

Y.B. Dato' Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein  
Minister of MOHA  
Ministry of Home Affairs  
Blok D1 & D2, Kompleks D  
Pusat Pentadbiran, Kerajaan Persekutuan  
62546 Putrajaya MALAYSIA

Your Excellency,

I am writing as a citizen of (enter your country) who is concerned about human rights worldwide, and as a responsible international traveler.

Malaysia is a fascinating country with a diverse cultural heritage, offering an abundance of attractions for travelers. The Malaysian Government's efforts in promoting natural and cultural tourism are encouraging. But as a socially aware tourist, I am deeply concerned with the treatment of refugees from Burma living in Malaysia.

Burmese refugees who have fled for their lives to Malaysia because of religious and ethnic persecution in their homeland have not been recognized as Persons of Concern by the Malaysian government and as such are being denied basic human rights. In many instances the refugees have been sold to human traffickers.

While deportations to the Thai border appear to have been placed on hold, other forms of exploitation, abuse and trafficking of refugees continue. Ongoing raids conducted by RELA, an officially sanctioned vigilante group, result in the arrest and mistreatment of hundreds of men, women and children. The lack of a comprehensive policy to protect the rights of these refugees amounts to the tacit complicity of your government in these human rights violations. One remedy is for the Malaysian Government to sign the 1951 UN Geneva Convention—which provides protections for the human rights of refugees—and to adopt its principals in full.

As a traveler, I have a choice of which countries to visit. The mistreatment of refugees discredits Malaysia's reputation in the eyes of the world. I ask for your cooperation on these points:

- I request that the raids by RELA be stopped immediately;
- I request that the government of Malaysia adopt protections for human rights of refugees as outlined in the 1951 UN Geneva Convention;
- I request that victims of mistreatment in Burma arriving in Malaysia be treated with respect and compassion, and given protection, while those individuals found to be complicit in trafficking and other mistreatment be punished;
- I request that the Malaysian government give us reassurance that steps are being taken to address these issues.

I honor your integrity, and respect your commitment to making Malaysia a destination where all residents and visitors can enjoy peace and safety.

Sincerely,