



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

**MEMORANDUM TO YAB PRIME MINISTER:
THE PUBLIC SERVICE – SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHANGE**

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1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 It is clear from the statements made during and after PRU14 that many aspects of the Public Service leave much to be desired. The general feeling is that it is no longer respected, highly regarded or even trusted. In fact, the common view is that it has become highly politicised in its decision-making processes, corrupt in its practices and inefficient, ineffective and wasteful in the management of its resources.
- 1.2 However, it is an undeniable fact that the Public Service plays a crucial role to support the new government's efforts to reinstate good governance and the rule of law, particularly in the Public Service itself. Positive changes to the image, reputation and public confidence in the Public Service will enhance the successful achievement of the new government.
- 1.3 Thus, strategic actions must be taken to enable immediate solutions to be put in place to correct some of these problems while longer-term reviews and solutions can be planned and undertaken.

2. VISION AND MISSION

- 2.1 The Vision and Mission Statements for the Public Service are **crucial starting points** for its members to understand, appreciate and act within their bounds and be guided by the direction that both would provide. Thus, there is an immediate need to ensure that:
 - a. The Vision and Mission Statements, if already existing, be **revisited and redefined in the context of the need to re-establish the Public Service as a clean, efficient and trustworthy institution**, respected by the public and internationally well-known and highly regarded.
 - b. The spirit of '**Bersih, Cekap, Amanah**' be **resurrected** to provide the basis for the Vision and Mission Statements.

- c. The Vision and Mission Statements **be communicated to the entire Public Service to be understood and internalised** to form the basis for all decisions, programmes and activities undertaken.
- d. The Vision and Mission Statements are **made known to the public as important reference points in the spirit of inclusiveness.**

3. VALUES, WORK CULTURE AND CONDUCT

3.1 **Good values, work culture and conduct must be internalized by the entire Public Service** to eliminate the lack of trust and respect of the public for the Public Service. Criticisms of the Public Service in recent years, especially in relation to its corrupt activities, indicate that specific actions need to be taken, among others:

- a. **Neutrality of the Public Service must be strictly followed.** Leaders, politicians and training institutions have a duty to ensure that public servants are not politically, religiously or racially aligned and remain neutral in the delivery of their services.
- b. Selection of candidates into the Public Service must be based on **proper evaluation of their character and personality traits** to ensure that those being recruited have the necessary good universal values and moral aptitude.
- c. All public servants must take **an oath on being selected into public service** and this oath must reflect the good values, work culture and conduct expected of them and the spirit of *Bersih, Cekap, Amanah*.
- d. For those being appointed into leadership positions as heads of Ministries, Departments or agencies, **the oath of office must also incorporate the commitment to the Vision and Mission Statements.**
- e. A clear and well-defined relationship that should exist between the Public Service and the government of the day is critical for good governance. Towards this end, **a similar code of conduct is also recommended for all political appointees.**

- f. Since corruption has become a systemic problem in the Public Service, **whistle-blowing must be encouraged** and the provisions of the Whistle-blowers Act must be enforced diligently..

4. REGULATORY PROVISIONS

- 4.1 The **Public Service is governed by provisions in the Federal Constitution and other relevant Acts passed by Parliament** as well as the regulations and rules as set forth in the General Orders, Financial General Orders and other Public Service rules and regulations which have, in fact, been in place for a long time. To ensure that good governance and the rule of law can be put in place, the following actions are recommended for immediate action:
 - a. The **Public Service must be re-educated** about its position, role and function as defined in the Constitution *vis-à-vis* the government and political leadership.
 - b. The **regulations and rules which are already in place should be revisited and revised** so as to be relevant in the context of new developments in the Public Service and properly aligned to the provisions of the Constitution.
 - c. **New regulations and rules should be considered** to ensure that the Public Service will be properly guided in its conduct and undertakings.
 - d. **Adherence to all legal and regulatory provisions is mandatory** to all members of the Public Service and any breach must be followed by disciplinary actions as prescribed accordingly.

5. LEADERSHIP

- 5.1 Much of the low morale, lack in integrity and general malaise in the management of the Public Service lately can be attributed to poor leadership among the heads of Ministries, Departments and agencies. **Many leaders are**

not able to inspire, guide and support those under their care. Therefore, it is recommended that:

- a. An **immediate assessment be made of the current Heads of Ministries, Departments and agencies** to ascertain their suitability to continue in their positions.
- b. **Processes for correct evaluation, training and exposure must be put in place** to ensure that those selected to be heads of Ministries, Departments and agencies are of high integrity, politically neutral, professional, qualified, trustworthy and able to act without fear or favour.
- c. There shall **be no political interference in the selection and promotion** of heads of Ministries and Departments as well as other senior staff members. The proper procedures that have long been practised must be revisited, redefined and adhered to.
- d. **Selection, recruitment and career advancement** in the Public Service must be done openly and **on the basis of merit and the principle of inclusiveness**. The power, authority, staffing and members of Service Commissions (eg the Public Service Commission) must be reviewed with the intention of making necessary changes.

6. SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES

6.1 The Public Service has always been known for the systems and procedures that have been put in place to guide, monitor and regulate its main functions, particularly in budgeting and financial procedures, personnel administration and development planning. It would appear that **many of such systems and procedures have been compromised** in recent years. To ensure that good governance will prevail, it is recommended that:

- a. These systems and procedures are revisited and redefined in the context of new developments and the need to **ensure a proper separation of the administrative and political boundaries**.
- b. The existing **systems and procedures are readjusted in line with the developments in information technology and new trends in doing**

business, such as through the Internet which have the potential of reducing the opportunities for corrupt activities.

- c. **Procurement policies, methods and procedures must be reviewed** to ensure transparency, cost-efficiency and avoid political intervention. **The practice of direct negotiation and restricted tenders must be stopped** and only open tenders should be allowed with the evaluation and subsequent **decisions to be made by the Tender Board so authorised.**
- d. The system and procedures for development planning that have been in existence for a long time should be revisited especially considering the setting up of the new Ministry for Economic Affairs where the role of the Economic Planning Unit should be redefined. **A revised system and set of procedures for development planning should be put in place.**
- e. **Discipline be enforced by taking immediate corrective action** on individuals who do not comply with systems and procedures as well as rules and regulations, No breach should be considered as too small for taking action. Punish quickly those who do not perform as required so that the disciplinary action will be effective. For this, the **existing disciplinary procedures should be simplified** to expedite the disciplinary actions to be taken.
- f. **An effective reporting system be instituted** so that public servants can report any attempt to interfere with the systems and procedures by politicians or influential individuals. The reports should go to the heads of their Ministries, Departments or to the Chief Secretary to the Government and, when necessary, the matter can be brought to the attention of the Prime Minister.
- g. In terms of personnel administration, there should be **no interference by politicians, especially members of the administration or others in the recruitment, selection, placement and promotions** of officers and staff. The decisions must be made by the authorities prescribed in the rules and following the procedures already set.

- h. Heads of Ministries, Departments and agencies must **stop the practice of taking on temporary and contractual staff** outside of the regular procedures for personnel administration.
- i. Action must be taken to **review all the latest reports of the Auditor General** that pertain to weaknesses and bad management in the public service delivery system, especially those that had been repeatedly committed and no remedial actions had been taken by the Heads of Ministries, Departments and agencies responsible. **Those responsible must be given a specific timeframe to undertake corrective actions** and if no satisfactory actions are taken, immediate disciplinary actions must be taken against them.

7. INSTITUTIONAL AND STRUCTURAL REVIEW

- 7.1 The decision made by the new government to reduce the number of Ministries, Departments and agencies is strongly supported. It is agreed that **we have a bloated Public Service** and the following are recommended:
 - a. **A total review of the Public Service** must be undertaken to decide which Ministries, Departments or agencies can be abolished, merged or restructured so as to redress the problems of duplication and overlapping, unnecessary or irrelevant functions.
 - b. The restructuring should incorporate the intention to ensure that **future organisations are lean, efficient and effective**.
 - c. There is a need to **do a human resource audit** of each Ministry, Department and agency to ensure that they have the right number of staff to avoid under-utilisation
 - d. The **review** should also consider whether there is a **need for so many layers of administration**, Federal, State and District, for those Ministries, Departments and agencies which have no operational functions.
 - e. To **redefine and upgrade the status, role and functions of some agencies** that have not been given sufficient importance before, like the

Public Complaints Bureau which can play the role of an ombudsman; and INTAN which now needs to play an enhanced role in building a Public Service that is professional, effective and efficient with high moral and ethical values.

- f. **Major technological developments that are taking place which have an impact on the size and nature of work of the Public Service must be adopted.** Many of its customers are using new technology to deal with the government to obtain its services such as on-line applications and on-line payments. These must lead to reduction of Public Service size and structure. The transparency of processes will also reduce opportunities for abuse.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The Alumni Association of the Administrative and Diplomatic Officers (PTD Alumni) has been observing the gradual decline in the quality of the Public Service in terms of lack of good governance, rampant corruption, inefficient delivery of service to the rakyat and, particularly, the lack of neutrality. We share the feeling of urgency on the part of the new government to restore good governance and the rule of law in the Public Service. Our members are ready to offer our assistance with regard to our views and recommendations for change as above or in any undertaking as required.

LAMPIRAN

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