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HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF MALAYSIA (SUHAKAM)

Transcript of SUHAKAM's Statement on the Right of Persons with Disabilities to Education
25th Session of the Human Rights Council
Palais des Nations, Geneva, 19 March 2014

Mr. President,

The increasing recognition of the importance of inclusive education, demonstrated by the progressive steps taken by Governments to transform their education system, signifies a crucial turning point in promoting the right to education for all, especially for persons with disabilities.

In the context of Malaysia, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) finds that a lot of effort has been made to enhance education for persons with hearing or visual impairments. However, lesser attention is given to persons with learning disabilities, such as those with Down Syndrome, autism and dyslexia, whose special needs call for a distinctive approach to education. There is a lack of awareness
among the public at large regarding the need to ensure equal access to education for persons with learning disabilities, preferably through inclusive education, as a pre-condition for their full and meaningful participation in society.

SUHAKAM has undertaken a study to identify the underlying problems surrounding the issue and would propose appropriate measures to promote greater accessibility to education for children with learning disabilities. The report of the study will be made available to the public in due course.

Mr. President,

SUHAKAM is pleased to note that the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2015, incorporates a roadmap that seeks to achieve 75-percent enrolment of students with ‘special needs’, which include persons with disabilities, in inclusive education settings by year 2025, with the facilities and equipment needed to create a conducive and supportive learning environment.
We hope that all stakeholders, particularly Government agencies and relevant civil society organisations, will make concerted efforts to fully realise the goals and objectives of the Blueprint, to bring about positive results towards achieving equal access and opportunity to education for all persons with disabilities.

Thank you Mr. President.