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CFM MEDIA STATEMENT

MERDEKA DAY & MALAYSIA DAY 2014

“WE MUST CONTINUE TO HOPE”

This year we commemorate the 57th Anniversary of Merdeka and the 51st anniversary of the establishment of the Federation of Malaysia. The Christian community in Malaysia has always counted it a blessing to be part of the great moments and milestones of our shared history as a nation.

Our experience of this past year, however, has been marred by the painful memory of two incidences; first, our sacred Scriptures being seized from the premises of the Bible Society of Malaysia and second, the refusal of the Federal Court to grant leave to the Roman Catholic Church to appeal against the decision of the Court of Appeal in the Herald case. We continue to be concerned for the status of the seized Bibles and the outcome of other cases pending in the courts related to the use of the word “Allah” by Christians.

In addition to these, we are also witnessing an escalation in ethnic and religious extremism, where unchecked sectarian forces of hatred and bigotry, often fuelled by misinformation and misinterpretation, lies and inflammatory speeches, are ripping apart the social fabric of our nation that had been built on the principles of moderation and multi-culturalism. We believe that all Malaysians truly have cause for concern.

Given the many challenges we are facing today, and compounded by insensitive and illogical statements and pronouncements by some members of the government and governing political parties and by the pursuit of economic policies that only add to the rising cost of living, it is not surprising that many have succumbed to pessimism and cynicism. If we are to survive as a united nation, if we are to keep hope alive for our common future, we must all resist and oppose these destructive forces. All who succumb to fear and despair eventually become enemies of hope. On the other hand, we must also avoid naïve and false optimism that comes from ignorance and indifference or an intentional act of sweeping important issues under the carpet.

What then is this genuine hope?

- Genuine hope has a cost as it is not about peace of mind or absence of strife.
- Genuine hope demands the courage to take risks, the moral will to carry through our convictions and the active resisting of the forces of destruction, hate and violence.
- Genuine hope is never the denial of truth, the sober realities of life, the rot and corruption that infects our society. Genuine hope must expose the veil of lies, fraud and deception that are often used to coerce and subjugate minds through misinformation and fear.
- Genuine hope sees a future in authentic dialogue, affirmation, humility and mutual respect.
- Genuine hope demands for others what we demand for ourselves.
- Genuine hope does not separate ‘us’ from ‘them’ but sees all as “one”. And every act that imparts hope is a victory in itself.

And so we call on all Malaysians to recommit themselves to a common collaboration to save Malaysia from the forces of bigotry, religious extremism and racial polarisation.

We urge all Malaysians to press even harder for personal, interpersonal and institutional change that will transform our nation into a more tolerant and caring society where all may enjoy the fullest measure of life and liberty, equal protection of the law and safeguarding of their fundamental liberties.

We enjoin our fellow Malaysians to support movements and groups that seek to unite us as Malaysians living in peace and harmony with each other.

More recently our nation has been engulfed by enormous grief at the loss of the passengers and cabin crews of flights MH370 and MH17. Christians in Malaysia unite with their fellow citizens, and indeed with all who lost loved ones and friends in these two tragedies, in prayer and solemn reflection, seeking solace and consolation for all those who mourn.

Even so, we call upon our fellow Malaysians not to succumb in these dark days to despair and desolation. Let us unite in prayer to Almighty God for the strength to persevere and the courage to hope and work for a better Malaysia for all Malaysians.

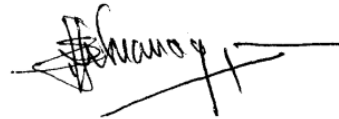
Our prayers are lifted up for our nation’s leaders, our Yang di-Pertuan Agong and the Rulers, our Prime Minister and members of his Cabinet, Mentris Besar and Chief Ministers and their executive committee members, our elected

representatives, the judiciary, the police and the armed forces that they will uphold with absolute integrity the freedom of religion guaranteed under our Federal Constitution and the responsibilities that have been entrusted to them for the common good.

May God bless our beloved country, Malaysia and all her peoples!



Rev. Dr. Eu Hong Seng
Chairman



Bishop Emeritus Antony Selvanayagam
Vice-chairman



Archbishop Datuk Bolly Lapok
Vice-chairman



Rev. Datuk Jerry Dusing
Vice-chairman