedy Jawan former Deputy Secretary-General (Multilateral Affairs) and Ms. Alice Mathew. (Back row) Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, Mr. Martin Khor, Prof Datuk Dr. Denison Jayasooria, Mr. Jerald Joseph and Dato' Dr. Gurdial Singh Nijar. (PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)

The Government strongly believes in the value of consultation in the formulation of foreign policy. This is in line with the spirit of democracy, whereby political leaders are always held accountable to the people. Public consultation is a way to ensure good governance because it means increasing transparency and accountability in the decision-making process.

Therefore, under this administration, there will be a partnership between the state, business sector and civil society. This will ensure that views and insights of all relevant stakeholders will be taken into consideration in policy-making.

As regard foreign affairs, this administration will initiate the

establishment of a Parliamentary Select Committee. The Parliament, which is the ultimate voice representing the people, should have a body consisting of a select group of parliamentarians who are well versed and interested in foreign policy matters, to discuss international issues that have impact on the country's national interests. Its deliberations can provide MOFA with valuable insights in charting the course of Malaysia's foreign policy.

Parliamentarians are also encouraged to establish caucuses and associations with their foreign counterparts. This will provide Malaysian parliamentarians the opportunity to exchange views and

gain international insights, particularly regarding international issues of interest. They can also leverage on the caucuses to push a certain international agenda according to Malaysia's interests.

As part of this administration's strategy to increase public participation in foreign policy-making, MOFA has established the Consultative Council on Foreign Policy in October 2018 following the approval given by the Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018. This is a significant step towards establishing a permanent consultative framework on foreign policy, comprising experts in various fields.

MOFA will also take steps to promote the development of a vibrant community consisting of scholars, observers and practitioners of foreign policy, to encourage the free flow of exchanges of ideas on foreign

policy. Toward this end, MOFA will harness existing formal and informal groupings, for example, the Association of Former Malaysian Ambassadors (AFMA), academics in relevant fields, corporate people with international interests as well as professionals with international exposure. All of them can contribute invaluable insights based on their own sphere of expertise and experiences. Malaysia will also seek to encourage contribution from such communities at the ASEAN and international levels.

Another useful forum to engage the public is through the UN Association of Malaysia (UNAM). MOFA will collaborate with UNAM and other similar bodies (such as students and youth organisations) in facilitating the activities of the Model United Nations and other international programmes among youth and students.

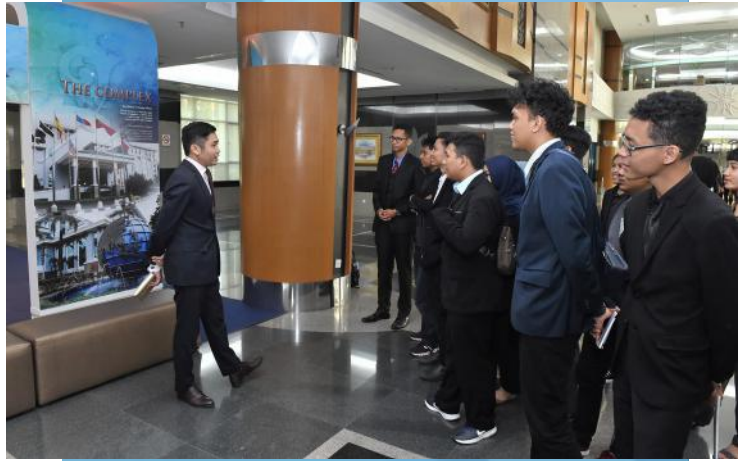


Malaysian Field Hospital in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh provides various health services including specialist care for the Rohingya refugees. (PHOTO: AWANI)

**Diplomacy begins at home: Deputy Foreign Minister Senator Dato' Marzuki Haji Yahya with students of *Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)*, Seremban.  
(PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)**



**Enhancing Wisma Putra's image: The Foreign Ministry received visits from numerous universities each year. Visit from *Universitas Andalas Indonesia*, 15 February 2019.  
(PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)**



**Appreciating different cultures: Culture Appreciation Day organised by the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR), Kuala Lumpur, 21 September 2018.  
(PHOTO: IDFR)**



**ASEAN awareness begins early: 51<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Day held at Wisma Putra, Putrajaya, 8 August 2018.  
(PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)**



# CONCLUSION



# 7 CONCLUSION

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This Foreign Policy Framework is an initiative of the new Government to articulate its foreign policy emphasis and direction. It does not mean that this administration is making an overhaul change to Malaysia's foreign policy. This cannot be the case because Malaysia's broad national interests remain largely the same. However, the New Malaysia will adopt some changes in approach and priorities, which will translate into certain changes in policy direction. In terms of approach, the New Malaysia under the PH administration aspires to play a proactive role and provide leadership in championing certain issues of interests. In terms of emphasis, the New Malaysia will prioritise issues of inequality, fairness and justice, as well as democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law. These principles will act as important guides to the direction of the New Malaysia's foreign policy.

This Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia is a document on foreign policy that is people-centric. It is prepared through a consultative process involving many stakeholders. Thus, this Framework, to a large extent, represents the aspirations of the people who voted for the New Malaysia. This Framework adopts the philosophy of the PH

administration and the spirit of its GE14 Manifesto, particularly those that concern transparency, accountability and good governance.

Due to limited resources, it is essential that the government select and focus on some important issue areas. The foreign policy priorities of this administration will show some changes compared to that of the previous administration. These changes in priorities are guided by the philosophies of *Pakatan Harapan* and will determine the change in direction of foreign policy of the New Malaysia.

The international arena, where foreign policy execution takes place, is a highly complex system. Recent global trends indicate an increasingly challenging international environment, in which Malaysia's foreign policy actors have to operate. It is thus vital that the country strengthens its foreign policy machinery through better inter-agency collaboration and capacity building in human and other resources.

While the government will endeavour to achieve the country's foreign policy objectives fully, there

are many factors that will influence the extent of its success. As highlighted, the international system is highly complex and has become increasingly challenging for foreign policy actors. Ultimately, the success can be gauged via the protection of Malaysia's national interests. This success can be broadly manifested from the prisms of security, economic and identity. Success in terms of security means that the country's territorial integrity is protected and the country remains peaceful and not at war with any other country.

Success in terms of economic interests is generally evaluated through growth in exports, FDI and other relevant indicators. Success in the protection and promotion of identity interests may be less tangible but can still be estimated via international impressions about the country through media coverage, selection of the country or its representatives to important positions in international fora or bodies, as well as positions of the country in prestigious and credible international rankings, among others.



Nice to meet you again: The 7<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad undertook his second visit to China for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Belt and Road Forum (BRF), Beijing, April 2019. (PHOTO: XINHUANET.COM)



Friendly neighbours: Foreign Minister, Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah with his Singaporean counterpart, Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan at a press conference, Putrajaya, 14 March 2019. (PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)



Diplomacy works: Foreign Ministry Secretary-General, Dato' Sri Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob welcomed 16 Malaysians at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) 2, on 10 March 2019 following their release by Indonesian authorities. (PHOTO: HUZAINI MAT HUSSIN)



Special capacity building programmes for Palestinians: Malaysia continues to organise dedicated capacity building programmes for Palestinian officials under the ambit of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), Kuala Lumpur, 13 March 2019. (PHOTO: RUSTINAH EDOY)

# ANNEX 1



# **SPEECH BY YAB PRIME MINISTER AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 73<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF UNGA**

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## **STATEMENT BY YAB PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 73<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNGA) 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018, NEW YORK**

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Madam President,

1. I would like to join others in congratulating you on your election as the President of the Seventy-Third (73<sup>rd</sup>) Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).
2. I am confident with your wisdom and vast experience; this session will achieve the objectives of the theme for this session. I assure you of Malaysia's fullest support and cooperation towards achieving these noble goals.
3. Allow me to also pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Miroslav Lajcak, for his dedication and stewardship in successfully completing the work of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the General Assembly.
4. I commend the Secretary-General and the United Nations staff for their tireless efforts in steering and managing UN activities globally.
5. In particular, I pay tribute to the late Kofi Annan, the seventh Secretary-General of the UN from 1997 – 2006, who sadly passed away in August this year. Malaysia had a positively strong and active engagement with the UN during his tenure.

Madam President,

6. The theme of this 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of General Assembly, “Making the United Nations Relevant to All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies” remains true to the aspiration of our founding fathers. The theme is most relevant and timely. It is especially pertinent in the context of the new Malaysia. The new Government of Malaysia, recently empowered with a strong mandate from its people, is committed to ensure that every Malaysian has an equitable share in the prosperity and wealth of the nation.
7. A new Malaysia emerged after the 14<sup>th</sup> General Election in May this year. Malaysians decided to change their government, which had been in power for 61 years, i.e., since independence. We did this because the immediate past Government indulged in the politics of hatred, of racial and religious bigotry, as well as widespread corruption. The process of change was achieved democratically, without violence or loss of lives.
8. Malaysians want a new Malaysia that upholds the principles of fairness, good governance, integrity and the rule of law. They want a Malaysia that is a friend to all and enemy of none. A Malaysia that remains neutral and non-aligned. A Malaysia that detests and abhors wars and violence. They also want a Malaysia that will speak its mind on what is right and wrong, without fear or favour. A new Malaysia that believes in co-operation based on mutual respect, for mutual gain. The new Malaysia that offers a partnership based on our philosophy of ‘prosper-thy-neighbour’. We believe in the goodness of cooperation, that a prosperous and stable neighbour would contribute to our own prosperity and stability.
9. The new Malaysia will firmly espouse the principles promoted by the UN in our international engagements. These include the principles of truth, human rights, the rule of law, justice, fairness, responsibility and accountability, as well as sustainability. It is within this context that the new government of Malaysia has pledged to ratify all remaining core UN instruments related to the protection of human rights. It will not be easy for us because Malaysia is multi-ethnic, multireligious, multicultural and multilingual. We will accord space and time for all to deliberate and to decide freely based on democracy.

Madam President,

10. When I last spoke here in 2003, I lamented how the world had lost its way. I bemoaned the fact that small countries continued to be at the mercy of the powerful. I argued the need for the developing world to push for reform, to enhance capacity building and diversify the economy. We need to maintain control of our destiny.
11. But today, 15 years later the world has not changed much. If at all the world is far worse than 15 years ago. Today the world is in a state of turmoil economically, socially and politically.
12. There is a trade war going on between the two most powerful economies. And the rest of the world feel the pain.
13. Socially new values undermine the stability of nations and their people. Freedom has led to the negation of the concept of marriage and families, of moral codes, of respect etc.
14. But the worse turmoil is in the political arena. We are seeing acts of terror everywhere. People are tying bombs to their bodies and blowing themselves up in crowded places. Trucks are driven into holiday crowds. Wars are fought and people beheaded with short knives. Acts of brutality are broadcast to the world live. Masses of people risk their lives to migrate only to be denied asylum, sleeping in the open and freezing to death. Thousands starve and tens of thousands die in epidemics of cholera.
15. No one, no country is safe. Security checks inconvenience travellers. No liquids on planes. The slightest suspicion leads to detention and unpleasant questioning.
16. To fight the “terrorists” all kinds of security measures, all kinds of gadgets and equipment are deployed. Big brother is watching. But the acts of terror continues.
17. Malaysia fought the bandits and terrorists at independence and defeated them. We did use the military. But alongside and more importantly we campaigned to win the hearts and minds of these people.
18. This present war against the terrorist will not end until the root causes are found and removed and hearts and minds are won.

19. What are the root causes? In 1948, Palestinian land was seized to form the state of Israel. The Palestinians were massacred and forced to leave their land. Their houses and farms were seized.
20. They tried to fight a conventional war with help from sympathetic neighbours. The friends of Israel ensured this attempt failed. More Palestinian land was seized. And Israeli settlements were built on more and more Palestinian land and the Palestinians are denied access to these settlements built on their land.
21. The Palestinians initially tried to fight with catapults and stones. They were shot with live bullets and arrested. Thousands are incarcerated.
22. Frustrated and angry, unable to fight a conventional war, the Palestinians resort to what we call terrorism.
23. The world does not care even when Israel breaks international laws, seizing ships carrying medicine, food and building materials in international waters. The Palestinians fired ineffective rockets which hurt no one. Massive retaliations were mounted by Israel, rocketing and bombing hospitals, schools and other buildings, killing innocent civilians including school children and hospital patients. And more.
24. The world rewards Israel, deliberately provoking Palestine by recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.
25. It is the anger and frustration of the Palestinians and their sympathisers that cause them to resort to what we call terrorism. But it is important to acknowledge that any act which terrify people also constitute terrorism. And states dropping bombs or launching rockets which maim and kill innocent people also terrify people. These are also acts of terrorism.
26. Malaysia hates terrorism. We will fight them. But we believe that the only way to fight terrorism is to remove the cause. Let the Palestinians return to reclaim their land. Let there be a state of Palestine. Let there be justice and the rule of law. Warring against them will not stop terrorism. Nor will out-terrorising them succeed.
27. We need to remind ourselves that the United Nations Organisation, like the League of Nations before, was conceived for the noble purpose of ending wars between nations.
28. Wars are about killing people. Modern wars are about mass killings and total destruction countrywide. Civilised nations claim they abhor killing for any reason. When a man kills, he commits the crime of murder. And the punishment for murder may be death.

29. But wars, we all know encourage and legitimise killing. Indeed the killings are regarded as noble, and the killers are hailed as heroes. They get medals stuck to their chest and statues erected in their honour, have their names mentioned in history books.
30. There is something wrong with our way of thinking, with our value system. Kill one man, it is murder, kill a million and you become a hero. And so we still believe that conflict between nations can be resolved with war.
31. And because we still do, we must prepare for war. The old adage says “to have peace, prepare for war”. And we are forever preparing for war, inventing more and more destructive weapons. We now have nuclear bombs, capable of destroying whole cities. But now we know that the radiation emanating from the explosion will affect even the country using the bomb. A nuclear war would destroy the world.
32. This fear has caused the countries of Europe and North America to maintain peace for over 70 years. But that is not for other countries. Wars in these other countries can help live test the new weapons being invented.
33. And so they sell them to warring countries. We see their arms in wars fought between smaller countries. These are not world wars but they are no less destructive. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed, whole countries devastated and nations bankrupted because of these fantastic new weapons.
34. But these wars give handsome dividends to the arms manufacturers and traders. The arms business is now the biggest business in the world. They profit shamelessly from the deaths and destructions they cause. Indeed, so-called peace-loving countries often promote this shameful business.
35. Today’s weapons cost millions. Fighter jets cost about 100 million dollars. And maintaining them cost tens of millions. But the poor countries are persuaded to buy them even if they cannot afford. They are told their neighbours or their enemies have them. It is imperative that they too have them.
36. So, while their people starve and suffer from all kinds of deprivations, a huge percentage of their budget is allocated to the purchase of arms. That their buyers may never have to use them bothers the purveyors not at all.

Madam President,

37. In Myanmar, Muslims in Rakhine state are being murdered, their homes torched and a million refugees had been forced to flee, to drown in the high seas, to live in makeshift huts, without water or food, or even the most primitive sanitation. Yet the authorities of Myanmar including a Nobel Peace Laureate deny that this is happening. I believe in non-interference in the internal affairs of nations. But does the world watch massacres being carried out and do nothing? Nations are independent. But does this mean they have a right to massacre their own people, because they are independent?

Madam President,

38. On the other hand, in terms of trade, nations are no longer independent. Free trade means no protection by small countries of their infant industries. They must abandon tariff restrictions and open their countries to invasion by products of the rich and the powerful. Yet the simple products of the poor are subjected to clever barriers so that they cannot penetrate the market of the rich. Malaysian palm oil is labelled as dangerous to health and the estates are destroying the habitat of animals. Food products of the rich declare that they are palm oil free. Now palm diesel are condemned because they are decimating virgin jungles. These caring people forget that their boycott is depriving hundreds of thousands of people from jobs and a decent life.
39. We in Malaysia care for the environment. Some 48% of our country remains virgin jungle. Can our detractors claim the same for their own countries?

Madam President,

40. Malaysia is committed to sustainable development. We have taken steps, for example in improving production methods to ensure that our palm oil production is sustainable. By December 2019, the Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) standard will become mandatory. This will ensure that every drop of palm oil produced in Malaysia will be certified sustainable by 2020.

Madam President,

41. All around the world, we observe a dangerous trend to inward-looking nationalism, of governments pandering to populism, retreating from international collaborations and shutting their borders to free movements of people, goods and services even as they talk of a borderless world, of free trade. While globalisation has indeed brought us some benefits, the impacts have proven to be threatening to the independence of small nations. We cannot even talk or move around without having our voices and movement recorded and often used against us. Data on everyone is captured and traded by powerful nations and their corporations.
42. Malaysia lauds the UN in its endeavours to end poverty, protect our planet and try to ensure everyone enjoys peace and prosperity. But I would like to refer to the need for reform in the organisation. Five countries on the basis of their victories 70 over years ago cannot claim to have a right to hold the world to ransom forever. They cannot take the moral high ground, preaching democracy and regime change in the countries of the world when they deny democracy in this organisation.
43. I had suggested that the veto should not be by just one permanent member but by at least two powers backed by three non-permanent members of the Security Council. The General Assembly should then back the decision with a simple majority. I will not say more.
44. I must admit that the world without the UN would be disastrous. We need the UN, we need to sustain it with sufficient funds. No one should threaten it with financial deprivation.

Madam President,

45. After 15 years and at 93, I return to this podium with the heavy task of bringing the voice and hope of the new Malaysia to the world stage. The people of Malaysia, proud of their recent democratic achievement, have high hopes that around the world – we will see peace, progress and prosperity. In this we look toward the UN to hear our pleas.

I thank you, Madam President.

# ANNEX 2



# **MOTION BY YB MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT *DEWAN RAKYAT* ON THE FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK OF THE NEW MALAYSIA**

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## **USUL KEMENTERIAN LUAR NEGERI KERANGKA DASAR LUAR MALAYSIA BAHARU**

**Menteri Luar Negeri** akan mencadangkan:-

**BAHAWA** YAB Perdana Menteri Malaysia telah menyampaikan ucapan pertama beliau selaku Perdana Menteri Malaysia ke-7 di Perhimpunan Agung Pertubuhan Bangsa-Bangsa Bersatu (PBB) yang ke-73 (UNGA), New York, Amerika Syarikat pada 28 September 2018 yang menggariskan matlamat dan rancangan dasar luar Malaysia Baharu.

**BAHAWA** ucapan YAB Perdana Menteri di Perhimpunan Agung PBB telah menggariskan antara lain kedudukan dan dasar luar negara yang berteraskan prinsip-prinsip seperti tidak berpihak kepada mana-mana kuasa, berkecuali dan mengamalkan falsafah “memakmurkan jiran” (*prosper-thy-neighbour*).

**BAHAWA** YAB Perdana Menteri juga memberi penekanan kepada hubungan Malaysia dengan kuasa-kuasa besar dunia, di samping isu-isu lain seperti situasi di Palestin, nasib orang-orang Islam di Rakhine dan perang dagangan antara negara-negara kuasa ekonomi.

**BAHAWA** YAB Perdana Menteri juga menyatakan kepentingan PBB sebagai satu platform utama bagi menyelesaikan isu-isu sejagat dan menyuarakan harapan agar PBB terus memainkan peranan utamanya dalam mengekalkan keamanan dan keselamatan antarabangsa.

**BAHAWA** ucapan YAB Perdana Menteri telahpun menggariskan matlamat dan rancangan dasar luar Malaysia Baharu bagi menyokong kelestarian perkembangan ekonomi, politik dan sosial di dalam negara kita sendiri.

**DENGAN INI DEWAN** mengambil ketetapan seperti berikut :

- a. Bersetuju dengan hala tuju dasar luar Malaysia Baharu seperti yang telah dinyatakan dalam ucapan YAB Perdana Menteri di Perhimpunan Agung PBB yang ke-73 (UNGA) di New York pada 28 September 2018; dan
- b. Memutuskan supaya ucapan YAB Perdana Menteri di Perhimpunan Agung PBB dijadikan sebagai kerangka asas dasar luar Malaysia Baharu.

## **MOTION BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK OF THE NEW MALAYSIA**

**The Minister of Foreign Affairs** shall propose: -

**THAT** the Right Honourable Prime Minister delivered his first address as the 7<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Malaysia at the 73<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations in New York, United States of America on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018, which outlined the broad goals and basic framework of foreign policy of the New Malaysia.

**THAT** the Right Honourable Prime Minister's address at the United Nations General Assembly had outlined, among others, Malaysia's principled foreign policy, its adherence to neutrality and non-alignment, as well as the "prosperity-neighbour" philosophy.

**THAT** the Right Honourable Prime Minister also emphasised the importance of maintaining Malaysia's relationship with major powers, whilst touching upon other contemporary developments such as the situation in Palestine, the fate of ethnic Rohingya and other minorities at Rakhine State and the ongoing trade war between global economic powers.

**THAT** YAB Prime Minister further stressed the importance of the United Nations as a key platform for resolving universal issues, and expressed hope that the United Nations will continue to play a leading role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

**THAT** the Right Honourable Prime Minister's address also outlined the outcomes and goals of the New Malaysia foreign policy in supporting sustainable economic, political and social development at the national level.

**THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES** takes the following decisions:

- a. **ADOPTS** the new foreign policy approach and direction outlined in the address by the Right Honourable Prime Minister at the 73<sup>rd</sup> UN General Assembly in New York, United States of America on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018; and
- b. **DECIDES** that the Right Honourable Prime Minister's address at the United Nations General Assembly shall serve as the basic foreign policy framework of the New Malaysia.

# ANNEX 3



# PARTICIPATORY PROCESS IN THE PREPARATION OF THE FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK OF THE NEW MALAYSIA

**1** **12 JULY 2018** 

Meeting between the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs

**7** **13 SEPTEMBER 2018** 

Town hall meeting with students from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)

**2** **13 JULY 2018** 

Discussion with the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)

**8** **16 SEPTEMBER 2018** 

Town hall meeting with students from Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)

**3** **15 AUGUST 2018** 

Discussion on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) with the Coalition of Malaysian NGOs (COMANGO)

**9** **18 SEPTEMBER 2018** 

Discussion on the internationalisation of Malay language with Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP)

**4** **27 AUGUST 2018** 

Discussion on the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs 2030) with the Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance

**10** **8 OCTOBER 2018** 

Meeting with the Association of Former Malaysian Ambassadors (AFMA)

**5** **28 AUGUST 2018** 

Discussion on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) with the Malaysian Alliance of Civil Society Organisations in the UPR Process (MACSA)

**11** **15 OCTOBER 2018** 

Presentation, debate and winding-up the motion by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Dewan Rakyat

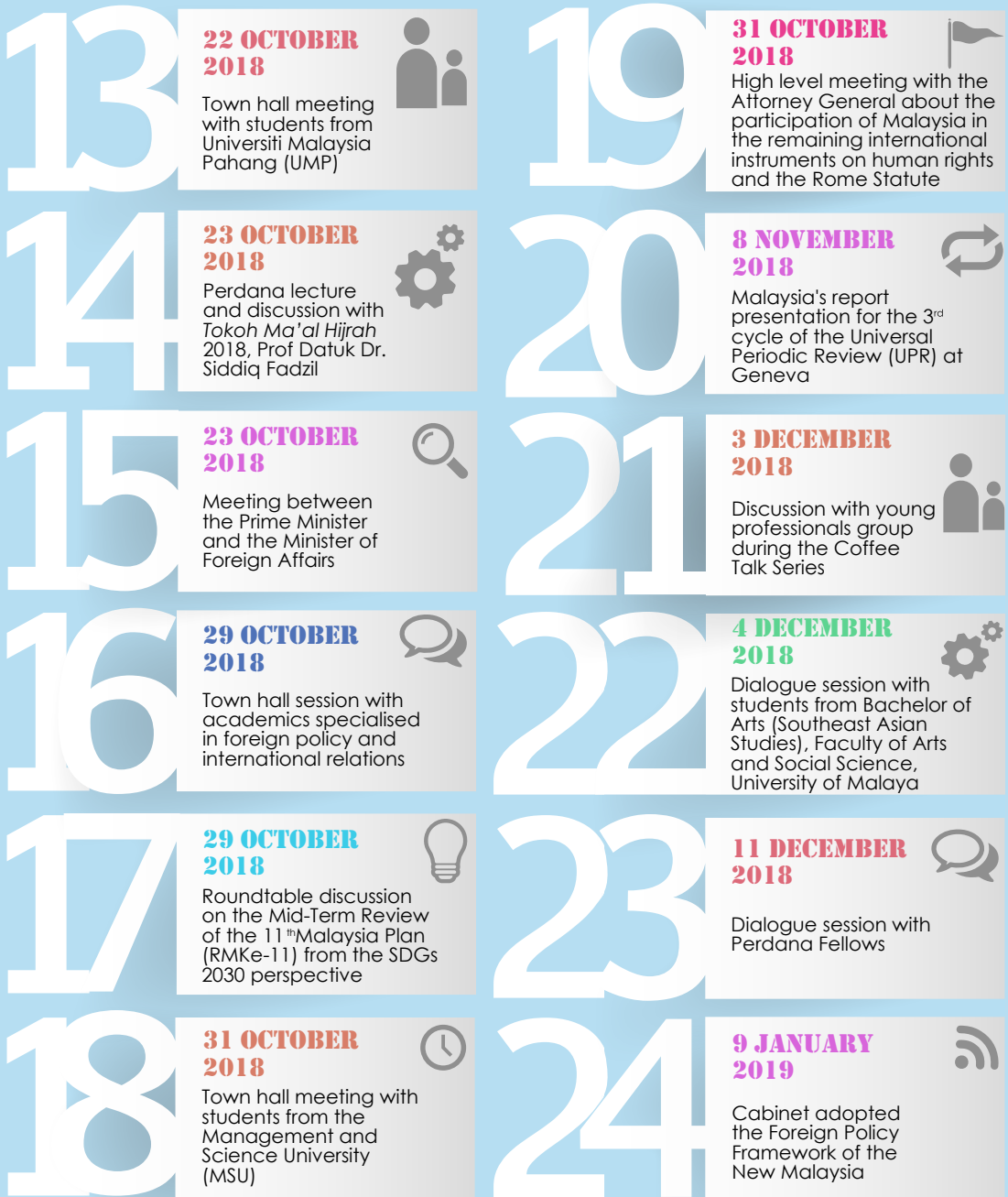
**6** **30 AUGUST 2018** 

Meeting with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Human Resources, and Attorney General's Chamber on Malaysia's participation in the remaining international instruments on human rights and the Rome Statute

**12** **21 OCTOBER 2018** 

First Meeting of the Consultative Council on Foreign Policy

# PARTICIPATORY PROCESS IN THE PREPARATION OF THE FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK OF THE NEW MALAYSIA



**FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK OF THE NEW MALAYSIA**  
Change in Continuity