

For immediate release

MEDIA STATEMENT

In Hung Parliament situation, IDEAS calls for policy and not patronage-based negotiations as basis of government formation

Kuala Lumpur, 20 November 2022: The Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) acknowledges that the 15th General Election (GE15) has resulted in a hung Parliament with no one political coalition winning a simple majority. As the coalitions begin to negotiate with each other to form a federal government, IDEAS strongly urges that the negotiations are based on policy and not patronage-type appointments to be distributed.

In a coalition of coalitions, it is widely expected that Cabinet, Chairs of Government-Linked Companies (GLC) and statutory body positions will need to be provided as a form of reward to the most number of senior party representatives as possible. Instead, IDEAS encourages the parties to negotiate on the grounds of laws and policies that are crucially needed to address both economic and institutional reforms for the future.

Commenting on the situation, IDEAS CEO Dr Tricia Yeoh said, “Forming the coalition government is the most urgent over the next few delicate days, and we would caution against money politics being used in this process, where smaller parties must exercise wisdom in using their kingmaker position and power. Also, important laws such as the Political Financing Act, Constituency Development Funds Act, Parliamentary Services Act, Fiscal Responsibility Act and Government Procurement Act are more urgent than ever, and we look forward to seeing parties state their strong position on these legislations that can truly transform the administration moving forward.”

Separately, IDEAS commends the largely anti-corruption messages that emerged during the GE15 campaign. “Evidently, voters in Malaysia are tired of the culture of corruption that has become deeply embedded within the administration and its ecosystem, and particularly the Malay electorate have chosen to stand their ground on this issue by turning to Perikatan Nasional as an alternative coalition. Thus, if we are to restore the pace of our country’s economic growth and development, addressing good governance will need to be an immediate priority of the government.

We look forward to seeing concrete plans following the National Anti-Corruption Plan (NACP) which expires in 2023. Evidently, bipartisanship in any future government will assure the most optimal outcomes when it comes to championing good governance, anti-corruption and institutional reforms. On this note, IDEAS congratulates many of the former members of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Political Financing, of which we were Secretariat, who have returned as Parliamentarians, and looks forward to reconvening the group, including new

members, in the immediate future to expedite the Bill’s tabling in Parliament”, commented Dr Yeoh.

Finally, IDEAS also cautions against race and religion being politically utilised by the government that is eventually formed. Malaysia is ultimately a multi-ethnic, multi-religious society. Taking into serious consideration the varied needs and expectations of all ethnic and religious communities, including those within Sabah and Sarawak, it is absolutely crucial for a government vision that emphasises inclusiveness, understanding and empathy for the other. During the campaign, Malaysians were unfortunately witness to several unnecessarily racially-tinged messages that may have infringed upon the nation’s founding values of unity and harmony.

Concluding, Dr Yeoh said, “GE15 has brought Malaysia many interesting surprises, and we congratulate all the winning Members of Parliament, many of whom are fresh faces who represent a sense of political renewal across the board. Over the next few days, we look forward to a rules-based process of forming a federal government, in which the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong will play an important role in ensuring. IDEAS hopes that the conclusion of this will finally provide the political and economic stability Malaysia desperately needs in order to make serious policy decisions for its future over the next five years.”

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About IDEAS

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