



**PERSATUAN ALUMNI PEGAWAI TADBIR DAN DIPLOMATIK**  
*Administrative And Diplomatic Officers' Association*

**ASPIRATIONS FOR TN50:**

**VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM  
PERSATUAN ALUMNI PEGAWAI TADBIR & DIPLOMATIK**

## ASPIRATIONS FOR TN50:

### VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PERSATUAN ALUMNI PEGAWAI TADBIR DAN DIPLOMATIK

1. The Forum on TN50 organized by the *Persatuan Alumni Pegawai Tadbir dan Diplomatik* (Alumni PTD) on 28 November 2017, with a follow-up discussion on 13 December 2017, was of the view that, to be comprehensive and all-encompassing, TN50 (2021-2050) should be drawn up using both the bottom-up and top-down approaches. Towards this end, the following should be taken into consideration:
  - 1.1. **TN50 must not be merely political rhetoric.** It is for the future of the country and, therefore, it must be holistic and substantive and critical issues must not be glossed over. To be meaningful and have any significant impact, TN50 must comprise 'brave policy statements' that will address **ALL** issues that are of concern to **ALL** Malaysians.
  - 1.2. A comprehensive **review/evaluation of Vision 2020 must be undertaken** to determine its achievements and shortcomings before drawing-up TN50.
  - 1.3. In line with the concept of 1Malaysia, **TN50 must adhere to the principle of inclusiveness**, not only to issues among races but also within races. There is a need for clear policies to address and eliminate the feeling among some sections of society that they are being side-lined, marginalised or displaced. A fundamental prerequisite for the success of TN50 is national unity. Thus, all policies, programmes and activities must have national unity as its ultimate goal.
  - 1.4. TN50 must have **sustainable development as a clear objective** in view of its national and international implications. Incidents, such as landslides and floods, cannot be seen as acts of God. Deforestation and reforestation planning is critical to meet international standards.
  - 1.5. The focus of TN50 should not be mainly on economic growth, that is, trying to achieve a high-income nation. **There is a need for balanced**

**development where economic growth is accompanied by social restructuring** to reduce income disparities and unfair distribution of wealth among the people.

- 1.6. The Education Policy must be reviewed after in-depth studies to ensure that it meets current and future needs for the country to remain competitive. **Constant and unnecessary changes to the education policy and programmes must be avoided.** The Government must, ultimately, move towards single stream schools after reviewing and resolving the push and pull factors both in national and vernacular schools. Educational institutions should impart technical as well as soft skills to their students. This will reduce the problem of growing graduate unemployment.
- 1.7. The country must reduce and, eventually, **totally eliminate its dependence on foreign workers** and the Government must draw up a roadmap for that purpose. Having such a high proportion of foreign workers to local workers is undesirable and can lead to critical social problems. Employers tend to take advantage of cheap foreign labour rather than employ the more expensive local labour and, in the process, prevent the country from moving up the value-chain towards higher productivity. The use of new technology, such as IBS, in the building industry should be made mandatory. Where foreign labour is required, the system to employ them must be made simple and easy. At the same time, an effective regulatory system must be put in place to ensure that foreign workers return to their country of origin when their term expires. As a long term measure, it is necessary to consider giving additional incentives to local labour to enter the job market.
- 1.8. It is imperative that **TN50 be based on universal values** that are acceptable to a wider section of the population. In fact, more emphasis must be given to issues of good governance, integrity and moral values among politicians, civil servants and the private sector. It has been noted that, despite the emphasis on universal and Islamic values and the establishment/strengthening of institutions (such as the MACC, placement of Integrity Officers in government agencies and the Integrity Institute), it is evident that the country has regressed rather than

progressed in the elimination of corrupt practices and abuse in providing service to the rakyat.

- 1.9. Implementation of TN50 requires **constant monitoring to ensure its success** in achieving its objectives. There is a need to factor in annual reviews, not only by the government, but by NGOs as well.
  - 1.10. The Government **must address the issue of urban poverty**. There has been a significant shift in population from rural to urban areas. Poverty, which has been a bane of the rural sector, has now become an increasingly serious issue in urban areas as well. The trend can and must be reversed by providing rural areas with good amenities, employment opportunities, medical and recreational facilities (as in some developed countries) to reduce rural-urban migration. At the same time, new approaches and strategies are needed to deal with urban poverty
  - 1.11. TN50 must consider **the formulation of more effective policies, programmes and activities** to eliminate the following social ills:
    - a. Dependency syndrome, to increase competitiveness among the population.
    - b. Child abuse and child abandonment.
    - c. Drug addiction, crime and juvenile delinquency.
2. The six megatrends that are rapidly changing the world we live in are urbanization, ageing society, digitalisation, resource scarcity, geopolitical shift and societal change. Therefore, the success of TN50 depends on good and effective planning that takes into consideration these trends. The Alumni PTD Forum decided to focus on two aspects, the ageing population and the civil service, both of which are pertinent to its members. First, they are senior citizens and, second, they are retired senior civil servants with vast and varied experiences.

### **Ageing Population**

3. Our population is expected to increase from 32 million in 2017 to 42 million in 2050 with the percentage of population 65 and older increasing from 5% to more than 15%. There is a need, therefore, to prepare for an ageing population as it

will have implications on healthcare, social safety and retirement savings apart from a shrinking labour force. In this regard, the B40 group will also need special attention. Among other things, it is recommended that the Government:

- 3.1. Review and standardise pre-retirement training for public servants to make it more useful (for example, like the training provided for the retiring members of the armed forces) to seek employment (self or otherwise) after retirement. A new framework that incorporates policies, laws and mechanisms is urgently required. For example, the Human Resource Development Fund can be used to finance such pre-retirement training whilst relevant existing agencies can fund retirees to start business ventures.
- 3.2. Consider the need to have a policy framework on housing for the aged. For example, PRIMA houses that are smaller and fully equipped to meet the needs of the aged could be sold to retirees who will want to move from bigger to smaller houses. The Government can work with the private sector to build affordable retirement homes in the form of retirement communities or resorts with all the support facilities for the aged. The local authorities may have to waive certain requirements to make the homes more affordable. The policy framework should also define the role of the pension fund and the Employees Provident Fund in supporting such a plan.
- 3.3. The Government should also identify all the existing facilities for the aged (such as old folk's home, day care centres, etc.) managed by its agencies and evaluate the facilities and services they offer, their conditions, their utilization and acceptance by their clients, with the intention of ensuring that they meet specific required standards. The Government should also consider the expansion of such facilities and services to a larger number of the aged and publicise their availability as well as promote the need and suitability for them in the long term from a social, cultural and religious perspective. Examples and experiences in other countries should be studied and adopted where suitable.
- 3.4. Identify suitable employment opportunities for retirees to continue working (as a source of income and to keep them occupied and avoid possible health problems). There may also be a need to amend the labour laws

and get the support of the private sector. The aged can also be trained to take advantage of the developments in digitalisation.

- 3.5. The Government should also provide incentives to train more locals to become caregivers for the aged. This will reduce the increasing dependency on foreign workers.
- 3.6. There is a need to focus on preventive rather than reactive health care and this requires a shift from a sickness to a wellness paradigm. A policy framework and a comprehensive programme will have to be drawn up and this will help the Government to reduce its expenditure on health.
- 3.7. The Government may need to increase the budget allocation to care for the aged either from the available revenue or through the imposition of a wealth tax. The other option is to provide additional tax incentives for children to take care of their parents.
- 3.8. It may also be useful to introduce structured volunteerism where able retirees can be trained as volunteers to take care of others, including the aged. The Government and private sector organizations should also support volunteer organizations that can help the aged in terms of their needs, especially transport to hospitals for health care, shopping and recreation. Likewise, local authorities should also consider providing such transport services for the aged.
- 3.9. Changes to building by-laws may be necessary to cater to the needs of the elderly-friendly and not just disabled-friendly buildings, parks and other facilities.
- 3.10. The time is right to create a new industry – taking care of the aged. There are already Singaporeans and Chinese looking for such facilities and services and, in the future, our other neighbours, like the Indonesians, may join them as our customers.

### **Public Service**

4. The general consensus was that the Public Service is seen as being bloated and not as competent as it should be. It was noted that, under the right-sizing policy various actions had been taken in the past. However, unfortunately, the public service had actually continued to grow. For example, privatisation of several

public services was supposed to reduce the size of the public sector. The intention was for the public service to focus on policy and regulatory functions while the actual operations would be carried out by the privatised agencies. It did not work out as intended. It is, therefore, recommended that the Government:

- 4.1 Down-size the Public Service and this requires:
  - a. A review of all government agencies and their functions to identify redundant agencies and streamline their functions. This should also incorporate a complete review of the public service, from recruitment and selection to training and retirement. Examples would include training institutions and enforcement agencies.
  - b. A need to avoid overlapping services provided by agencies. Detailed consideration is needed before the establishment of new agencies, departments or commissions and this means reviewing what is already available so as to avoid duplication in activities and functions. Overlapping functions will arise easily when new agencies are created without reviewing the functions and activities of those already existing.
  - c. A review of the accreditation of Ambassadors and High Commissioners is necessary. Is there a need to have an Embassy or High Commission in every country? Can an Ambassador or a High Commissioner cover several countries as is the case with some countries? Similarly, is there a need for each agency to have its own office in a country such as Tourism Offices, the Trade Missions, Education Attaches, Immigration Officers, etc?
- 4.2. Use the experiences of retired civil servants whenever and wherever necessary.
- 4.3. Ensure a multi-racial public service so that the principle of inclusiveness is maintained.
- 4.4. Public servants must be professional and well-trained with strong convictions in managing policies, and in assigning duties and responsibilities commensurate with their qualifications. There should also be zero tolerance for those lacking integrity.
- 4.5. Review deployment of public servants to ensure their optimal utilisation by assigning more staff to operational rather than desk jobs and ensuring

there is no underemployment to ensure a more efficient utilisation of resources.

- 4.6. Reduce activities which are basically ceremonial in nature and unnecessary and which result in excessive wastage in terms of resources – manpower, money and time.

## **Conclusion**

5. The views, concerns and recommendations above are based on the experiences and expertise of members of the Alumni PTD. It is hoped that they will be taken into consideration in the preparation of the TN50 plan.

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