



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **2020 WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference to Tackle the COVID-19 Crisis on the Labour Market**

**KUALA LUMPUR** – The COVID-19 outbreak which spread across the globe early this year has affected almost all socio-economic sectors including the labour market. So far, **nearly 60 million people around the world have been infected by COVID-19 and more than 1.4 million people succumbed to the virus, with Malaysia recorded 59,817 cases and 345 deaths.**

The multiple Movement Control Orders (MCO) imposed by the Government to arrest the spread of the virus have led to employers cutting hundreds of thousands of jobs as the economic impact from COVID-19 worsened. This has sharply pushed up Malaysia's unemployment numbers until almost **100,000 workers become jobless as of 26 November 2020.**

Responding to the situation, the **Social Security Organisation (SOCSO)**, an agency under the Ministry of Human Resources, the **World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES)** and the **Korea Employment Information Service (KEIS)** have teamed up to organise the 2020 WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on 26 November 2020, focusing on ways and means to handle the COVID-19 crisis on employment.

Themed, "**Addressing the Impact of Covid-19 on the Labour Market**", the one-day virtual conference covers strategies to stimulate economic growth and jobs creation in the formal sector, with a focus on vulnerable demographics like informal workers and the hardest hit industries such as tourism. The conference was attended by participants from Europe, Africa, and the Asia-Pacific.

In his opening remarks at the conference, SOCSO Chief Executive Officer Dato' Sri Dr. Mohammed Azman Dato' Aziz Mohammed has called on the governments, the private sector and workers unions in all countries to unite and support their respective economies including the labour market in the face of unprecedented challenges brought by the pandemic.

The conference participants listened to a presentation by SOCSO on how the Malaysian government has reacted in a timely manner by allocating RM22 billion to SOCSO in the economic stimulus and recovery packages, allowing SOCSO Employment Insurance System (EIS) to deploy Active Labour Market Policies like the Wage Subsidy Programme (PSU) and the Employment Retention Programme (ERP) to stabilise the country's labour market.

By providing financial support to employers and employees who are struggling to make ends meet during the MCO, the PSU and ERP initiatives have **saved over 2.7 million jobs**. These were then followed by PENJANA's Hiring Incentive Programme (PenjanaKerjaya), mobility assistance and reskilling & upskilling programmes, which aim to stimulate the hiring of workers in the post-MCO recovery period. So far, the PenjanaKerjaya has been a success with **more than 120,000 jobseekers** have found jobs through the national employment services portal, **MYFutureJobs**.

Officially launched in June 2020, MYFutureJobs is an online labour market supply and demand solution with skills profiling and occupation taxonomies tailored to the Malaysian economy. It matches jobseekers to vacancies swiftly and accurately using comprehensive factors including skills, competencies, knowledge, academic qualifications, professional certifications, location and many more. Currently, **over 500,000 vacancies** have been posted on MYFutureJobs, with **more than 400,000 jobseekers** are using the site for their employment needs every day.

Malaysia became a member of WAPES in 2018 through SOCSO EIS. WAPES comprises 80 Public Employment Services (PES) agencies, employing more than 1 million staff worldwide. It was established to advocate worldwide employment and labour market issues as well as to promote the exchange of knowledge and best practices among members.

For any enquiries, employers, employees and jobseekers may visit SOCSO website at [www.perkeso.gov.my](http://www.perkeso.gov.my) **AND** the official EIS website at <https://eiscentre.perkeso.gov.my/> **OR** call the hotline number **1-300-22-8000**.

**SOCIAL SECURITY ORGANISATION (SOCSO)**

**26 November 2020**