



OPENING REMARKS
YB TAN SRI DATO' MOHAMAD ARIFF BIN MD YUSOF
SPEAKER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PARLIAMENT OF MALAYSIA

REGIONAL SOUTH AND SOUTH EAST ASIA PARLIAMENTARY WORKSHOP:
"PROMOTING ENGAGEMENT OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS IN ADDRESSING
THE ILLICIT TRADE OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS"

WEDNESDAY, 29 JANUARY 2020 @ 2.00PM
BRIEFING ROOM, PARLIAMENT HOUSE
KUALA LUMPUR

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh dan Good Afternoon.

(SALUTATIONS)

Honourable Mr. M.Kulasegaran

Minister of Human Resources, Chairman of the Parliamentarians for Global Action for the Malaysian Chapter & Member of the PGA's Executive Committee;

His Excellency Mr Niloy Banerjee

UNDP Resident Representative for Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei;

Her Excellency Mrs. Maria Castillo Fernandez

EU Ambassador & Head of Delegation;

Honourable Ms. Kasthuri Patto

Parliamentarians for Global Action Executive Committee Member & Member of Parliament for Batu Kawan; Secretary for PGA Malaysia & Member of the Parliamentary Special Select Committee on Gender Equality and Family Development;

Honourable Members of Parliament from Maldives, Pakistan, Nepal, Indonesia, the Philippines and India;

Datuk Kamis Samin

Chief Administrator of the Parliament of Malaysia;

Datuk Roosme Hamzah

Secretary of the House of Representatives;

PGA Senior Director for the International Peace and Security Programme, Mr Peter Barcroft and his team,

Honourable Members of the Parliament & Senators;

Representative from various government agencies;

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be attending this Regional South and South East Asia Parliamentary **Workshop: "Promoting Engagement of Women Parliamentarians in Addressing the Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons"** and to deliver this opening remark to welcome all distinguished participants in this 2-day event. On behalf of the Parliament of Malaysia specifically Dewan Rakyat, I would like to welcome all respected Member of Parliaments from India, Indonesia, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines to Malaysia, particularly to the Parliament of Malaysia. I hope that you will have a pleasant stay during this 2-day workshop and perhaps could extend your stay for a few days as this year is our Visit Malaysia 2020.

2. I believe our presence today signifies our commitment as a parliamentarian to address the whole range of issues that we are facing in this modern world. In a modern parliament, parliamentarians are not only bound to the local issues but also need to aware of global and cross-border issues which might affect the interest of local people. That's where I believe the initiative by the Parliamentarians for Global Action for this event must be lauded as it offers a valuable platform for parliamentarians to tackle such issues which might otherwise not be deliberated in our traditional role as parliamentarians.

3. I have been informed that this programme is one out of 14 proposals that have been selected for implementation in 2020 by the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR). I believe the selection process must have been very competitive and vigorous, and the fact that Parliamentarians for Global Action managed to make the cut and secure the funding to organise this programme is indeed a great achievement. Congratulations PGA!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. The Small Arms Survey the global centre based in Geneva in its Report, "Firearms and Violent Deaths" found that 75 per cent of deaths caused by armed violence occur in non-conflict settings, while an estimated 2 million people in non-conflict settings live with firearm-related injuries. The average number of violent deaths worldwide was estimated to be at 214,000 annually between 2010 and 2015. Conflict-related deaths accounted for 17 per cent of that number. Firearms were used in 50 per cent of homicides and 32 per cent of conflict-related deaths. According to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), there were 32,726 small arms and light weapons seized, 103,983 were surrendered, and 652 were found in 2017 globally.

5. This year marks the 25th year since the United Nations' General Assembly Resolution 50/70 was adopted in 1995 with regard to the issue of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The resolution in calling for the assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic

in small arms had realised that the circulation of massive quantities of small arms throughout the world impedes development and is a source of increased insecurity. The illicit transfer of small arms and their accumulation also constitutes a threat to the populations and to national and regional security while at the same time contributing to the destabilisation of States.

6. Since then, many efforts have been taken to seriously address this issue. Under the Programme of Action (PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects which was adopted in 2001, governments have agreed to improve national small arms laws, import and export controls, stockpile management and most importantly to engage in cooperation and assistance; hence, I believe parliamentarians have a significant role in ensuring our respected governments take adequate actions in adhering to this Programme of Action.

7. In a further major step to tackle this issue, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has incorporated the agenda of reducing illicit arms flows as one of its targets to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. In the recent High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development to review SDG 16, it was acknowledged that the Member States and the international community need to do more in preventing and eradicating conflict, by reducing the drivers of violent conflict and improving ways to reach marginalised populations affected by conflict.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Let's now turn to the main focus of this workshop which is to promote greater participation of women parliamentarians in this area. In line with the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. This very important UN resolution emphasises the inclusion of women's perspectives, priorities and capacities in peacebuilding and governance processes, gender-mainstreaming and gender-sensitive approaches must be incorporated in every level of decision making. The Programme of Action has also made specific recommendations for gender mainstreaming in combatting the illicit trade and trafficking of small arms and light weapons. Apart from integrating gender analysis and the provision of gender-specific data as a component of all small arms and light weapons programme, planning and execution, the knowledge and experiences of men and women should be included.

9. Perspectives of women are not less critical as their actual experiences have always been beneficial to contextualise the severity of the problem. Since there is a need to empower those left behind and particularly women and girls as key actors of development, the traditional gender role must be corrected. Women should no longer be left at the periphery and confined to specific subject matters. This is where empowerment and encouragement for women to participate in such an issue should be enhanced.

10. Therefore, this event which in particular will promote more active participation of women parliamentarians is highly commendable. I once again congratulate the organising committee from the Parliamentarians for Global Action for putting forward such an essential

angle for the prevention, combat and eradication of the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. I also thank UNDP and the Delegation of the European Union to Malaysia for their continuous support to the Parliament of Malaysia.

11. I want to end my opening remarks by quoting Shirin Ebadi, the Nobel Peace Prize Winner, a lawyer cum former judge and a human rights activist in her Nobel Lecture in 2003:

If the 21st century wishes to free itself from the cycle of violence, acts of terror and war, and avoid repetition of the experience of the 20th century – that most disaster-ridden century of humankind, there is no other way except by understanding and putting into practice every human right for all mankind, irrespective of race, gender, faith, nationality or social status.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On that note, I wish you all the best and have a productive discussion.

Thank you.

Wabillahi taufiq wal hidayah, Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh