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PERSEKUTUAN MAJIKAN-MAJIKAN MALAYSIA

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## MEDIA RELEASE

# MEF thanks the YAB PM Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri bin Yaakob, and Datuk Seri M. Saravanan, Minister Human Resources for Initiatives to enhance Business with USA

PETALING JAYA: MEF thanks the YAB PM Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri bin Yaakob, for raising several issues affecting Malaysia's businesses including the issues on forced labour to the USA President. The YAB PM raised many issues on global Safety and Security and focus on the most important issues that will bring benefits to our nation and businesses.

The Malaysian government and the United States through its Department of Customs and Border Protection (US CBP) agreed to work together to address the issues on forced labour through the establishment of a working committee.

MEF President Dato' Dr. Syed Hussain Syed Husman J.P. stated that "MEF fully supports the initiatives taken by the government to explore more business opportunities. The initiative to set up a working committee with the US CBP to address the issues of forced labour will be able to resolve some of the outstanding Withhold Release Order (WRO) imposed on some of the Malaysian exporters to USA. Allegations of forced labour practices had resulted in the issuance of WRO by US CBP against some of the Malaysian companies exporting their products to the USA especially those in the rubber glove and palm oil industries."

"We need proactive ministries which are concerned with our economy and the future of our businesses. With the establishment of the working committee, it would be easier to deal with the outstanding issues with the USA and the various related agencies. These efforts taken by YB Datuk Seri M. Saravanan the Minister of Human Resources in conjunction with the YAB PM's visit to the USA is indeed timely" adds Dato' Dr. Syed Hussain.

The working committee would focus on exchange of information, including formulating policies that would support the country's initiatives towards combatting forced labour, would meet every three months. The US CBP is expected to make a working visit to Malaysia at the end of May and hold a workshop with the country's industry players. The workshop will shed light on matters related to elements of forced labour that should be avoided by industry players so that their products will not be banned from entering the United States market. Datuk Seri M. Saravanan's working visit to the USA had opened up opportunities for bilateral cooperation in curbing forced labour as well as establishing a platform for the United States to better understand the challenges faced by Malaysia in tackling forced labour and child labour issues.

Dato' Dr. Syed Hussain states further that "Setting up the working committee to deal with the issues on forced labour directly with the US CBP is the best approach. We also appreciate the efforts of the US embassy in Malaysia to resolve outstanding issues on forced labour."

For further information, please contact the MEF Secretariat at 03-7955 7778 or fax at 03-7955 9008 or email [mef-hq@mef.org.my](mailto:mef-hq@mef.org.my).

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