

Joint Statement: 7 April 2011

We, the undersigned Civil Society Organisations, are appalled are appalled by the news of another death at the MACC (Malaysia anti Corruption Commission) Office that reportedly occurred yesterday around 10.15am. The victim, believed to be Ahmad Sarbani Mohamed (56) an assistant director of the Selangor Customs Department had been released on bail three days ago, but was found dead on the first floor of MACC building at Jalan Cochrane.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the second time a fellow citizen has died whilst under the custody of the MACC. The fact that this comes not long after the death of Teoh Beng Hock in July 2009, is a real cause for concern for the peoples of this nation. This incident has again raised questions on the integrity and accountability of the MACC. Public confidence in the credibility and professionalism of the MACC has been shattered!

We are extremely saddened that the very institutions of the State that are supposed to protect and advance the public's interest have apparently abandoned the principles of democratic governance. Not only have human freedom and dignity been degraded, lives have been unnecessarily lost.

Principally, we do not condone any corruption activities. We support the anti-corruption agency's effort in fighting graft, but right to life is above all - fighting graft must not be at the expense of a life.

We demand that the government, as a matter of utmost urgency, undertakes the following measures:

(1) The establishment of a Royal Commission of Inquiry {RCI} immediately, to independently and thoroughly investigate the said incident. The terms of reference of the proposed RCI must include investigation into the key role of the present command and power structure of MACC in this tragic incident. Half the members of the RCI must be nominated by civil society organisations to ensure credibility.

(2) The Police must buck up and carry out independent and professional investigation against MACC. They must clear their reputation and regain credibility in this incident. The police have failed to neither investigate nor take action on 59 complaints of abuse of power against MACC. Its inaction caused two deaths - Teoh Beng Hock, and now Ahmad Sarbani Mohamed.

(3) The MACC investigations director Datuk Mustafar Ali, and all officers involved in the investigation of the case must be immediately suspended, until the completion of the Royal Commission's work, to ensure justice is served and there is no cover-up of evidence or any obstruction to the investigation process.

(4) Immediately implement the recommendations by the Parliamentary Select Committee on The Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code to enact a Coroner's Act in Malaysia and to establish a Coroner's Court to investigate all cases of sudden deaths in custody.

In closing, we would like to express our deepest condolences for the family of Ahmad Sarbani Mohamed. We would like to encourage the family to approach us should they need further support and assistance in the pursuit of justice and upholding their rights.

This statement jointly endorsed by:

1. Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM)

2. Saya Anak Bangsa Malaysia [SABM]

3. Malaysians For Beng Hock

4. 528 Media Action Group

5. AIC (Anwar Ibrahim Club)

6. Amnesty International Malaysia (AIM)

7. AWAM

8. Centre For Independent Journalism (CIJ)

9. Child Development Initiative (CHILD)

10. KL & Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall

11. Community Action Network (CAN)

12. Community Development Centre (CDC)

13. Council of Temples Malaysia

14. DISKOPI collective

15. Friends of Kota Damansara

16. Frinjan Community

17. Hartal MSM

18. Ikatan Hak Rakyat

19. Jaringan Rakyat Tertindas (JERIT)

20. Johor Tamizhar Sangam

21. Klang Consumer Association

22. Kolektif LimaPulohB

23. Kumpulan Aktivis Mahasiswa Independen (KAMI)

24. Lawyers For Liberty (LFL)

25. LLG Cultural Development Centre

26. Malaysia Youth and Student's Democratic Movement (DEMA)

27. Malaysian Dravidian Association

28. Malaysian Indian Business Association

29. Malaysian Indian Development and Unity Association

30. National Institute for democracy and electoral integrity (NIEI)

31. Nationwide Human Development and Research Centre

32. Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM)

33. People Service Organisation (PSO)

34. Persahabatan Semparuthi

35. Persatuan Kemajuan Pendidikan Malaysia

36. Persatuan Masyarakat Wilayah Persekutuan dan Selangor (PERMAS)

37. Persatuan Prihatian Belia Malaysia

38. Pusat Kesedaran Komuniti, Selangor (EMPOWER)

39. Pusat Komunikasi Masyarakat (KOMAS)

40. Solidariti Anak Muda Malaysia (SAMM)

41. SOS Selangor

42. WAMI

43. Women's Aid Organisation (WAO)

44. □□□□□□□ Perak Young Graduate Association

45. □□□□□□□□□□ UMANY ALUMNI

46. □□□□□□□ Gabungan Anak Muda dan Pelajar, GAMP

47. □□□□□□ Student Progressive Front USM

48. □□□□□□ Gerakan Mahasiswa Maju UPM

49. □□□□□□ Student Progressive Front UUM

50. □□□□□□□ Student Progressive Front New Era Colledge

51. □□□□□□□□ Kesatuan Mahasiswa New Era Kolej

52. □□□□□□□□ New Era College Alumni Association

53. □□□□ Sembang-sembang Forum

54. □□□□□ Monsoons group

55. □□□□□□□□ Persatuan Prihantin Komuniti Kuala Lumpur & Selangor,PRIHATIN

56. □□□□□□□□ Gabungan Murid-Murid Sekolah-Sekolah Menengah Persendirian Perak

57. □□□□□□□□□□ Ipoh Mini Oasis Library

58. □□□□□□□ Persatuan Murid-Murid Tua Sekolah Menengah Shen Jai

59. □□□□□□□ Persatuan Alumni Han Chiang Pulau Pinang

60. □□□□□□□ Persatuan Bekas Murid-Murid Han Chiang Seberang Perai

61. □□□□□□□□□□□ Persekutuan Alumni Han Chiang Malaysia

62. □□□□□□□□□ Kong Min School Old Pupils Association

63. □□□□□□□ Persatuan Kawan Karib Pulau Pinang

64. □□□□□□□□□ Penang Chinese Independent Schools' Education Society

65. □□□□□□□□□□□ Bhg Pemuda Persatuan Alumni Sekolah Serdang Bharu

66 □□□□□□□□□□ Youth Section of KL & Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall

67. □□□□□□□□□□□ Youth Section of Negeri Sembilan Chinese Assembly Hall

68. □□□□□□□□□□ Persatuan Wui Leng Selangor & K.L(Bahagian Pemuda)

69. □□□□□□□□□□ Bahagian Pemuda Persatuan Hokkien WP & S'gor

70. Persatuan Sahabat Wanita, Selangor (PSWS)

71. □□□□□□ Perak Kwang Tung Association

72. □□□□□□□□□□□□□□ Council of Churches of Malaysia Youth Network

73. □□□□□□□□□□□□Youth Section of Malacca Chinese Assembly Hall