



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MINISTRY OF TOURISM & CULTURE AND TOURISM MALAYSIA EXPRESS CONDOLENCES TO FAMILIES AND NEXT OF KIN OF MH17

PUTRAJAYA, 18 July 2014: The Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia and Tourism Malaysia express their deepest condolences to the families and next of kin of the 298 passengers and crew members of Malaysia Airlines MH17.

“On behalf of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Tourism Malaysia, and fellow Malaysians, our sympathies, sincere thoughts, prayers and condolences go to each and every one affected by this unfortunate tragedy,” said the Minister of Tourism and Culture Dato’ Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz.

“This is a very difficult time for the families involved. We know that no amount of words can help ease the tremendous pain they are going through. We pray to the Almighty to give them the strength and courage to go through this trying moment. Our prayers go out to all their loved ones,” Dato’ Seri Mohamed Nazri continued.

As of now, Tourism Malaysia has not received information on any immediate cancellation of tour packages from tourists but it will continue to monitor the market reaction closely. Tourists from western Europe, western Russia, as well as Scandinavian and Benelux countries, use this flight sector to travel to Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand on Malaysia Airlines (MAS), which also code share with KLM. This is the peak period as many tourists from these markets are currently on a long summer break and normally they will use MAS to fly not only to Kuala Lumpur but also to other tourist destinations in the ASEAN region.

Last year, Malaysia received a total of 427, 995 tourists from Western Europe, with 83,955 tourists from the Netherlands. Besides that, the country also received 107,541 tourists from Eastern Europe, 548,729 tourists from Northern Europe, and 109,447 tourists from Southern Europe.

In conjunction with the celebration of Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) 2014, Tourism Malaysia has carried out various promotional efforts in the European markets. For the first four months of 2014, a total of 31,945 tourists from the Netherlands visited Malaysia. It was an increase of 13.5% compared to the same period in 2013. During this period, tourist arrivals from Eastern Europe were 55,771 (increased by 25.1%), Northern Europe – 227,545 (increased by 8.9%), Southern Europe – 46,043 (increased by 29.9%), and Western Europe – 179,574 (increased by 15.9%).



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Besides MAS, other airlines that fly to Malaysia from Europe include KLM, Air France, Lufthansa, Turkish Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Thai Airways, Air Astana, Uzbekistan Airways, Emirates, Qatar Airways, and Gulf Air.

Tourism Malaysia will continue to carry out its promotional efforts in these markets and work closely with its partners in the respective markets. In terms of advertising, Tourism Malaysia will also carry out in-market and online campaigns to promote Malaysia to tourists from the European markets.

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For more media releases, media info and media features on Malaysia's tourism industry, kindly visit the Media Centre of Tourism Malaysia's website at <http://www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my/>

MALAYSIA TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD OR TOURISM MALAYSIA is an agency under the Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Malaysia. Tourism Malaysia focuses on the specific task of promoting Malaysia at all levels. Since its inception, Tourism Malaysia has grown by leaps and bounds and it has emerged as a major player in the international tourism scene. In 2013, Malaysia registered 25.7 million tourist arrivals and RM65.4 billion in receipts, making tourism its second largest foreign exchange earner and the sixth highest contributor to its Gross National Income (GNI).

Malaysia is celebrating its fourth **VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR (VMY)** in 2014 with the theme "Celebrating 1Malaysia Truly Asia". The VMY 2014 promotional campaign has started in 2013 with a series of year-long special events and activities leading to VMY 2014. It will contribute to the Government's target to receive 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion in receipts by 2020, as outlined in the Malaysia Tourism Transformation Plan (MTTP) 2020.

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