



Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

Empowering women to use law as an instrument of change and promoting women's human rights in the Asia Pacific region

NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

To:
Inspector-General of Police
Royal Malaysia Police Headquarters
Bukit Aman
50560 Kuala Lumpur.

Tuesday, 3rd March

Subject: Appeal to immediately drop all investigations and intimidations against Fadiyah Nadwa Fikri, Ambiga Sreenevasan and Marina Mahathir

To the Inspector-General of Police,

The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) is a regional women's rights organisation established in 1986, with over 200 members in 27 countries in Asia and the Pacific.¹ We call on the Malaysian government to immediately drop all of their investigations and intimidation against Fadiyah Nadwa Fikri, Ambiga Sreenevasan and Marina Mahathir. Fadiyah Nadwa Fikri has been targeted for participating and speaking at a peaceful gathering on the situation of Malaysia's political crisis last Tuesday 25 February 2020, along with other individuals and activists. While both Ambiga Sreenevasan and Marina Mahathir are being targeted for participating in another similar gathering held last Sunday 1 March 2020.

Fadiyah and the four other individuals are being investigated under Malaysia's archaic and draconian Sedition Act as well as the Communications and Multimedia Act. While the police have not yet specified the offences that both Ambiga and Marina are being investigated under. The investigation against Fadiyah and the other individuals - one of the first to come since the current political crisis has unfolded - has since been followed by further police harassment and intimidations of other individuals who are expressing their views on social media or who have organised or participated in other peaceful gatherings. This is part of a worrying trend that Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) are experiencing across the world, when authoritarian governments disregard its obligations to respect, protect and realise human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons; but rather at the forefront of such violations to silence the dissents.

Malaysia has been urged by the United Nations (UN) [human rights experts to withdraw its Sedition Act](#) as it has used the Act to [curb the legitimate exercise of freedom of expression](#) over the past few decades.² The use of the Sedition Act on ordinary Malaysians for the exercise of their human rights to freedom of opinion and expression is unwarranted and unacceptable; and is a direct violation to Malaysia's human rights obligation as a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 19).

¹ APWLD is the leading network of feminist organisations and individual activists in Asia Pacific. One of our core work of APWLD is to respond to women human rights defenders who are targeted for who they are and what they do through false charges, judicial harassment and intimidation.

² <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15144&>;

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2015/04/495512-malysias-anti-terror-and-sedition-laws-curtailed-human-rights-warns-un-rights>

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We are concerned that these intimidations and harassment signal a rapid regression of the peoples' rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in Malaysia. We urge the police to immediately cease its harassment and intimidation against Fadhiah, Ambiga and Marina as well as all other individuals who are exercising their fundamental constitutional rights as citizens of Malaysia.

We look forward to an immediate, just and accountable action from your office. Should your office have any inquiries, please contact apwld@apwld.org.

Regards,

Misun Woo
Regional Coordinator,
APWLD

Cc

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