



## **A Woman's Choice of Clothing**

*3rd October 2014*

PETALING JAYA - Women's bodies and dressing always seem to be at the forefront of public debate all over the world.

In Malaysia, one debate that crops up ever so often is whether or not a woman should wear the *tudung*. This is part of the pressure women and girls face every day in meeting societal expectations as to how she looks, what she does, and how she behaves.

In the context of the service industry, women do not always have the option to choose. While in society she may be pressured to wear the *tudung*, as a woman working in retail, hospitality, or in this case, the airlines, it is often the opposite, where women are not often given the option to wear the *tudung* as it does not comply with the brand image.

For AWAM, the issue is not only about women having the right to decide whether to wear the *tudung* or not. It is a larger issue of what powers the state, or any other institution should have to decide what is appropriate or not for women. This power should belong to and lie in the hands of the women themselves. Further, women who do not conform to imposed societal norms should not be persecuted or punished.

In the course of AWAM's work, we have met and worked with a range of women. We know that they come in all shapes and sizes. We accept this diversity, and believe that more can be done foster not only acceptance of this diversity, but a celebration of it.