PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA (8 SEPTEMBER 2025) – Today, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) and the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM) signed a four-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) commencing on 8 September 2025.

The MoU was signed by SUHAKAM's Chairman, Dato' Seri Mohd Hishamudin Yunus, and HRCM's President, Ms. Mariyam Muna. The MoU formalises the intention of both national human rights institutions (NHRIs) to strengthen cooperation through consultations, information exchange, capacity building, knowledge sharing and the exchange of experiences in the promotion and protection of human rights at national, regional and international levels.

The Republic of Maldives, by its constitution, a democratic Republic based on the principles of Islam, acceded to UNCAT on 20 April 2004, and ratified the Optional Protocol (OPCAT) on 15 February 2006. In April 2008, as prescribed under the OPCAT, the government of the Maldives legislatively designated HRCM as the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM).

By this MoU, SUHAKAM, through the HCRM, seeks to draw on the experiences and best practices of the Republic of Maldives. This knowledge exchange is expected to strengthen SUHAKAM's advocacy for Malaysia's accession to UNCAT, particularly, in addressing issues relating to the compatibility of UNCAT with Shari'ah law. At the same time, HRCM expresses interest in learning from SUHAKAM's initiative in human rights education, particularly, the Human Rights Best Practices (ATHAM) in Schools programmes, designed to inculcate awareness and understanding of human rights among teachers and students in schools.

The MoU underscores the commitments of both SUHAKAM and HRCM to strengthen bilateral cooperation by focusing on training and capacity building vide the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), technical assistance, and the sharing of expertise on areas including, but not limited to, UNCAT, Shari'ah law and human rights education as well as any other mutually agreed areas of collaboration.

Both institutions hope that this MoU will provide a meaningful platform for stakeholders in Malaysia and the Maldives to engage in constructive dialogue on human rights issues and to advance the shared objectives of the agreement.

The MoU signing ceremony was held in conjunction with the Closed-Door High-Level Dialogue on Torture Prevention at The Everly Putrajaya, Putrajaya, on 8 September 2025. The dialogue was officiated by SUHAKAM's Chairman, Dato' Seri Mohd Hishamudin Yunus, whilst HRCM's President, Ms. Mariyam Muna, participated as a resource person, sharing HCRM's expertise and the Republic of the Maldives's experience in harmonising international human rights frameworks with Islamic Principles in acceding to UNCAT.

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Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)
Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM)
Date: 8 September 2025