

LEGISLATING EQUALITY: CEDAW & BEYOND SYMPOSIUM ON LEGISLATIVE REFORM FOR WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS



28 and 29 Sept 2026 (Monday and Tuesday)
8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Raja Aziz Addruse Auditorium
Level 2, Wisma Badan Peguam Malaysia
2 Leboh Pasar Besar, 50050 Kuala Lumpur

**Registration deadline
extended to
27 Sept 2026 (Sunday)!**

Registration Fee: Free of Charge

Advance registration is required
(Seats are limited and registration is based on a first come, first served basis)

**Physical registration has closed and virtual registration is now
open to accommodate more participants. Register [here](#) now!**

The Malaysian Bar, through its Bar Council Women's Rights Committee, and in collaboration with SUHAKAM (Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia Malaysia, or the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia) and the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Gender Equality, will be organising a symposium titled "Legislating Equality: CEDAW & Beyond — Symposium on Legislative Reform for Women's Human Rights".

The symposium aims to provide a platform for international and local speakers to share knowledge and examine key women's rights issues in Malaysia, taking into account the current legal landscape, emerging challenges and local realities.

The symposium will review Malaysian laws in the light of Malaysia's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women ("CEDAW") and the CEDAW Committee's concluding observations. It will identify existing gaps and areas for legislative reform, and provide updated knowledge and practical tools to advance meaningful reforms in promoting and protecting women's human rights.

The full programme of the symposium is as follows:

Day 1

8:30 am	Registration
8:45 am	Welcome Addresses (1) Marisa Regina , Chairperson, Bar Council Women's Rights Committee ("WRC") (2) Anand Raj , President, Malaysian Bar Special Address Her Excellency Danielle Heinecke , Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia
9:00 am	Session 1: Introduction to the CEDAW Committee and CEDAW Mechanism — The Impact of the Current Global Crisis on Follow-Up CEDAW Reporting Presenter (1) Dr Hiroko Akizuki , Member, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women ("UN CEDAW Committee") (2) Tulika Srivastava , Executive Director, International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific ("IWRRAW-AP")
10:00 am	Session 2: Parliament and Gender — Where Are We Now? Speaker Omna Sreeni-Ong , Head of Secretariat, All Party Parliamentary Group, Malaysia – Gender Equality ("APPGM-GE")
10:15 am	Break
10:30 am	Session 3: Parliamentary Reform and CEDAW — Good Practices Speakers (1) Dr Hiroko Akizuki , Member, UN CEDAW Committee (2) Rusni Tajari , Senior Manager, Strategy and Policy, Wanita Berdaya Selangor (3) Jehan Wan Aziz , Rule of Law Analyst and Lead (Human Rights and Institutions), Governance and Inclusive Growth, United Nations Development Programme (4) Dahlia Madanih , Vice-Chairperson, Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan ("KOMNAS Perempuan") Moderator Suri Kempe , Founder and Partner, Kemban Kolektif
11:30 am	Session 4: Women's Rights, Roles of MPs and Government Obligations Speakers (1) Shivani Verma , Human Rights Officer, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Regional Office for South-East Asia (2) Kasthuri Patto , Vice-Chief, Wanita DAP; Former Member of Parliament ("MP") (3) Maha Balakrishnan , Researcher, trainer and advisor on democratic governance, rights-based policymaking and strategic advocacy Moderator Saiyidah Izzati Nur Razah Maideen , Member, WRC
12:30 pm	Lunch Break
1:15 pm	Session 5: Women Friendly Cities (Political Leadership and City Design Based on Sustainable Development Goals ("SDG") 5 and 16 — Building an Inclusive Parliament) Speakers (1) Shivani Verma , Human Rights Officer, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Regional Office for South-East Asia (2) Ita Bah Nan , Deputy Secretary General, Pertubuhan Wanita Orang Asal/Asli Malaysia (3) Anit Kaur Randhawa , Co-Deputy Chairperson, Bar Council Constitutional Law and Human Rights Committee Moderator Kee Hui Yee , Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee
2:15 pm	Session 6: Harmful Practices: Child Marriage Speakers (1) Goh Siu Lin , Partner, Kee Sern, Siu & Huey (2) Syarifatul Adibah bt Mohammad Jodi , Senior Programme Officer, SIS Forum Malaysia (3) Wan Zayana Wan Idris , Programme Assistant, United Nations Children's Fund Moderator Ireeny Muzamel , Consultant, Kemban Kolektif
3:00 pm	Session 7: Harmful Practices: Female Genital Cutting and Laws on Medical Ethics Speakers (1) Professor Nazimah Idris , Professor, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, IMU University Malaysia (2) Dahlia Madanih , Vice-Chairperson, KOMNAS Perempuan (3) Melissa Akhir , Commissioner on Gender and Chair, Policy and Law Working Group, SUHAKAM (4) Joshua Teh Honguan , Gender Consultant, United Nations Population Fund Moderator Jaskirath Kaur Sohanpal , Gender Consultant, Kemban Kolektif
3:45 pm	Break
4:00 pm	Session 8: Case Study Focus: Refugee Women and Girls Speakers (1) Umyra Ahmad , Co-Founder, Garabtaag; Manager, Advancing Universal Rights and Justice programme, Association for Women's Rights in Development (2) Hannah Jambunathan , Asia Pacific Senior Programme Officer, International Detention Coalition (3) Ja Seng Pan , General Secretary, Coalition of Burma Ethnic Malaysia Moderator Collin Arvind Andrew , Co-Deputy Chairperson, Bar Council Migrants and Refugees Committee
5:00 pm	Keynote Address YB Tuan M Kulasegaran , Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform)



Please click here to view the speakers and moderators' profiles

Day 2

9:00 am	Session 1: Lived Realities of Women as Rightsholders in All Their Identities — Reflected in the Law Speakers (1) Dr Hiroko Akizuki, Member, UN CEDAW Committee (2) Bina Ramanand, Executive Director, Family Frontiers (3) Dahlia Madanih, Vice-Chairperson, KOMNAS Perempuan Moderator Brenda Rangithan, Co-Chairperson, Kuala Lumpur Bar Committee Gender Equality & Diversity Committee
10:00 am	Film Screening and Presentation Ita Bah Nan, Deputy Secretary General, Pertubuhan Wanita Orang Asal/Asli Malaysia
10:30 am	Break
10:45 am	Session 2: Incorporating CEDAW into National Legislation: Anti-discrimination Against Women Bill and Gender Parity in Political Representation Bill Speakers (1) Dr Hiroko Akizuki, Member, UN CEDAW Committee (2) Daniella Zulkifli, Immediate Past President, Association of Women Lawyers (3) Dahlia Madanih, Vice-Chairperson, KOMNAS Perempuan Moderator Hemalatha Parasa Ramulu, Co-Deputy Chairperson, WRC
12:15 pm	Lunch Break
1:15 pm	Session 3: Access to Justice for Women and Girls Speakers (1) YBhg Dato Dr Punitha Silivarajoo, Deputy Director General (Policy and Development), Legal Affairs Division in the Prime Minister's Department ("BHEUU, JPM") (1) Karen Cheah Yee Lynn, LAWASIA ExCo Member (2024–2026); Past President, Malaysian Bar (2022–2024); Non-Executive Director in LawClaims; Board Member, Legal Profession Qualifying Board (2) Melissa Akhir, Commissioner on Gender and Chair, Policy and Law Working Group, SUHAKAM Moderator Vilasini Vijandran, Kemban Kolektif
2:15 pm	Session 4: Domestic Violence Act — 27 Years on — Addressing Femicide in Malaysia Speakers (1) The Honourable Justice Datuk Noorin Badaruddin, Judge, Court of Appeal (2) The Honourable Justice Datin Paduka Evrol Mariette Peters, Judge, Court of Appeal (3) Nazreen Nizam, Executive Director, Women's Aid Organisation Moderator Marisa Regina, Chairperson, WRC
3:15 pm	Break
3:30 pm	Handbook Introduction and Guide
4:00 pm	Session 5: Case Studies and Practical Applications Presenter (1) Dr Hiroko Akizuki, Member, UN CEDAW Committee (2) Sharmilah Rajendran, Programme Officer, Advocates for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights ("SRHR"), Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women ("ARROW") Facilitator Jaskirath Kaur Sohanpal, Gender Consultant, Kemban Kolektif
4:30 pm	Session 6: Handbook Launch and Photo Session Presenters (1) Her Excellency Danielle Heinecke, Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia (2) Dato' Seri Hishamudin b Md Yunus, Chairman, SUHAKAM (3) Marisa Regina, Chairperson, WRC
5:00 pm	Closing Remarks YB Senator Dr Jufitri Joha, Treasurer, APPGM-GE



Day 1 | 28 Sept 2026 (Monday)

Session 1: Introduction to the CEDAW Committee and CEDAW Mechanism — The Impact of the Current Global Crisis on Follow-Up CEDAW Reporting

Speakers



Dr Hiroko Akizuki
*Member,
UN CEDAW Committee*



Tulika Srivastava
*Executive Director,
IWRAP-AP*

Session 2: Parliament and Gender — Where Are We Now?

Speaker



Omna Sreeni-Ong
*Head of Secretariat,
APPGM-GE*

Session 3: Parliamentary Reform and CEDAW — Good Practices

Speakers



Dr Hiroko Akizuki
*Member,
UN CEDAW Committee*



Rusni Tajari
*Senior Manager,
Strategy and Policy,
Wanita Berdaya Selangor*



Jehan Wan Aziz
*Rule of Law Analyst and
Lead (Human Rights and
Institutions), Governance
and Inclusive Growth,
UNDP*

Moderator



Dahlia Madanih
*Vice-Chairperson,
KOMNAS Perempuan*



Suri Kempe
*Founder and Partner,
Kemban Kolektif*



Session 4: Women's Rights, Roles of MPs and Government Obligations

Speakers



Shivani Verma
*Human Rights Officer,
Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for
Human Rights, Regional
Office for South-East Asia*



Kasthuri Patto
*Vice-Chief, Wanita DAP;
Former MP*



Maha Balakrishnan
*Researcher, trainer and
advisor on democratic
governance, rights-based
policymaking and
strategic advocacy*

Moderator



**Saiyidah Izzati Nur
Razak Maideen**
Member, WRC

Session 5: Women Friendly Cities (Political Leadership and City Design Based on Sustainable Development Goals ("SDG") 5 and 16 — Building an Inclusive Parliament)

Speakers



Shivani Verma
*Human Rights Officer, Office
of the United Nations High
Commissioner for Human
Rights, Regional Office for
South-East Asia*



Ita Bah Nan
*Deputy Secretary General,
Pertubuhan Wanita Orang
Asal/Asli Malaysia*



Anit Kaur Randhawa
*Co-Deputy Chairperson,
Bar Council Constitutional Law
and Human Rights Committee*

Moderator



Kee Hui Yee
*Co-Chairperson,
Bar Council Family Law
Committee*



Session 6: Harmful Practices: Child Marriage

Speakers



Goh Siu Lin
*Partner, Kee Sern,
Siu & Huey*



**Syarifatul Adibah
bt Mohammad Jodi**
*Senior Programme
Officer, SIS Forum
Malaysia*



Wan Zayana Wan Idris
*Programme Assistant,
UNICEF*

Moderator



Ireeny Muzamel
*Consultant,
Kemban Kolektif*

Session 7: Harmful Practices: Female Genital Cutting and Laws on Medical Ethics

Speakers



Professor Nazimah Idris
*Professor, Obstetrics and
Gynaecology, IMU
University Malaysia*



Dahlia Madanih
*Vice-Chairperson,
KOMNAS Perempuan*



Melissa Akhir
*Commissioner on Gender
and Chair, Policy and
Law Working Group,
SUHAKAM*

Moderator



Joshua Teh Honguan
*Gender Consultant,
United Nations
Population Fund*



Jaskirath Kaur Sohanpal
*Gender Consultant,
Kemban Kolektif*



Session 8: Case Study Focus: Refugee Women and Girls

Speakers



Umyra Ahmad

*Co-Founder, Garabtaag;
Manager, Advancing
Universal Rights and
Justice programme,
Association for Women's
Rights in Development
("AWID")*



Hannah Jambunathan

*Asia Pacific Senior
Programme Officer,
International Detention
Coalition*



Ja Seng Pan

*General Secretary of the
Coalition of Burma
Ethnics Malaysia
("COBEM")*

Moderator



Collin Arvind Andrew

*Co-Deputy Chairperson,
Bar Council Migrants and
Refugees Committee*



Day 2 | 29 Sept 2026 (Tuesday)

Session 1: Lived Realities of Women as Rightsholders in All Their Identities — Reflected in the Law

Speakers



Dr Hiroko Akizuki
*Member,
UN CEDAW Committee*



Bina Ramanand
*Executive Director,
Family Frontiers*



Dahlia Madanih
*Vice-Chairperson,
KOMNAS Perempuan*

Moderator



Brenda Rangithan
*Co-Chairperson,
Kuala Lumpur Bar Committee
Gender Equality & Diversity
Committee*

Film Screening & Presentation



Ita Bah Nan
*Deputy Secretary General,
Pertubuhan Wanita Orang
Asal/Asli Malaysia*



**Session 2: Incorporating CEDAW into National Legislation: Anti-discrimination
Against Women Bill and Gender Parity in Political Representation Bill**

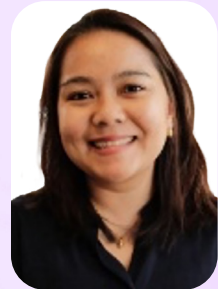
Speakers



Dr Hiroko Akizuki
*Member,
UN CEDAW Committee*



Dahlia Madanih
*Vice-Chairperson,
KOMNAS Perempuan*



Daniella Zulkifli
*Immediate Past President,
Association of Women
Lawyers*

Moderator



Hemalatha Parasa Ramulu,
*Co-Deputy Chairperson,
WRC*

Session 3: Access to Justice for Women and Girls

Speakers



**YBhg Dato Dr Punitha
Silivarajoo**
*Deputy Director General
(Policy and Development),
Legal Affairs Division in the
Prime Minister's Department
("BHEUU, JPM")*



Karen Cheah Yee Lynn
*LAWASIA ExCo Member
(2024–2026); Past President,
Malaysian Bar (2022–2024);
Non-Executive Director in
LawClaims; Board Member,
Legal Profession Qualifying
Board*



Melissa Akhir
*Commissioner on Gender
and Chair, Policy and Law
Working Group, SUHAKAM*

Moderator



Vilasini Vijandran
Kemban Kolektif



Session 4: Domestic Violence Act — 27 Years on — Addressing Femicide in Malaysia

Speakers



**The Honourable Justice
Datuk Noorin Badaruddin**
Judge, Court of Appeal



**The Honourable Justice
Datin Paduka Evrol
Mariette Peters**
Judge, Court of Appeal



Nazreen Nizam
*Executive Director,
Women's Aid
Organisation ("WAO")*

Moderator



Marisa Regina
Chairperson, WRC

Session 5: Case Studies and Practical Applications

Presenters



Dr Hiroko Akizuki
*Member,
UN CEDAW Committee*



Sharmilah Rajendran
*Programme Officer, Advocates for
Sexual and Reproductive Health
and Rights ("SRHR"), Asian-Pacific
Resource & Research Centre for
Women ("ARROW")*



Jaskirath Kaur Sohanpal
*Gender Consultant,
Kemban Kolektif*

Facilitator

Session 6: Handbook Launch and Photo Session

Presenters



**Her Excellency
Danielle Heinecke**
*Australian High
Commissioner to
Malaysia*



**Dato' Seri Hishamudin
b Md Yunus**
Chairman, SUHAKAM



Marisa Regina
Chairperson, WRC

Terms and Conditions

Event Policy

Places are limited and registration is on a first come, first served basis. Registration will close on **27 Sept 2026 (Sunday)**, at **12:00 am**.

For events with registration fees, all payments must be made in advance, including bank charges. Registration will be confirmed once full payment is received and proof of payment is provided by email or fax.

The organiser reserves the right to modify, cancel or postpone the event, should circumstances arise that make such action necessary, whereupon all registration fees paid will be refunded.

Cancellation

Cancellations must be made in writing.

Please note that there will be **no refunds** for cancellations, but substitutions are allowed. Kindly inform us in writing with the relevant details at least **three** days in advance.

If you have failed to inform the organiser on your cancellation for three consecutive times, you may be blacklisted for future events.

Transferral

You are allowed to transfer your place to another participant, but you must notify the organiser with the necessary details at least **three** days in advance.

Attendance

CPD points for the CPD Scheme will not be awarded to lawyers and pupils in chambers from Peninsular Malaysia who arrive more than 15 minutes late, are not present throughout the event, or leave before its scheduled end.

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Issued by: **Marisa Regina**, Chairperson, Bar Council Women Rights Committee