



**VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIAN ARMED FORCES
(Persatuan Veteran ATM)**



**COUNTRY REPORT FOR 33RD EBM AND 20TH GA
PRESENTED BY
CAPTAIN DATUK SHARUDDIN BIN HJ OMAR
PRESIDENT OF THE VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIAN ARMED FORCES**

Excellency Senior Lt Gen (Ret) NGUYEN VAN DUOC, VECONAC President cum the President of the Vietnam Veterans Association, the host of the 33rd VECONAC Executive Board Meeting and 20th VECONAC General Assembly,

Excellency Maj Gen (Ret) LE VAN CAU, the Secretary General of VECONAC,

Excellency Senior Col MAI PHUC THUA, the Treasurer General of VECONAC,

Excellencies VECONAC Vice Presidents and Head of Delegation, and

Distinguished Delegates from VECONAC Member Countries.

First and foremost allow me on behalf of Members of the Veterans Association of Malaysian Armed Forces (VAMAF) Supreme Council to extend our warmest regards and gratitude to the President of VECONAC and his Secretariat as well as to all Presidents of VECONAC Member Associations.

It is my privilege indeed to extend our sincerest appreciation and congratulation to the VECONAC President and VAVN for holding the post of VECONAC Secretariate for two years (2020-2021) during the most trying time in the history of mankind, i.e. the Covid-19 Pandemic.

It is in this harmonious and jubilant atmosphere, allow me to share with you briefly on the activities carried out by us during the year 2020 and 2021.

Our association's policy direction remained clear and intact since its inception in 1922, which providing undivided loyalty to the Kings and undivided support to the Government of the Day regardless of which political party they come from and also how often they frequently changed hand of late. Our main focus remained in looking after the welfare of our members and non-members and their families. The population of Veterans in Malaysia is now 350,000 and about 4,500 to 5,000 servicemen leave or retired from the Service every year.

It is sad to note that the COVID-19 Pandemic has inflicting heavy damage and casualty to the world community, and Malaysia is non-exception. The pandemic has caused many loss of life and damaged to the world economy at large, particularly among the third countries. In Malaysia, some of our Veterans are striving for a living especially amongst the senior citizens in the Non-Pensioners group. In working together with various Non-Government Organization (NGOs) and corporate players, we have managed to distribute non-stop "Food Basket" to the Veterans families in dire need of help. All in all about 50,000 Food Baskets were distributed so far.

As for the general welfare of the whole Veterans community, we are continuously pressuring the government to pay more attention to the Veterans' welfare because of the rising cost of living in our country. We are demanding the government to take steps to implement the followings:

- ❖ **First**, the issue on the pension disparity received between Veterans retired before and after the year 2004, where there is an urgent need for the government to seriously review the pension scheme to narrow the gap existed between them. We have even aired our grievances in Parliamentary sessions.
- ❖ **Second**, we have about 130,000 non-pensioners Veterans in Malaysia, hence, we want the government to continuously giving monetary support to the Veterans in the Non-Pensioner group by giving a "one-off" payment of RM3,000.00 per year for those below 60 years old and providing a monthly living allowance of at least RM500.00 to those above the age of 60s.
- ❖ **Third**, we want the government to extend the period of awarding the "Derivative Pension" to Widows married by Veterans during their retirement from 20 years to at least 40 years if not 50 years. This is to allow the affected widows to continuously live a normal life and also to upbringing their young children with proper education.

- ❖ **Fourth**, we have about 20,000 Ex-Servicemen were dismissed due to disciplinary reasons, and according to the Veterans Act 2012 (Act 740) they are not to be recognized as “Veterans”. Hence, they are not entitled to enjoy all facilities given by the Government to the Veterans, such as medical treatment, monthly living allowance and children education scheme. We want the Government to establish a “Pardon Board” to review the sentences inflicted to them in order to allow them to be recognized as Veterans.

Our association was established on 20 May 1922, and next year we will be celebrating our centenary (100-years) in existence. We have planned to carry out several activities nationwide in conjunction with that, and these include prayers, parade, grand dinners with our Royal Patron, His Majesty the Supreme King as the guest of honour and charity events.

Last but not least, our Association is fully committed in maintaining and enhancing the existing relationship within the VECONAC community. With that we believe the priorities are Solidarity and Cooperation in bringing stability and peaceful environment in the ASEAN region. We applauded the effort taken by VECONAC Secretariat in establishing a closely working relationship with the VECONAC Secretariat in Jakarta. The effort taken by our Brothers in LVRI of helping in the bridging of the cordial cooperation with the ASEAN Secretariat is much appreciated.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the VECONAC Secretariat and VAVN Leadership as well as the Organizing Committee for their tremendous efforts in the making the virtual/online 33rd EBM and 20th GA meeting a success. We sincerely hope the Almighty God will permit us to have a “face to face” meeting in Thailand next year.

“VECONAC FOREVER - FOREVER VECONAC”

Wisma Pahlawan,
KUALA LUMPUR

15 December 2021.