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MEDIA RELEASE

MEF URGES EMPLOYERS TO ESTABLISH ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AT TO INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

PETALING JAYA: MEF President Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman, P.J.N., J.P., states that “Based on the statistics PWDs represent a huge pool of talents but they are not yet fully tapped. In Malaysia about 11% of the population above 18 years are PWDs. However, the PWDs registered with the relevant authorities are 637,537 and less than 12,000 of the registered PWDs are in employment. The government is encouraging the hiring of PWDs, and has put in place a 1% quota of employment to be given to the PWDs. Based on the allocated 1% of employment quota to PWDs there should be at least 162,000 PWDs in employment. Based on the statistics PWDs represent a huge pool of talents but they are not yet fully tapped.”

“Employers need to facilitate employment of PWDs by providing seamless accessibility and productive work set-up for PWDs. These cover digital support in terms of tech tools to help them communicate and produce the required jobs, physical support by providing ample space for them to have access to office facilities and well-being support. Employers should nurture high level of openness and awareness towards the granting of reasonable workplace facilities for PWDs. Process reengineering includes making hiring process more accessible, reworking job description to focus on essential criteria, and making performance management policy more flexible. Apart from the working environment that facilitates PWDs, some adjustments may be required to the job itself. These flexibilities will have positive impact on job satisfaction and is critical in attracting and retaining PWDs at work. The aim of the HR policy is to increase fairness and equity across the board by ensuring everyone is paid equally based on what the employee brings to the role, rather than based on gender, race, or other factors.” Adds Datuk Dr Syed Hussain.

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Datuk Dr Syed Hussain states further that “Employers should consider implementing safe transition platforms for PWDs talents to assimilate in the workplace and accelerate their participation at the workplace and in the wider community. It is indeed timely to build an organization that is Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive (DEI). The workplace is fundamentally changing. Technological, societal, and environmental shifts are reshaping how employers engage with people, customers and communities facilities that employers should have both physical and emotional PWDs friendly facilities in the work place. Today many companies do not focus in having these PWDs friendly facilities at the work place. Employers should also advocate flexi working conditions for PWDs staff. Employers and businesses should seriously look into having better facilities both physical and emotional for PWDs and their clients.

To survive in the face of increasing disruptions, the employer needs talent that matches the complexity of the world it operates in. To thrive, the employer needs diversity, equity and inclusion to unlock the power and potential of all talents including PWDs. DEI is not just nice-to-have. It is a critical component for organisations to grow and meet the challenges of everchanging business environment.”

Malaysia enacted the Persons with Disabilities Act in 2008. Under the Act Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) have equal access to public facilities, healthcare services, and recreational activities. The Act established the National Council for Persons with Disabilities which among others promotes employment of (PWDs).

Malaysia ratified the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, stating that “Malaysia acknowledges that the principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity as provided in articles 3 (b), 3 (e) and 5 (2) of the said Convention are vital in ensuring full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to

promote respect for their inherent dignity, which shall be applied and interpreted on the basis of disability and on equal basis with others.

Under budget 2023 employers employing PWDs are given incentives, at a rate of RM600 per month for a three-month period, subject to applications being submitted starting 1 April 2023, for new hires beginning 1 January 2023. Remuneration paid to certified disabled employees with a Disabled Person's Card (or Kad OKU) qualifies for double deduction. The incentive was introduced in YA 1982. The disabled employee must be certified in writing by the Department of Social Welfare as a disabled person. Under the Income Tax (Deductions For The Employment of Disabled Persons) Rules 1982 [P.U.(A) 73/1982] and Income Tax (Deductions For The Employment of Disabled Persons) (Amendment) Rules 2019 [P.U.(A) 204/2019], an additional deduction is allowed. Employers that train non employees PWDs are entitled to claim Double Deduction. This is pursuant to the Income Tax (Deductions For Approved Training) Rules 1992 [P.U. (A) 61/1992] and Income Tax (Deductions For Approved Training) (Amendment) Rules 1995 [P.U. (A) 111/1995],

MEF is of the view that the administrative procedures for submitting and approving double tax deduction claims should be reviewed and simplified to encourage more employers to offer employment and provide skills training for PWDs.

For further information, contact the MEF Secretariat at 03-7498 7200 or email mef-hq@mef.org.my.

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