

10<sup>th</sup> January 2013

**Advisory to National Evangelical Christian Fellowship (NECF) Malaysia  
member churches on the use of “Allah” by non-Muslims**

NECF Malaysia maintains the right to freedom of religion for all persons in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Constitution. Article 11 states that it is the right of every Malaysian to profess and practice his or her religion and to manage their own religious affairs.

This right to profess, practice and manage our own religious affairs includes the use of the Alkitab, which is the Holy Bible in Bahasa Malaysia, our national language, as well as the Bible in the native languages of Sabah and Sarawak which also use “Allah”, both in the public and private spheres of life including in all our church meetings and in our homes.

To insist that the use of any word in the national language is only for one particular religion is contrary to the Federal Constitution. It is ludicrous for one faith community to interfere in and tell other faith communities how they should manage their own faith and religious affairs, particularly by imposing which words can or cannot be used in their holy Scriptures.

The position of NECF is as follows:

- 1) The fatwa of 18 February 2010 that prohibits “Allah” from being used by any non-Muslim in Selangor has no bearing on non-Muslims because it is a fatwa made pursuant to the Administration of the Religion of Islam (State of Selangor) Enactment 2003 with respect to Islamic administrative matters. As this Enactment is applicable to Muslims only, the gazetted fatwa is similarly binding on Muslims only.
- 2) The ban against non-Muslims from using “Allah” under the Non-Islamic Religions (Control of Propagation Amongst Muslims) Enactment 1988 is only within the context of the propagation of religion, and does not extend to the right of a person to profess and practice his religion and of the religious group to manage its own affairs, including to worship and read the Alkitab in churches, homes and any place of Christian meetings.

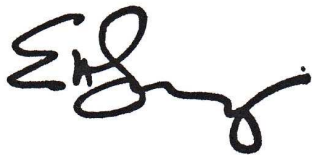
3) MAIS's statement is inconsistent and not in line with recent developments such as:

- The 10-point solution promised by the Cabinet in April 2011 to resolve the impasse over imported copies of the Alkitab. In this solution, the Cabinet has recognised the rights of non-Muslims to use "Allah".
- The High Court judgment of 31 Dec 2009 which affirmed the constitutional right of the Catholic weekly, *The Herald*, to use "Allah. This right has therefore been legally recognised and still stands.

It was only last month that the Prime Minister made a gesture of goodwill to the Christian community when at the Christian Federation of Malaysia's Christmas Tea on 25 Dec 2012, he assured Christians that they had "not been forgotten" and that he would be a prime minister "for all Malaysians". It is disappointing that despite such assurances, the right of Christians to determine their own affairs is being interfered with.

We urge all Christians to pray and intercede in the words of St Paul in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 (CEV): "First of all, I ask you to pray for everyone. Ask God to help and bless them all, and tell God how thankful you are for each of them. Pray for kings and others in power, so that we may live quiet and peaceful lives as we worship and honor God."

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'EHS' followed by a stylized flourish.

Rev Dr Eu Hong Seng  
Chairman  
NECF Malaysia