



**G25 Statement Welcoming the Government's Decision Not to Take Over the  
Private Member's Bill to Amend the Syariah Court's (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act  
1965 or RUU 355**

The G25 welcomes the announcement by YAB Prime Minister that the government will not take over the Private Member's Bill to amend the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965 or RUU 355, in line with the principle of consensus in the Barisan National. This decision is very much in line with the spirit of consultation and mutual understanding amongst the BN parties.

However, we note that the Bill is still on Parliament's Legislative List and can be tabled at any time during the Parliamentary sitting. We appeal to the Government and the Honourable MPs not to support RUU 355 as it is not only a divisive issue in multi-racial Malaysia but is a first step towards the implementation of hudud. Any legislation that alienates our fellow Malaysians in Sabah and Sarawak and which makes the minority races feel that they do not count, is bound to create frictions in the Federation, adding to the fears which many already have on the future of Malaysia as a constitutional democracy. Malaysians are already asking what has happened to the five principles of Rukunegara which was meant to unite the various communities into a happy and peaceful nation.

Economists and international experts who have studied Malaysia's remarkable economic development over a relatively short period to become one of the most advanced economies in the developing world, have always cited its system of law and administration as a key factor in attracting foreign and local investors to do business here. It is a system which foreigners are familiar with because it is similar to what they find in their own countries. Their presence is most important for the transfer of knowledge and technology so that Malaysians can benefit by developing our own skills to compete in the world market.

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Our country will be taking a big risk with foreign and local investors if we have a system of law which accords differential treatment among races. This will be confusing and create uncertainty to investors who have to protect and ensure fair treatment of their investments, in addition to being misaligned to a modern way of life. Higher priority should be given towards improving the standards of governance and to strengthen our public institutions so as to promote integrity and clean administration in the country. These governing qualities are far more important to the country than policing the moral behaviour of Muslims and punishing them like criminals. The personal sins of Muslims do not hurt others in the society or the economy, but the corruption and financial mismanagement among politicians and civil servants together with the perception that the institutions of justice favour those in power, are harmful to society. These are the social diseases that can cause economies to collapse and the people to rise up against their rulers.

We therefore urge the Government and Members of Parliament not to support the PAS Bill and instead to devote its energy to dealing with the unresolved problems surrounding 1MDB, so that the country can turn its attention to deal with the bigger issues facing the economy, in particular, the weak ringgit and the rising cost of living. We do not need the PAS Bill to divide the nation at a time when all Malaysians should stand together to face the challenges confronting our country.

**G25**

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