



COUNTRY REPORT: MALAYSIA

PRESENTED BY
HON. SEN. ADM. TAN SRI MOHD ANWAR HJ MOHD NOR (RET)
PRESIDENT OF THE VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIAN ARMED FORCES

Excellency Lt Gen Hsan Oo, VECONAC President,
Excellency Maj Gen Zar Ni Winn, VECONAC Secretary General,
Excellency Pehin Datu Paduka Raja Maj Gen (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Shari bin Ahmad,
President of the Ex-Soldiers Association of Brunei Darussalam, the host of the 16th VECONAC
General Assembly,
Excellencies VECONAC Vice Presidents and Head of Delegations,
Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

1 First of all allow me on behalf of the Veterans Association of Malaysian Armed Forces (VAMAF) delegations to extend our warmest regards and gratitude to the Head of Delegations and distinguished members of delegation from all VECONAC Member Associations attending the 16th VECONAC General Assembly in Brunei Darussalam, the "Kingdom of Unexpected Treasure".

2 It is my privilege to extend our sincerest appreciation and gratitude to the leadership of the Ex-Soldiers Association of Brunei Darussalam (ESABD) for a very warm welcome and hospitality accorded to our delegations attending this significant occasion.

3 It is in this jubilant and cordial atmosphere, I would like to share some of VAMAF activities happening after our last meeting in Yangon Myanmar on the 21-24 Oct 2016.

4 First of all, we are very glad to inform that VAMAF as an "Umbrella Association" to all 380,000 Veterans in Malaysia, has continuously engaging our federal and state government on matters pertaining to Veterans' welfare issues. To date, both government has shown their willingness to work together in looking after the interest of all Veterans in Malaysia. We are very happy to inform that at the beginning of the year the Defence Minister has officially appointed his deputy as Minister responsible for Veterans Affairs in Malaysia. Hence, Veterans in Malaysia is now having a dedicated deputy minister to look after their wellbeing.

5 We have been continuously and relentlessly working towards providing better welfare services to all Veterans in Malaysia by working hand-in-hand with the Department of Veterans Affairs in the Ministry of Defence. Our main focus is looking into areas where we can further upgrade assistance given to the less privileged and handicapped Veterans as well as Veterans' widows that in dire need of assistance to meet up the high cost living.

6 We are in the midst of discussion with the government on finding ways and means on how to implement the 10 issues stipulated in the Veterans Welfare Blueprint. We have proposed to the government that priority must be given in implementing at least three main issues during the 2017 National Budget.

6.1 Firstly, reducing the gap in amount of pension received by Veterans retired before the year 2004 with those retired after 2004. We reckoned that the disparity percentage is from 50% to 80%.

6.2 Secondly, providing a fixed yearly cash payment to all non-pensionable Veterans with the aim of helping them in coping with the high cost of living. They are to be given monthly subsistence allowance automatically when they reach the age of 65 and above.

6.3 Extending the period of providing "derivative pension" from 20 years to 50 years to wife of Veterans married by Veterans during retirement, however this is only applicable to first wife.

7 As for the yearly Warrior Fund campaign, the campaign period is from 31 July 2016 to 31 December 2016, and so far we have received RM1.8 million contributions from corporate organization mainly from the Government Link Companies. We hope to be able to achieve our collection target of at least RM3.5 million by end of this year. For a record, last year we managed to collect RM2.8 million, and with that amount of fund we managed to continue in providing the following welfare assistance to the handicapped as well as the less privileged Veterans and widows across the board.

7.1 Providing special welfare assistance of RM500.00 in cash to every Handicapped Veterans who were injured in operations against the insurgencies and also those suffering from acute sickness. We have spent RM1.0 million for this purpose.

7.2 Providing monthly subsistence allowance of RM300.00 to each of the less privileged Veterans and Widows that are not entitled to receive any assistance from the government particularly involving Veterans who were discharged from the service on disciplinary grounds.

7.3 Providing an immediate assistance of between RM1,000.00 to RM2,000.00 to all Veterans involved in disaster and sudden great misfortune such as their houses were destroyed during storm and strong winds as well as during flood and fire.

8 We are also very happy to inform that the federal government still is providing us with an Annual Grant of RM1.5 million. With that annual grant we are able to continue administering our Association at national level. On the same score, our divisions and branches at state level are also receiving financial assistance from their respective states.

9 Last but not least, the following activities took place during the reporting period:

9.1 **Bilateral Visits VAMAF-SAFVL.** The Bilateral Visit program between VAMAF and SAFVL was held in Singapore on 15-18 April 2016 and the reciprocal visit took place in Kuala Lumpur on 30 Aug- 1 Sep 2016. The aim of the program is to further enhance the existing cordial relationship between VAMAF and SAFL in line with ASEAN spirit of co-existence and good neighbourhood.

9.2 **Veteran Economic Carnival (Exposition).** For the first time in history that we had successfully organized a Veteran Economic Carnival of Exposition in May 2016 in Miri, Sarawak. The carnival allowed Veterans Entrepreneur to introduce and promote their products to public as well as changing ideas on how to further elevate their business entity.

9.3 **Veteran Outreach Program (Road Tour).** Also for the first time in our history that our association organized an outreach program or Road Tour starting from February until December this year . The main aim of the program is to reach the Veterans in the remote area to listen to their problems and grievances. So far we have covered all part of Sarawak and only some part of Malaya, and we hope to be able to cover the remaining area before end of year.

9.4 **Warriors Day.** Malaysia celebrates its Warriors Day every year on the 31 July, where three main events will take place; i.e. special parade at the Warriors Square in Putrajaya, special prayer in all mosques throughout the country and the launching of Warriors Fund Campaign. As an umbrella association, we actively took part in all the events.

9.5 **National or Independence Day.** Malaysia celebrates its National or Independence Day every year on 31 August and the main event is the National Day Parade at the Independence Square (Dataran Merdeka) in the heart of Kuala Lumpur city. VAMAF was given an honour to provide a contingence of 220 Veterans to take part in the parade since 2014.

9.6 **"Walk for Peace" Event.** Our association has successfully organized the "Walk for Peace" event in Federal Government Administration Centre, Putrajaya on the 21 September 2016 as requested by the World Veterans Federation, and the event is sanctioned by the United Nations and was held simultaneously throughout the world.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

10 Our Association is fully committed in enhancing the existing relationship within VECONAC members, and our priorities are solidarity and cooperation because we believed that both will bring stability and peaceful environment in the ASEAN region. On the same note, let all of us not forget our comrades who had sacrificed their lives and blood in safeguarding our respective country's sovereignty and security, which had one way or another contributed in bringing peace and stability within our region.

11 Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the VECONAC President and his staffs as well as the leadership of the Ex-Soldiers Association of Brunei Darussalam who have done a tremendous effort in making this year general assembly a success. We also would like to congratulate the Honorary President and Medal of Honour award recipients for their achievement. And to the rest of our brother delegates, we wish and pray for your good health and prosperity as well as a safe journey home.

Thank you.

"VECONAC FOREVER – FOREVER VECONAC"