

**MALAYSIA OPPOSITION LEADER ANWAR IBRAHIM FILES CASE
WITH UN WORKING GROUP ON ARBITRARY DETENTION**

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim’s international legal team led by human rights lawyer Jared Genser filed his case on 15 June 2015 with the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, requesting it investigate Anwar’s detention and conclude that he is being held in violation of Malaysia’s obligations under international law.

On February 10, 2015, Anwar Ibrahim was detained by order of the Federal Court after it affirmed a five-year sentence on fabricated sodomy charges.

Amnesty International designated Anwar a prisoner of conscience on February 17, 2015, and said the court’s decision was a “deplorable judgment, and just the latest chapter in the Malaysian authorities’ relentless attempts to silence government critics.” Human Rights Watch described Anwar’s conviction as “a political vendetta,” and FIDH added it was “the disgraceful conclusion of a politically-motivated trial.”

Anwar is in fact imprisoned because he presents a democratic and non-violent threat to Prime Minister Najib Razak. This is the second time Anwar has been subjected to a politically-motivated prosecution under the same government. And it takes place in the context of numerous opposition leaders, journalists, and activists, including Anwar’s daughter Nurul Izzah Anwar MP, having been arrested, charged, and or detained under the country’s draconian Sedition Act and other oppressive laws.

Anwar was initially held from February 10, 2015, in solitary confinement in a bare cell, with a foam mattress on a low bed, a bucket for bathing, and a squat toilet. The cell was extremely hot and humid with no form of ventilation or fan. After public pressure, his conditions were improved but he was not transferred to a hospital for a full month after visiting doctors recommended he receive further treatment. Further to his recent three-day hospital stay, Anwar requires further monitoring for his drastic loss of body weight of 6 kg (13 pounds), irregular blood pressure, and also intensive physiotherapy for an injured shoulder.

“Anwar is experiencing a great injustice,” said Sivarasa Rasiah, Anwar’s counsel. “The international community should be alarmed by the politically-motivated nature of Anwar’s conviction and jailing, which is part of a broader crackdown on political opposition and dissent in Malaysia.”

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention is a quasi-judicial body of the UN Human Rights Council, which itself is comprised of 47 Member States of the United Nations. The group is comprised of five legal experts – currently from Benin, Mexico, Norway, South Korea, and Ukraine – and has the authority to investigate and issue legal opinions about alleged cases of deprivation of liberty imposed arbitrarily.

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