



PRESS STATEMENT

SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN COMPANIES COMMISSION OF MALAYSIA AND UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND & THE LAUNCHING OF COMPANIES COMMISSION OF MALAYSIA'S BEST BUSINESS PRACTICE CIRCULAR NO. 1/2010

The Companies Commission of Malaysia (SSM) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in furtherance to their mutual understanding to collaborate in the area of corporate responsibility. The event also saw the launching of the inaugural issue of SSM's Best Business Practice Circular (BBPC) jointly developed by SSM and UNICEF. The signing of the MOU was witnessed by Y.B Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri bin Yaakob, Minister of Domestic Trade, Co-operatives and Consumerism. He later launched the inaugural issue of the Best Business Practice Circular 1/2010 on the Establishment of a Child Care Centre at the Work Place by Business and Corporate Employers.

UNICEF is part of the United Nations, established by the United Nations General Assembly on 11 December 1946¹. It has been working with the Malaysian Government since 1954 by supporting programmes in health,

¹ It was initially known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund established for the purpose of providing food, clothing and health care for the children in Europe who were facing famine and diseases following the aftermath of the World War II.

nutrition, water and sanitation, formal and non-formal education as well as services for deprived children in poor urban areas.

UNICEF has signed a Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) with the Government of Malaysia which is currently in force (1 January 2008 until 31 December 2010), with the goal to reduce disparities in health and education, reduce violence against children and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS. This CPAP which opened doors for UNICEF to work with government agencies and the corporate sector has led to the collaboration between SSM and UNICEF and further, the signing of the MOU today.

The signing of the MOU represents a milestone for SSM as it represents the first time for the agency to enter into an official arrangement with an international body as well as an agency of the United Nations. The MOU documents both SSM's and UNICEF's understanding to work together towards enhancing the well-being of children and women in Malaysia and promoting their survival, development and protection through the promotion of the concept of corporate responsibility practices amongst the corporate and business community. Pursuant to this MOU, both parties would be focusing on the promotion of greater awareness of child rights issues, the promotion of philanthropic or community activities, carrying out research and development on related issues and dissemination and monitoring of child-friendly business practices within the corporate and business environment in Malaysia.

The MOU will serve as a precursor to a whole line of activities to be carried out jointly by SSM and UNICEF on a collaboration basis which include:

- (i) Conducting a feasibility study on the voluntary reporting of corporate responsibility by all companies and businesses in Malaysia and the relevant reporting mechanism;
- (ii) Organizing seminars to promote and enhance awareness on child rights issues and child-friendly business practices within the corporate sector;
- (iii) Publication of articles; and
- (iv) Carrying out research on relevant issues such as the current status of child-friendly and corporate responsibility practices in the Malaysian corporate environment.

In addition to the MOU signed, SSM also today unveiled its inaugural issue of the BBPC. The issuance of the BBPC is targeted at selected issues which are relevant to the corporate and business sector towards striving for a sustainable corporate and business pursuit in the country such as efficient energy usage, ethical transactions, recycling, the conservation of the environment and others. BBPC 1/2010 focuses on the establishment of child care centers at the work place. It contains general guidelines for the private sector employers on the setting up of child care centers for their employees. The development and issuance of BBPC 1/2010 also seeks to contribute to the development of a high-income economy that is socially inclusive and sustainable by promoting a family-friendly work environment and to ensure children's early development needs are met.

The setting up of child care centers at the work place is a highly relevant endeavor and is consistent with the general principles of corporate responsibility found in various national agenda framework including Vision 2020, the Ninth Malaysian Plan, the 2010 National Budget and the

upcoming Tenth Malaysian Plan. In Ninth Malaysian Plan², both the public and private sectors were encouraged to establish child care facilities at the work place through the provision of various incentives such as grants and tax rebates. In the recent 2010 Budget speech by YAB Dato' Sri Najib Razak, he had called for all ministries and Government departments to provide day care and education centers. Through the issuance of BBPC 1/2010, such call is now extended to the private sector.

The collaboration between SSM and UNICEF is also consistent with SSM's Corporate Responsibility Agenda (SSM CR Agenda) which was launched on 30 June 2009. The SSM CR Agenda outlines SSM's approach towards promoting and advocating the practice of corporate responsibility amongst the corporate and business community. SSM believes that it is vital for the private sector to start inculcating corporate responsibility as part of their culture towards ensuring business viability and sustainability within the 21st century business and corporate environment.

COMPANIES COMMISSION OF MALAYSIA
28 January 2010

² Chapter 15 (Fostering Family and Community Development)