

International Human Rights Day 2021:

# Advancing Equality and Human Rights in Malaysia

10 Dec 2021 (Friday) | 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm  
This webinar carries 2 CPD points.

International Human Rights Day commemorates the day the United Nations General Assembly ("UNGA") adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ("UDHR") on 10 Dec 1948. International Human Rights Day has since been celebrated annually on 10 December, and the UDHR is a milestone document that proclaims the inalienable rights that everyone is entitled to as a human being – regardless of race, colour, religion, language, political opinion or status.

It has inspired countries and people alike globally through the years to treat every person with the right to life and liberty. On International Human Rights Day, we acknowledge the importance of the UDHR and the importance of advancing human rights in Malaysia.

The theme for International Human Rights Day 2021 is "EQUALITY – Reducing inequalities and advancing human rights".

Article 1 of the UDHR states: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." This means that the principles of equality and non-discrimination are at the heart of human rights. Equality is aligned also with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals ("SDG") and importance of the trite principle: Leave No One Behind. Non-discrimination is at the heart of sustainable development, especially for developing countries in the advancement of human rights.

## Guest Speaker

**Virpi Kukkasniemi-Leino** started to work as a Political Counsellor at the Delegation of the European Union to Malaysia from 1 Oct 2021. She is also the Focal Point for Human Rights at the Delegation. She is from Finland and has been working for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland for 20 years previously, holding various positions related to human rights and the rule of law, foreign and trade policy, and European issues. Before coming to Malaysia, she has also lived in Moscow, Brussels and the Netherlands. She has a Master of Economics degree from the Aalto University, Helsinki.



**Welcoming Address**  
New Sin Yew, Co-Chairperson of the Bar Council Human Rights Committee ("HRC")

## Moderators

**Usha Kulasegaran** is a Member of the Bar. She is active in legal practice and practises criminal litigation in the Malaysian Courts. She has an LLM degree (Masters in International Criminal Law and Justice) specialising in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court ("ICC"). She is a graduate of the University of Sussex, England, and her areas of interests are international criminal justice ("ICJ") and international criminal law ("ICL"). She is the Head of the ICC Working Group of HRC and the Deputy Chairperson of HRC.



She is an Officer at the International Bar Association ("IBA") Access to Justice and Legal Aid Committee, and War Crimes Committee that deals with the four major international crimes, namely war crimes, genocide, crimes of aggression, and crimes against humanity. She is also an Officer for the IBA Human Rights Institute.

Usha is a Member of the International Law Association ("ILA") and has completed her Public International Law Training at the Hague Academy of International Law at The Hague, Netherlands.

In November 2021, Usha was a speaker at the LAWASIA conference on the topic "International Criminal Justice in the Asia-Pacific Region". Recently, Usha was selected to the International Visitor Leadership Programme in Washington, DC – the prestigious programme by the US Department of State and is the sole Malaysian to be granted that honour for 2021/2022.

**Cassandra Nicole Thomazios** graduated with a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) degree from Northumbria University, United Kingdom. She was called to the Bar of England and Wales as a Barrister-at-Law (Inner Temple) in 2011 and was admitted as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya in 2012. Cassandra also holds an LLM degree, specializing in transnational law from Kings College London.



She is currently a partner at MahWengKwai & Associates where she heads the corporate department and undertakes human rights work pro bono in collaboration with the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

She is currently a member of HRC and is an advocate of human rights issues, such as freedom of religion, enforced disappearances, and freedom of speech and expression. In 2019, she was selected as a Fellow representing Malaysia on the "Professional Fellows On-Demand Religious Freedom and Interfaith Dialogue Exchange" programme in the USA.

## Heads of the HRC Working Groups



Rachel Tan Mei Chien,  
Head of Domestic Violence Abuse Victims ("DVA") Working Group

**Rachel Tan** is currently a Law Consultant with Meca Employers Consulting Agency. She was the previous Head of HRC's LGBT Working Group. Rachel also served as a Public Relations Officer of the Bar Council Secretariat from 2009 to 2011.



Nur A'minahtul Mardiah bt Md Nor,  
Head of the Project Help-Desk Working Group

**Nur A'minahtul Mardiah bt Md Nor** obtained her Bachelor in Law Studies (Hons) and Bachelor of Law LLB (Hons) degrees from Universiti Teknologi MARA ("UiTM") and subsequently was called to the Bar in 2013.

In 2007, A'minahtul Mardiah started her career as a Legal Officer at the Attorney General's Chambers ("AGC") as a Deputy Public Prosecutor of its sexual offences and general crime units. After serving as the Deputy Public Prosecutor for five years at AGC, A'minahtul Mardiah was appointed in 2012 as a Magistrate in the district of Pontian, Johor, and later was transferred to serve as a Magistrate at Kuala Lumpur Court.

Many of her Grounds of Judgments were published in the Current Law Journal ("CLJ"). She has also demonstrated high accountability when she was appointed as the Magistrate in charge for security offences cases under the Prevention of Crime Act 1959 ("POCA") and Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 ("SOSMA") for the Kuala Lumpur Court. In 2017, she ventured into new area of law, mainly on civil cases when she was appointed as the Deputy Registrar of the Court of Appeal. A'minahtul Mardiah bade farewell to the Judicial services in July 2018.

A'minahtul Mardiah was also a Lecturer for UiTM Shah Alam (Magisterial Skills and Business Law) from 2011 to 2017. In 2019, she was entrusted by the Legal Profession Qualifying Board, Malaysia, to lecture at USIM on the subject of criminal procedure code while serving her clients as a practising lawyer and a Partner in Vijey Esvaran until June 2020.

A'minahtul Mardiah started her own practice, Chambers of A'minahtul Mardiah, since July 2020.



Vince Tan Hoo Seh, Head of the Online Anti-Bullying Working Group

**Vince Tan** holds a Bachelor of Law degree from University of Malaya.

Vince's areas of practice include industrial relations law, constitutional and administrative law, civil litigation, and criminal defence work. He commenced pupillage at Jeeva Partnership and was admitted as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya in 2017. He then commenced legal practice at Karpal Singh & Co as a legal associate and subsequently at Tan Ban Cheng & Associates in 2019.

He rejoined Jeeva Partnership in February 2020, and currently is actively pursuing its employment and corporate/commercial crime division. He is frequently invited by the Bar Council to participate in its continuing professional development workshops.

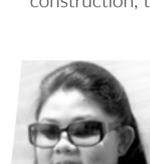
He currently sits as a committee member in the following Bar Council committees: HRC, National Young Lawyers and Pupils Committee ("NYLPC"), and Industrial and Employment Law Committee ("IELC").

He has previously served as a Board Member of Amnesty International Malaysia and Committee Member of Persatuan Aliran Kesedaran Negara ("Aliran").



Saha Deva A Arunasalam, Head of the Universal Periodic Review ("UPR") Process Working Group

**Saha Deva** is the Managing Partner of Saha & Associates. His legal focus areas include investment, oil and gas, construction, torts, trust, and intellectual property.



Amanda Kong Hwei Zhen, Co-Head of the Persons with Disability Act 2008 ("PWD") Working Group

**Amanda Kong** was diagnosed with congenital glaucoma at birth, which resulted in vision impairment. At a young age, Amanda aspires to pursue a career in the legal field as she desires to champion the cause of persons with disabilities ("PWDs") in Malaysia.

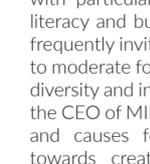
Amanda was awarded the Outstanding Cambridge Learners Award for being the Top Student in the World for Law for the year 2013 by University of Cambridge. In 2016, she graduated with a Class I LLB (Hons) from the University of Liverpool. Amanda went on to complete the Certificate of Legal Practice ("CLP") in 2017, and subsequently read in chambers at Skrine. She was admitted an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya in 2019.

In line with her passion to champion the cause of PWDs in Malaysia, coupled with her determination to give back to the community, Amanda joined the Make It Right Movement ("MIRM") as a Community Advocate for PWDs in 2019.

Amanda has been involved in conducting and facilitating various internal and external capacity building and professional development workshops conducted by MIRM, with particular focus on diversity and inclusion, financial literacy and business management, and life skills. She was frequently invited by the Kuala Lumpur State Bar Committee to moderate forums or as a panellist for sessions focusing on diversity and inclusion of PWDs. Amanda works closely with the CEO of MIRM in curating, leading and managing projects and causes for MIRM's partners and affiliates, geared towards creating a sustained positive impact on the community by championing worthy causes, including B40 alleviation, advancements for refugees and asylum seekers in Malaysia, mental health support projects, women empowerment, and promotion of child rights and welfare.

Besides being a mediator registered with the Bar Council, she is also an adjudicator registered with the Asian International Arbitration Centre ("AIAC").

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Wong Poh Leng, Head of the Business, Human Rights and UN Sustainable Development Goals ("SDG") Working Group

**Wong Poh Leng** was admitted as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya in 1992. Her practice areas include both civil and criminal litigation, corporate and conveyancing.

Besides being a mediator registered with the Bar Council, she is also an adjudicator registered with the Asian International Arbitration Centre ("AIAC").



Sonya Liew Yee Aun, Head of the IT, AI and Privacy Working Group

**Sonya** practises at Y A Liew & Partners. She obtained her LLB (Hons) degree from the University of London and her LLM in Information Technology and Telecommunications Law from the University of Strathclyde.

This webinar is free of charge, but **advanced registration is required for all members.**

Upon successful registration, a link to the webinar will be emailed to registered participants only. Registration will close on **9 Dec 2021 (Thursday) at 9:00 am.**

Please note that **no** additional registration will be accepted once the closing date has passed, or if the Webinar is full (whichever comes first).

## A Step-By-Step Guide to Join a Webinar via Zoom

Webinar via Zoom is an initiative by the Bar Council during the Movement Control Order.

Continue learning even while at home. We're here to inspire you, connect with you and learn with you. This guide will show you how to join a webinar smoothly.

**01**  
**For seamless streaming, download the Zoom app.**

You will be given a webinar ID and a password to join the webinar once your registration has been confirmed.

**02**  
**Log in to Zoom, and provide your username.**

For Members of the Bar or pupils in chambers, use the format below for identification purposes when prompted: **Full name (as per NRIC) | Bar Council membership number or petition number.**

For non-Members, provide your full name only.

**03**  
**Set up your space.**

Find a spot which is comfortable and free from background noises. You may use an earpiece with microphone for clarity. Having a strong internet connection is equally important.

**04**  
**Please raise your questions only during the Question-and-Answer session.**

Please take note that no speaking is allowed when the webinar is taking place.

If you wish to raise a question, please type in the Q&A box and the speaker will respond accordingly.

**05**  
**Please do not do these**

Sharing screen recording and webinar ID and password on links, and reproducing the content of the webinar on any platform.

Any unregistered person may be removed without prior notice and no CPD point will be awarded. Failure to adhere to this may result in disciplinary action by the Bar Council.



Should you have any enquiries, please contact:  
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