

PERPADUAN ANAK NEGERI SABAH (PAN SABAH)
(NATIVE SOLIDARITY OF SABAH)

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Press Statement: For Immediate Use

To All Chinese & Sino-Chinese Sabahans, You Are Our Family.

Recently Chinese President Xi Jinping was quoted as saying, “*No matter where the Chinese people are, China will always be their maternal home*” when referring to their new policy of issuing “Overseas Chinese Cards” for Overseas Chinese born in foreign countries, including those born in South East Asia.

To all Chinese and Sino-Chinese Sabahans, we the natives of this land, would like to affirm and say to you that you are our family. While China is your maternal home, Sabah is also your homeland.

Sarawak’s Chief Minister mentioned before that the Chinese of Sarawak may go to China for holidays but will come back to Sarawak as it is their home. Indeed, for the Chinese and Sino-Chinese in Sabah, Sabah is your home too!

We the natives who are the true *sons of this soil* have long ago welcomed the Chinese, Indians, Europeans and other immigrants - who came in legally - with open arms to live peacefully in Sabah as part of our family. Our forefathers have toiled this land together and we have reaped the fruits of their labour together. The natives had land, while the immigrants had expertise and financial resources. We all have brought different gifts to the table and have contributed in one way or another to the peace and progress of this nation. Therefore, no one has the right to claim superiority in this land. No one group should be lording over another.

World history testifies that our strength, peace and beauty do not lie in our unity in similarities but in our differences - the greater our diversity, the greater our perfection. Amongst siblings in a family, there are differences in character and personality. However, we are united on the basis of love for one another. We respect our differences, allow one another to grow and prosper, and we revel in the successes of our brothers and sisters. As a family living in this land, we have cultivated the virtues of tolerance, harmony and love. This is a blessing and we shall stand united and be vigilant in preserving the peace in this home of ours, Sabah.

As tolerant as we are, we shall not be cowed into accepting and do not condone attempts by certain quarters to inject elements of intolerance, extremism and injustice into our society - especially concerning our race and freedom of religion. Sabah was, is and will always be a secular nation. This is the promise and covenant of the Malaysia Agreement 1963, the spirit of which is clearly found in the records of the Inter-Governmental Committee Report, 1962. We have not forgotten.

We are disappointed and saddened by the escalating racism and tension between certain quarters in West Malaysia which are often sensationalised by certain political parties. It is unacceptable that certain groups have claimed to be the '*sons of the soil*' and therefore purportedly superior over other races which have led to aggression every now and then.

What transpired at the recent anti-Chinese demonstration held in Kuala Lumpur do not sit well with us in Sabah. The repeated calls for our Chinese Malaysians to '*go back to China*' is an embarrassment to our proclamation of '*1Malaysia*' and '*Malaysia Truly Asia*'. We do not want this culture to reach our shores in Sabah and openly reject this trend. We stand by our Chinese brothers and sisters and do not condone hatred and racist remarks against them. We warn that the threat to the stability and progress of Malaysia is not from without but from within – it is the threat of intolerance, extremism and injustice.

Our nation will not progress until we truly know who we are - our identity, our heritage, our history. As Sabahans, we want to uphold all three. We denounce any government policies that have the effect of racial disintegration and which dictate our race and religion for ease of statistical collation. We identify ourselves as citizens of Malaysia but we acknowledge and cherish our heritage. We who are natives of this land, know who we are. We who are of mix parentage, honour our ancestors, acknowledge our ancestral line and take pride in wherever our roots may be from. We know our heritage. No one can take that away from us. Sabah is our home, our people are our family. We call on our family to stand united and take charge in shaping our own destiny for our land!

We are glad with the recent opening of the office of the Consulate-General of China in Kota Kinabalu. Historically, links between China and Sabah dates back to the Han Dynasty. Inter-marriages between our people have long been practised. Therefore, we welcome you wholeheartedly and hope to forge closer ties and cooperation for the mutual benefit of our people.

Issued on 18th Dec 2015 by Perpaduan Anak Negeri Sabah (PAN Sabah).

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