



CONCEPT NOTE

FORUM AND BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN SARAWAK: Promoting Responsible Business Conduct and Safeguarding Public Participation

Date : 24 September 2026 (Thursday)
Time : 8.30 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.
Venue : Sheraton Kuching Hotel, Sarawak

BACKGROUND

The National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAPBHR) 2025–2030 provides a national framework to promote responsible business conduct and strengthen the protection of human rights in the context of business activities in Malaysia. Among others, the NAPBHR emphasises the importance of Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD), meaningful stakeholder engagement, access to justice and effective remedy, as well as greater awareness and capacity among businesses and relevant stakeholders.

The implementation of the NAPBHR requires consideration of the different economic, social, environmental and community contexts across Malaysia. In Sarawak, business and development activities may intersect with issues relating to Indigenous Peoples, native customary rights, land, natural resources, environmental protection and community livelihoods. These issues highlight the importance of meaningful engagement between businesses, Government, communities and other stakeholders in preventing and addressing potential human rights impacts.

Against this backdrop, there is a need to better understand the awareness, experiences and challenges relating to Business and Human Rights (BHR) in Sarawak, including how businesses and other stakeholders currently identify and address human rights risks arising from business activities.

The proposed programme therefore seeks to provide a platform for stakeholders in Sarawak to share perspectives, experiences and challenges, and to discuss practical approaches to promoting responsible business conduct. The discussions will include HRDD, meaningful stakeholder engagement, Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), grievance mechanisms and other good practices that can help prevent and address business-related human rights concerns at an early stage.

Building on these discussions, the programme will also examine safeguarding public participation and business-related Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs), including their potential implications for communities, Indigenous Peoples, civil society organisations and other stakeholders who raise concerns on matters of public interest. The discussion will consider the relationship between meaningful participation, dispute prevention, access to justice and effective remedy.

The programme will bring together Government, businesses, Indigenous Peoples, communities, legal practitioners, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders to promote dialogue, share good practices and identify practical recommendations to support the implementation of the NAPBHR 2025–2030 in Sarawak.

PURPOSE

The programme aims to provide a Sarawak-focused platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue on Business and Human Rights, with a view to understanding the current BHR landscape, identifying key challenges and sharing practical approaches to promote responsible business conduct and prevent business-related human rights concerns from escalating into disputes.

The programme will also provide an opportunity to discuss meaningful stakeholder engagement, FPIC, public participation, business-related SLAPPs and access to justice and remedy, with a view to identifying practical measures that can strengthen stakeholder protection and responsible business conduct in Sarawak.

OBJECTIVES

The programme seeks to:

1. Understand the BHR landscape in Sarawak, including the level of awareness, experiences and key human rights challenges arising from business activities;
2. Facilitate dialogue and experience-sharing among Government, businesses, Indigenous Peoples, communities, legal practitioners, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders;
3. Promote practical approaches to responsible business conduct, including HRDD, meaningful stakeholder engagement, FPIC and effective grievance mechanisms;
4. Identify good practices and challenges in preventing and addressing business-related human rights concerns and disputes in the Sarawak context;
5. Enhance understanding of public participation and business-related SLAPPs, including their potential implications for communities, Indigenous Peoples, environmental concerns and access to justice and remedy; and
6. Gather Sarawak-specific perspectives and recommendations to support the implementation of the NAPBHR 2025–2030, particularly in relation to responsible business conduct, stakeholder engagement and access to remedy.

PROGRAMME

PANEL DISCUSSION 1

BHR in Sarawak: Understanding the Landscape, Experiences and Challenges

The session aims to provide an overview of the Business and Human Rights landscape in Sarawak, including the level of awareness, experiences, key issues and challenges faced by businesses, communities and other relevant stakeholders, while fostering a common understanding of the application of BHR principles in the Sarawak context.

Moderator: Encik Kevin Geh, BHEUU JPM

Proposed Speakers:

1. Tuan Dahim Anak Nadot (Commissioner, SUHAKAM)
2. Encik Abang Mohd Iwawan bin Abg Narawi (METL Committee Member | Abang & Co)
3. Encik Fahmi Haris, Stakeholder Manager, Sarawak-Sabah Link Road Phase 2 (SSLR) Project)

PANEL DISCUSSION 2

Promoting Responsible Business Conduct: Sharing Good Practices

The session aims to facilitate the sharing of practical experiences, challenges and good practices in promoting responsible business conduct and preventing business-related human rights concerns from escalating into disputes, with particular focus on HRDD, meaningful stakeholder engagement, FPIC and effective grievance mechanisms.

Moderator: YBhg. Dato Dr. Punitha Silivarajoo, BHEUU JPM

Proposed Speakers:

1. Puan Melissa Chin Yoke Ling (METL Committee Member | Proforest Sdn. Bhd)
2. Puan Mary Anne K Baltazar (METL Committee Member | Anak Sabah)
3. Puan Muniwaza Juliana, Human Rights Commission Malaysia (SUHAKAM) (TBC)
4. TBC

OPEN ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Safeguarding Public Participation in Sarawak: Business-related SLAPPs, FPIC and Access to Remedy

The session aims to enhance understanding of business-related SLAPPs and their implications for public participation, Indigenous Peoples, communities and access to justice and remedy, while exploring the role of meaningful participation, FPIC and other practical measures in preventing disputes and safeguarding legitimate public participation.

Moderator: Encik Abang Mohd Iwawan bin Abg Narawi (METL Committee Member | Abang & Co)

Proposed Speakers:

1. YBhg. Dato' Mary Lim Thiam Suan (President of The AIAC Court of Arbitration | Former Federal Court Judge)
2. Puan Bibi Waheeda (Director of Legal, Metro Sdn Bhd)
3. Encik Kiu Jia Yaw (Lawyer specialising in Native Customary Rights [NCR] | Kiu&Co Advocates & Associates)
4. PACOS Trust (TBC)
5. TBC

PROGRAMME TENTATIVE

Time	Session
8.30 a.m. – 9.00 a.m.	Registration & Welcome Coffee
9.00 a.m. – 9.15 a.m.	Opening Remarks by YBhg. Datuk Zamri bin Misman Director-General Legal Affairs Division, Prime Minister's Department
9.15 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.	Panel Discussion 1: BHR in Sarawak: Understanding the Landscape, Experiences and Challenges Moderator: Encik Kevin Geh, BHEUU JPM Proposed Speakers: 1. Tuan Dahim Anak Nadot (Commissioner, SUHAKAM) 2. Encik Abang Mohd Iwawan bin Abg Narawi (METL Committee Member Abang & Co) 3. Encik Fahmi Haris, Stakeholder Manager, Sarawak-Sabah Link Road Phase 2 (SSLR2) Project) 4. TBC
10.00 a.m. – 10.45 a.m.	Panel Discussion 2: Promoting Responsible Business Conduct: Sharing Good Practices Moderator: YBhg. Dato Dr. Punitha Silivarajoo, BHEUU JPM Proposed Speakers: 1. Puan Melissa Chin Yoke Ling (METL Committee Member Proforest Sdn. Bhd) 2. Puan Mary Anne K Baltazar (METL Committee Member Anak Sabah) 3. Puan Muniwaza Juliana, Human Rights Commission Malaysia (SUHAKAM) (TBC) 4. TBC

Time	Session
10.45 a.m. – 11.00 a.m	Tea Break
11.00 a.m. – 11.45 a.m.	Open Roundtable Discussion: Safeguarding Public Participation in Sarawak: Business-related SLAPPs, FPIC and Access to Remedy Moderator: Encik Abang Mohd Iwawan bin Abg Narawi (METL Committee Member Abang & Co) Proposed Speakers: 1. YBhg. Dato' Mary Lim Thiam Suan (President of The AIAC Court of Arbitration Former Federal Court Judge) 2. Puan Bibi Waheeda (Director of Legal, Metro Sdn Bhd) 3. Encik Kiu Jia Yaw (Lawyer specialising in Native Customary Rights [NCR] Kiu&Co Advocates & Associates) 4. PACOS Trust (TBC) 5. TBC
12.00 p.m. – 1.00 p.m.	Lunch Break
1.00 p.m. – 2.00 p.m.	Closed-Door Summary: Key Recommendations and Proposed Next Steps
2.00 p.m.	Closing Remarks and End of Programme