



MINISTRY OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

PRESS STATEMENT

Malaysia Has Not Retracted Its Option To File WTO Complaint Against EU's Delegated Regulation

I wish to refer to the Reuters report, 14 February 2020 titled, “Malaysia backs off from WTO suit against EU on palm oil”.

I wish to categorically state that at no time did I inform the media that Malaysia will back off from our plans to file the WTO complaint against the EU and its Delegated Regulation.

We continue to view the Delegated Regulation as a discredit to the Malaysian palm oil industry's commitment towards mandatory sustainability since it creates additional trade barriers and impedes our sustainability efforts throughout our palm oil supply chain.

In fact, our highest level legal team is examining with a fine comb, our potential response to make our petition as watertight as possible. We have thus always agreed to intervene as a co-complainant and join the likes of Indonesia and other palm oil producers at the opportune juncture at the WTO proceedings.

The Reuters report published, deliberately misquoted me that Malaysia no longer plans to file the WTO suit against EU restriction on palm oil. as This was also not the thrust of my intention when the Reuters journalist interviewed me in Brussels yesterday (13 Feb, 2020)

In my interview, I had emphasized clearly that my current mission to meet with European leaders was to explain the efforts made by the Malaysian government and palm oil industry to produce sustainable palm oil, and various green conservation projects initiated by the industry.

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I sought the endorsement of EU leaders on Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) certification and to accept MSPO certified palm oil into Europe.

This is in line with the announcement of seven EU countries in the Amsterdam Declaration on Fully Sustainable Palm Oil by 2020.

In my meeting with EU Commissioner for Energy, Ms Kadri Simson and her advisors in Brussels, I conveyed the concerns of Malaysia on the Delegated Regulation and EU RED II passed by European Parliament that discriminated against the usage of palm oil in biofuel.

I further sought for review of the Delegated Regulation by way of an expert joint working group and such provision is actually also embedded within the Delegated Regulations .

Ms Kadri Simson concurred with our views to activate the expert consultation between EU and palm oil producers and Malaysia will raise its objections at the Joint Working Group of EU and Palm Oil Producing Countries to review the Delegated Regulations.

The review process of the Delegated Regulations is planned to take place soon and should be completed by June 2021.

Malaysia meanwhile has been accepted as an interested party to observe the proceedings at the Indonesian suit against the EU at the WTO.

At any point when our legal experts who will also sit in at the WTO hearing feel ready, we will be prepared to mount our own independent complaint.

Indeed this was the very essence of my statement to the Reuters journalist, who unfortunately appears to have twisted my statements on this matter of supreme importance.

For now, we will still negotiate on these issues with the EU through bilateral meetings and negotiations.

However, I reiterate that Malaysia has never stated its intentions to back off from the WTO suit.

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