

New Malaysia Declaration

Preamble

The DAP National Conference on 5th May 2019 is the first gathering of our National Delegates – the highest decision-making body of the DAP – since Pakatan Harapan won the 14th General Election on 9th May 2018. On this occasion, DAP adopts the New Malaysia Declaration to outline the directions to guide the party forward and to deal with the challenges ahead.

Previous declarations were the Setapak Declaration (1967), Petaling Jaya Declaration (1981, when DAP turned 25), Tanjong Declaration (1991) Shah Alam Declaration (2012), and DAP@50 Declaration (2016, when DAP turned 50).

Other policy documents discussing specific issues include the Declaration on Cultural Democracy (1968), DAP Wanita Tanjong Declaration (1992); DAPSY Declaration (1992); Kulai Anti-Corruption Declaration (1993), Gelang Patah (Issues facing ethnic Indians) Declaration (2013), and Bintulu (Issues facing Sara-wak) Declaration (2014).

We, the National Delegates of the DAP, here assembled in Shah Alam, Selangor, on 5th May 2019, hereby in the brief words of a Declaration reaffirm the visions, guiding policies and principles of the party, in facing the challenges of New Malaysia, a year after being in power as part of the Pakatan Harapan Government.

1. DAP as a responsible coalition partner in power

The DAP was founded on 18th March 1966. It was only after 52 years of very difficult and often painful struggle that the DAP and our Pakatan Harapan allies managed to topple Barisan Nasional for the first time in history in 2018. Thanks to the people of Malaysia, Pakatan Harapan is now the government.

Wednesday 9th May 2018 was a peaceful uprising of the people. Since the 12th General Election, DAP aspires to be a responsible partner in power based on the tenets of democracy, justice, rule of law, integrity, human dignity and freedom.

We are guided by the following tenets:

- That the DAP wishes to be in power not for power's sake, not for money, not for self-gratification, but for a better Malaysia that we can all be proud of, on behalf of the people and for the people, inspired by shared ideals of social democracy; and
- That the DAP wishes to be in power through coalition building as well as to be a responsible coalition partner. No party can rule alone in Malaysia.

A year after GE14, we acknowledge that building a New Malaysia together is an uphill task that we have to endeavour together with patience and perseverance.

2. **Steady economic growth**

The economy is going strong and the Government projects the 2019 gross domestic products (GDP) to expand a further 4.9% after expanding 4.7% last year. Clarity and consistency in government policy have engendered growing confidence in the business community, capital markets and investors.

Institutional reforms are important to build the right foundation for Malaysia to reclaim its place among the leading economies in Asia as well as to bring benefits to the people. The country can no longer depend on mega projects; it is the quality of growth that must be the focus.

DAP needs to ensure that the Pakatan Harapan government generates high-quality growth and creates quality jobs. As a member of the Pakatan Harapan coalition, DAP must focus on national unity; shared prosperity that provides equal opportunities in jobs, education and business; clean government and fighting corruption; respecting rule of law and justice for all; good governance that is people-centric and performance-oriented; and protecting the environment and the basic human rights of every Malaysian to live with dignity.

3. **A new non-racial Malaysian narrative**

We need to build a new narrative beyond racial framing for New Malaysia that brings every Malaysian together to scale greater height as a nation. Pakatan Harapan needs to rise to the occasion to provide a moderate vision to bring all ethnic groups together. And we must have a genuine, sincere and strong cooperation among the people of Sabah, Sarawak and Semenanjung. The centre must hold.

In the Shah Alam Declaration in 2012 and DAP@50 Declaration in 2016, DAP reaffirmed the following tenets:

- To defend and uphold our system of Parliamentary Democracy and Constitutional Monarchy with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong as the Head of State as well as Malay Rulers; and upholding the Federal Constitution as the supreme law and to honour it in the spirit of Merdeka 1957 and the Malaysia Agreement 1963;
- To preserve the special position of the Malays and Bumiputeras while protecting the rights of other ethnic groups as enshrined in Article 153 of the Federal Constitution;
- To safeguard the position of Islam as the religion of the Federation while simultaneously championing the freedom of other religions to be practiced in peace and harmony, as enshrined in Article 3 and 11 of the Federal Constitution;
- To dignify Bahasa Melayu as the National Language as enshrined in Article 152 of the Federal Constitution while encouraging the use and study of other mother tongues.

But beyond safeguarding the constitutional guarantees, Pakatan Harapan needs to offer Malaysia a New Vision. This vision has an important role for DAP to play.

DAP does not want to be boxed in as a non-Malay party or a Chinese party. In DAP's fold we have Malays, Chinese, Indians, Kadazandusuns, Dayaks, Orang Asli leaders and members. We have had members from all races since our inception in 1966. Lest we forget, since our first GE in 1969, Ibrahim Singgeh became DAP's first Malay state assemblyman for Tapah Road constituency.

Our members and grassroots leaders need to think beyond representing non-Malays. This must be the same spirit we hold for our allies in Pakatan Harapan that they too must think beyond merely representing Malay interests. In fact, we must think beyond Semenanjung interests to enable the sharing of new vision with our comrades in Sabah and Sarawak.

- New Malaysia needs to reassure all Malaysians that our political, economic and cultural futures are guaranteed. We must shed the belief that we are going to be dominated by a certain race. That is a lie, and that only serves the interest of the racist politicians.
- New Malaysia deserves a new practicable grand vision to show the path for all Malaysians into the future.

4. **International Solidarity**

While focusing on Malaysian issues, the DAP has never wavered in international matters. With current tensions over terrorism, DAP has expressed its solidarity with the Sri Lankan and New Zealand people over a series of bombings and shootings against civilians.

All nations and all people should stand together for peace, respect of religious freedom and diversity, tolerance, harmony and compassion. Human civilization progresses not through hate but love for each other as human beings.

We Malaysians must work together against forces of disunity, racism and religious extremism by showing our preference for co-operation not conflict, consultation instead of confrontation and an inclusive shared society rather than an exclusive separate society.

To reiterate our stand, DAP subscribes to the ideal of solidarity as it is the strongest weapon in the struggle against oppression and injustice, and it embraces all the peoples of the world. All who subscribe to these fundamental values are our allies and our friends against tyranny, dictatorship, corruption, exploitation and oppression.

We are consistent in expressing our international solidarity with peoples fighting for democratic rights, including the plight of the Palestinian people.

5. **Fulfilling Promises, Marching Towards the Future**

The great visionary Mahatma Gandhi said, “Be the change that you wish to see in the world”. Change is easier said than done. DAP needs to transform to face the challenges of New Malaysia and to be an effective and responsible partner in the ruling Pakatan Harapan coalition.

The process of rebuilding Malaysia, as we have stated in our 50th anniversary declaration in 2016, must involve serious efforts in setting up a clean set of institutions which include clean, fair and credible elections, a world class parliament that represents the voices and concerns of all Malaysians, a free media, an independent judiciary, and a neutral and effective civil service.

We can remind ourselves and fellow Malaysians time and again that Pakatan Harapan is the only coalition party that can represent all Malaysians, regardless of demography or geography.

Besides institutional and democratic reforms, we need to do more to improve people’s lives. We must strive to deliver on our election promises as well as provide jobs, improve household incomes and control the cost of living so that the people can enjoy a better life.

DAP is committed to help the Pakatan Harapan government deliver this promise to the rakyat as well as fulfill the promises made in our PH General Election Manifesto. We do not fear to be alone in representing all races and all religions to provide the political stability needed for economic development. Let us unite as one Bangsa Malaysia and let us take care of each other.