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AWAM's Press Release on International Human Rights Day 2015

KUALA LUMPUR, [10th December 2015] – December 10th marks the International Human Rights Day. This day is recognized globally to commemorate the day in 1948, in which the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This date of December 10th also marks the end of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence, which began on November 25th (the International Day Against Violence Against Women).

According to police statistics, in 2014, in Malaysia alone, 4807 cases of domestic violence, 2045 cases of rape, and 1590 cases of sexual harassment were reported to the police. It is important to remember that these numbers do not take the unreported cases into account, and therefore the actual statistics would be significantly higher.

Malaysia today is fraught with many issues such as the politicisation of ethnicity and religion and governmental corruption, in addition to gender-based violence. The issue of gender-based violence as a human rights concern often falls through the cracks. Though it is heartening to note that the public is responding enthusiastically to our activities, (such as our annual White Ribbon Run and our workshop on the link between power and gender-based violence), it is more important that society recognises the issue of gender-based violence as a violation of women's human rights and works towards affecting change by making positive steps forward for Malaysia.

As the year draws to a close, AWAM will continue to actively engage the public to emphasize the fact that women's rights are human rights, and we all collectively need to work together to bring about equality, justice and rights for all people, especially women, in the country.
