

Malaysian CSOs urge the Swiss parliament to return corrupt deposits

Monday 12 March 2018, by [LEE Annabelle](#) (Date first published: 9 March 2018).

Kuala Lumpur: Ahead of the Swiss parliament's debate whether to return unclaimed 1MDB-linked funds amounting to about CHF104 million (USD 110m) to Malaysia, NGOs have urged Swiss MPs to vote in favour of the Malaysian people.

Ahead of the Swiss parliament's move to debate whether to return unclaimed 1MDB-linked funds amounting to about CHF104 million (roughly RM430 mil) to Malaysians, several local NGOs today urged Swiss MPs to vote in favour of the Malaysian people.

The motion, translated from German to mean "repatriation of confiscated corruption funds to the robbed populations", is expected to be debated and voted on, next Tuesday (March 13).

Bersih acting chairperson Shahrul Aman Mohd Saari said Malaysians were the "rightful beneficiaries" of the money.

"The Center to Combat Corruption and Cronyism (C4) and Bersih urge the MPs who will be debating the motion in the Swiss Parliament next week to consider the proposal put forth; to return a portion of the stolen funds that happened to be laundered in Switzerland, back to the rightful beneficiaries - the people of Malaysia," Shahrul said, reading from a statement at the Bersih office in Petaling Jaya this morning.

He also called for the money to be returned via an independent trust fund that is accountable to the public, and not to the Malaysian government.

"Without any action by the (Malaysian) government and its many limbs to persecute the culprits who enabled and benefitted from money laundered from 1MDB, it is not a viable option for funds to be returned to the very leaders who are part of a flawed system which allowed for such greed and rampant corruption to persist," Shahrul added.



The funds in question were seized by the Swiss government from several banks.

Swiss Finance Minister Ueli Maurer previously said that the funds had already flowed into the Federal Treasury because there were no claimants.

Swiss law allows the government to recover illegally-generated profits.

Minister of Finance II Johari Abdul Ghani (*photo*) has said that he is unaware if Putrajaya had any intention to claim the money.

Meanwhile, C4 executive director Cynthia Gabriel said she intends to brief Malaysian MPs once the Swiss Parliament votes on the above motion.

She also lamented that motions related to 1MDB have consistently been thrown out in the Dewan Rakyat,

“You must allow room for Parliament to debate important affairs,” Cynthia said.

Last April, the Swiss Attorney-General revealed that Malaysian authorities had turned down requests to cooperate on a money-laundering investigation linked to 1MDB.

Annabelle Lee

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