

Reforming Political Financing in Malaysia: Sabah Region Workshop (Kota Kinabalu)

“Reforming Political Financing in Malaysia: Sabah Workshop” was the fifth workshop of Transparency International – Malaysia’s Nationwide Campaign on Reforming Political Financing in Malaysia. The Sabah Workshop was held on 17 March 2011 at Beverly Hotel, Kota Kinabalu. The forum was part of the *Crinis* project funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Similar with earlier workshops in West Malaysia, this workshop aimed to encourage free and frank discussion and exchange of ideas, with a view to mobilise public support for reforming political financing in Malaysia. The forum was also meant for disseminating information, as well as providing public education on political corruption and money politics. Additionally, the workshop would help TI-M to make inroads into East Malaysia for further research and events.

The panelists for the workshop were Datuk Wira Wan Ahmad Wan Omar, Deputy Chairman of Election Commission of Malaysia, Professor Datuk Mohamad Ali Hasan, Deputy President of TI-M, Colonel (R) Shaharudin Othman, Deputy Chairman of Malaysians for Free and Fair Election (MAFREL), and Tan Sri Simon Sipaun, former Vice Chairman of Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM). Mr Alan Kirupakaran, Executive Director of TI-M moderated the discussion.

The forum was the first attempt by TI-M to engage with local residents in Sabah. The main objective is was to spread the reform message to the state. The participants were grateful for TI-M’s effort to engage with the local residents. The forum provided the platform for the participants to share their experience and views on combating political corruption and money politics. They were very supportive of the 22 recommendations put forward by TI-M. Additionally, the participants requested that TI-M to set up a local branch to facilitate the effort on combating corruption in the state.

A total of 49 participants attended the forum, including Mr Don Chin Hon Kiong, Vice President of Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), Dr Edwin Bosi, Secretary of DAP Sabah, Mr Chong Pit Fah, Information Chief of SAPP, representatives from various NGOs, academics and members of the public. The event was covered by Daily Express.