

10 May, 2012

TO: ALL NEWS EDITORS

PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media statement from National Union of Journalists (NUJ) in response to government's move to set up a six-member Independent Advisory Panel to investigate allegations of police brutality at the recent Bersih 3.0 rally.

The NUJ welcomes the move by the Home Ministry in setting up the panel as means to provide a channel for the people to come forward with proof of what transpired at the rally on April 28, 2012.

However, from feedback given by our members, the NUJ is not agreeable that former Inspector –General of Police Tun Hanif Omar heads the panel.

It is in the common interest that an ex-police officer should not be heading the panel when it is the police that are involved in the alleged attack.

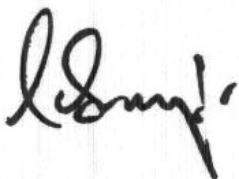
NUJ also would like to express its disagreement over Hanif's appointment as he had reportedly made adverse remark concerning Bersih 3.0 rally by supporting claims that the gathering was an attempt to topple the Government.

It would lead to controversial issues if the panel is led by Tun Hanif, because the public would not be convinced of the panel's finding as he himself was a former police chief and this would also discourage eye witnesses and victims from coming forward to give evidence.

NUJ suggests that former chief judge (Tan Sri Steve Shim) to be appointed as its panel chairman instead. This is the first time in our history that a retired senior judge was reduced to being an ordinary member of a panel.

NUJ has no objection to the other members of the panel while it would like to suggest that the panel members should also include individuals or NGOs that concern with human rights and press freedom issues.

Thank you.



Chin Sung Chew
President