



PRESS RELEASE

208 WOMEN DIRECTORS ARE READY FOR BOARD DIRECTORSHIPS ON MALAYSIAN PUBLIC LISTED COMPANIES

KUALA LUMPUR, 13 OKTOBER 2012 - To-date, 208 women have undergone the Women Directors' Program (WDP) and are now ready for board placements. The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development have achieved the target to train at least 200 women through the inaugural Women Directors Programme 2012, which will conclude on December 20, 2012.

As a culmination to the WDP 2012 programme, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development organized a Chairman Power Breakfast event with the objective of introducing the program and the women directors registry to the Public Listed Companies. With this, the PLCs can directly source for suitable women candidates through the Registry to fill board positions within their organizations.

Prime Minister Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak said that the programme has helped to identify, locate and prepare the country's top women talent for board positions in 2013 onwards.

"I must congratulate the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development for driving this programme with passion and focus to achieve the set target of creating this talent pipeline of more than 200 women".

“Women make up a half of potential human capital available in any economy. The efficient use of this talent pool is a key driver of competitiveness.” He said in his keynotes address at the Chairman Power Breakfast here yesterday.

His address was read by Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office and Chief Executive Officer of Performance Management & Delivery Unit (PEMANDU), YB Senator Dato’ Sri Idris Jala.

Female employees tend to be concentrated in entry or middle level positions and remain scarce in senior management or board positions in most countries and industries. A major exception to this trend is Norway, where the percentage of women among boards of directors is above 40%. This is due to a government regulation that mandates a minimum of 40% of each gender on the boards of public companies.

“We are the only country in the Asia Pacific region to set a policy and allocate a budget to increase women representation into senior decision-making and board positions in Malaysian Public Listed companies. We strongly believe that there is a need to introduce affirmative-action programs, driven by quotas or targets to achieve this goal.” said YB Senator Dato’ Sri Idris Jala.

He added “The value of diversifying boards and leadership teams, not just from a gender perspective, has been proven to positively impact new economies.”

In June 2011, the Malaysian Government mandated a 30% target of women representation at senior decision-making and corporate boards by 2016. The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, through its agency NAM Institute for the Empowerment of Women (NIEW), has since introduced the Women’s Directors Programme (WDP), which aims to prepare potential and qualified women for directorship roles in Malaysian public-listed companies.

“The early success that we are seeing from the WDP 2012 programme is a result of a systematic approach taken by the Ministry in designing the programme framework and managing the quality of the overall implementation” he said.

The WDP comprises a comprehensive set of modules: online board readiness assessment, coaching on preparation for boards and training for boardroom knowledge and skills (both technical and softskills). Upon completion of the modules, these potential women candidates will go through a board simulation exercise that will familiarise them with the real-life challenges of serving on boards.

Women who meet the set criteria must first register themselves in the Women Corporate Directors' Registry (www.wcdregistry.com). The Registry will serve several purposes. Besides capturing pertinent information of the skills, experience and leadership styles of the professional women, it will also support the placement process of board-ready candidates. Companies can also source for suitably qualified candidates for their boards through the Registry.

For more information on the WDP programme, visit www.niew.gov.my.

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