



MENTERI PERUSAHAAN PERLADANGAN DAN KOMODITI MALAYSIA
(Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities Malaysia)

KPPK 19(05)552/1 Klt.3 (17)

22 June 2014

H.E. Michel Sapin
Ministre des Finances et des Comptes Publics
Rue de Bercy
PARIS
FRANCE

Dear Excellency,

NO PALM OIL LABELLING ON FOOD PRODUCTS

I am writing to Your Excellency to express Malaysia's concerns on the action by several companies in France by labelling their products with 'No Palm Oil'.

2. Malaysia is of view that singling food products with the label 'No Palm Oil' tantamount to discriminating palm oil without the necessary facts justifying its reasons. In addition, this labelling is clustered with other elements such as 'No Preservatives', 'No Added Salt' and 'No Colouring'. This gives impression that the consumer needs to be informed on the existence of palm oil, similar to those additives.

3. Malaysia has the necessary scientific evidence to attest to the fact that palm oil is suitable for consumption and beneficial to human health. In this context, this element has been confirmed by scientists both in Europe and other countries around the world.

4. The palm oil industry is an important component of the agriculture sector in Malaysia and has been instrumental in addressing rural poverty and employment opportunities. This industry is important to the livelihood of small farmers where currently close to 40% of the planted areas are under smallholdings. This unsubstantial action by the food manufacturers in France has negative repercussion on palm oil imports into France and the long term bilateral trade relation between Malaysia and France.

5. In this context, I wish to recall the statement by the former French Prime Minister, H.E Jean-Marc Ayrault, during his visit to Malaysia in July 2013 on the importance of palm oil to Malaysia, and as part of a mutually respectful France-Malaysia relationship. H.E Ayrault committed that France would not introduce measures that discriminates against palm oil. This commitment was extremely important and was welcomed by Malaysia.

6. I respectfully request your Ministry to take action to address this labelling issue which is contrary to the existing legislation in Europe. Malaysia is prepared to provide additional information on nutritional benefits of palm oil including its sustainable production for your perusal.

7. I thank you for your attention and look forward to cooperating with your Ministry to address this issue.

Yours sincerely,



DOUGLAS UGGAH EMBAS