



ARTICLE 19

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak,
The Prime Minister of Malaysia,
Office of The Prime Minister,
Main Block, Perdana Putra Building,
Federal Government Administrative Centre,
62502 Putrajaya, MALAYSIA

19 May 2015



ENGLISH
PEN

Dear Prime Minister Najib,

We, the undersigned international organisations, urge the Malaysian authorities to drop charges against cartoonist Zulkiflee Anwar Haque “Zunar”, who is currently facing a record-breaking nine charges under the Sedition Act for comments made on the social media network Twitter, for which - if convicted - he could face up to 43 years in prison.



Xindex
the voice of free expression

We also call upon the Malaysian authorities to repeal the Sedition Act, a law that is used as a tool to stifle legitimate debate and dissent. In 2012, Prime Minister Najib Razak made a commitment to repeal the Sedition Act. However, following the most recent election, he has instead extended the Sedition Act’s reach and strengthened the penalties for infringement in a move we believe is intended to help maintain his party’s hold on power.



pen
INTERNATIONAL

Freedom of expression is an essential part of any democratic society and the Malaysian authorities must protect this right for all, including those who are critical of government. Rather than safeguard this right, the authorities have intensified their crackdown on journalists, writers, activists, students, academics and artists. We, the undersigned international organisations, condemn these violations and urge the international community to support Zunar and everyone in Malaysia to speak freely in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Sincerely,

ARTICLE 19
English PEN
Index on Censorship
Media Legal Defence Initiative
PEN International



MLDI

CC:

Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail, Attorney General
Tan Sri Dato' Sri Khalid bin Abu Bakar, Inspector General of Police