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PRESS STATEMENT

IDEAS launches Blueprint for Reforms that outlines priority areas in reforming Malaysia's institutions

Kuala Lumpur, 28 February 2024: Today, the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) launched a blueprint entitled “Reforming Our Institutions: Blueprint for Reforms.” The blueprint was developed through engagement with multiple Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), experts and Members of Parliament in an effort to identify reform priorities over the next three years, as well as interlinkages between specific reform initiatives.

Recognising that there are a slew of institutional reforms that Malaysia must implement across different areas, IDEAS, together with our CSO partners, has put together a visualisation of 13 individual reforms, which have been compiled into one image. This IDEAS Blueprint may be a useful reference for the government as it decides how to prioritise institutional reforms in the next three years.

Together with other CSO partners, we echo the urgent need for the Madani government to produce a roadmap delineating all the institutional reforms that the government intends to enact with a clear timeline to ensure accountability and assure the public of its commitment.

The IDEAS blueprint places as the highest priority 13 reforms in total, which fall into four categories. Achieving reforms in these 13 areas would strengthen the four pillars, which would in turn achieve the two overarching goals of “Competitive and fair democracy for all” and “A clean, transparent and accountable governance system”. These pillars are:

1. Electoral and Political System
2. Government Oversight and Transparency
3. Independent and Strong Parliament
4. Independent and Strong Institutions

IDEAS stresses the need to streamline reform efforts, foster a collaborative approach within the CSO network to avoid duplication and ensure a more effective push for reform. Considering that advocating reforms requires a significant commitment in terms of effort, determination and resources, a strategic approach is imperative for prioritising urgent reforms effectively.

“One of the main challenges IDEAS has faced in our effort to push for the Political Financing Act is in situating political finance reform in the midst of other much needed reform initiatives. Political financing reform cannot be accomplished in isolation, as no reforms work in a vacuum. In fact, many reforms are interconnected, which is precisely why this Blueprint is so crucial. Many other reform efforts must be undertaken simultaneously, if the Political Financing Act is to be meaningful and impactful,” stated Dr Tricia Yeoh, CEO of IDEAS.

“We highly recommend that the relevant government departments such as the Legal Affairs Department (BHEUU, Bahagian Hal Ehwal Undang-Undang) and the Attorney General’s Chambers (AGC) conduct meaningful consultation with civil society and other experts to share their views on the various institutional reforms being planned for.

Specifically, we express hope that the Parliamentary Special Select Committee (PSSC) on Human Rights, Election and Institutional Reforms will be closely involved in the process of drafting and amending any laws needed in the reform process. This is especially the case for the Political Financing Act, which has been IDEAS’ priority over the last few years. The PSSC’s involvement is important in ensuring the contents of various versions of the PFA, which requires bipartisan support, is compared with each other. This legislation will fundamentally transform Malaysia’s political system and make it more transparent and accountable. We also stand ready to assist the government in effectively implementing these critical institutional reforms,” concluded Dr Yeoh.

We also want to thank the following CSOs and individuals who have contributed to this Blueprint for Reforms:

- a) Agora Society
- b) BERSIH
- c) Coalition for Business Integrity Berhad (CBI)
- d) Maha Balakrishnan
- e) Projek SAMA
- f) Rasuah Busters
- g) Sinar Project
- h) Transparency International-Malaysia (TI-M)
- i) Wo Chang Xi

For more information on the **Blueprint for Reforms**, click [HERE](#)

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About IDEAS

The Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) is a nonprofit research institute, dedicated to promoting solutions to public policy challenges, focussing on three overarching missions – advancing a competitive economy, ensuring trust in institutions and promoting an inclusive Malaysia. IDEAS is Malaysia's first independent think tank, free of personal interests and partisan influences. For more information, visit www.ideas.org.my.