Majlis Perundingan Malaysia Agama Buddha, Kristian, Hindu, Sikh dan Tao

Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism

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PRESS STATEMENT

MCCBCHST: PROPOSED SOLIDARITY WEEK IN SCHOOLS SHOULD BE REVIEWED AS SCHOOLS SHOULD REMAIN PLACES OF LEARNING

The MCCBCHST sympathises with the suffering of the people in Gaza brought about by an armed conflict, but subjecting students to take sides in such a complex situation of which even many adults do not understand is definitely not right and counter-productive.

2. Schools should remain neutral places for learning and centres of excellence in education. This is a place for promoting moral values, peace and solidarity. Children may not understand the conflict amongst nations in Gaza and the programme to show videos of the conflict, death and violence may have a negative effect on the them.

3. The MCCBCHST is concerned with the pain and suffering caused by the war to civilians resulting in deaths. It is even more painful as many innocent civilians, including children and women, have been killed. We do not support use of violence by either side to the conflict. We therefore call for peaceful resolution to this Israel-Hamas/Palestine conflict and immediate ceasefire so that food and medical supplies could be delivered to the thousands of displaced civilians in Gaza.

4. Videos has appeared showing teachers carrying toy rifles in schools before assembled students and mimicked the Palestinian armed conflict. Other videos show that some students too carried toy guns and covered their faces in the style of Palestinian fighters. Here, there is danger that the students may be influenced towards militancy.

5. We therefore call upon the Ministry of Education to review its call to hold Solidarity with Palestine week in schools. This may be seen as taking sides and develop into a racial and religious issue. Schools should be kept free from global conflicts as these young and impressionable minds are unable to comprehend. We reiterate our call for a peaceful resolution to the Israel-Hamas/Palestinian conflict.

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Statement Signed by:

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