



JARINGAN ORANG ASAL SEMALAYSIA

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES NETWORK OF MALAYSIA

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Orang Asal Expert is a New Member of SUHAKAM

Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia (JOAS) would like to congratulate Jannie Lasimbang upon her appointment as one of SUHAKAM's Commissioners.

Jannie Lasimbang, a Kadazan from Sabah, is an advocate for Indigenous Peoples' rights. Since the 1980s, she has been actively involved in environmental and human rights advocacy at the local, national as well as the international level.

She has been actively involved with PACOS Trust and Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia (JOAS) since its formation, and was the Secretary-General of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation (AIPP) from 2000-2008.

Currently she is the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), which is a subsidiary body directly under the United Nations Human Rights Council. She is also one of the focal point for the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity dealing with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

JOAS welcomes her appointment and is ready to work together with her and other commissioners to continue the work of former SUHAKAM vice chairperson, Tan Sri Simon Sipaun and former commissioners that have worked tirelessly to promote and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples of Malaysia.

We believe Jannie can make a difference in incorporating the UN human rights mechanisms within SUHAKAM's framework, especially on issues that brings great concern to the human rights violations that is currently faced by the Orang Asal when their inherent rights to land, territories and resources has been denied.

Furthermore, new policies and guidelines for development that includes the Orang Asal in decision making processes must be upheld especially in the context of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) that is mandatory in all development projects that affects the Orang Asal.

Article 46(2) of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) states that:

In the exercise of the rights enunciated in the present Declaration, human rights and fundamental freedoms of all shall be respected. The exercise of the rights set forth in this declaration shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law, in

accordance with international human rights obligations. Any such limitations shall be non-discriminatory and strictly necessary solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedom of others and for meeting the just and most compelling requirements of a democratic society.

Hellan Empaing, JOAS Secretary and also the focal point for Women's rights said, "We are proud that an indigenous woman is appointed for such an influential and important post, regardless of her gender and ethnicity. Indigenous women have always suffered triple discrimination (for being indigenous, for being poor and because she is a woman), and hopefully we can now have proper representation and a platform to voice out our important issues and grave situations".

JOAS will continue to work closely with SUHAKAM in promoting human rights especially the rights of the Orang Asal.

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