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Malaysia's Collaborative Guidelines Recognised on Global Stage at IASP World Congress 2025

Kuala Lumpur, 19 June 2025 – The Communications and Multimedia Content Forum of Malaysia (Content Forum) was honoured to represent Malaysia at the 32nd International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) World Congress, held in Vienna, Austria, where it presented Malaysia's suicide prevention efforts including the newly launched **Guidelines for Ethical Reporting and Sharing of Suicide-Related Content**. The guidelines, launched earlier this month by Communications Minister YB Datuk Fahmi Fadzil, were selected from over 700 global abstract submissions to be featured at the prestigious congress, highlighting Malaysia's leadership in ethical content self-regulation and media engagement for suicide prevention.

The congress brought together more than 800 researchers, clinicians, policymakers and advocates from around the globe to share knowledge, exchange best practices, and collaborate on strategies to address this public health issue. Among countries represented were the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Ireland, Iran, India, Pakistan, Scotland, Brazil, Australia, Morocco, Ghana, Spain, Hong Kong, France, and Malaysia.

Speaking at Symposium 07: Media & Suicide (Part 1), Content Forum CEO Mediha Mahmood highlighted Malaysia's leadership in suicide prevention awareness through ethical content self-regulation and media engagement. Mediha presented the national Guidelines for Ethical Reporting and Sharing of Suicide-Related Content as part of a wider, ongoing initiative to foster responsible, empathetic, and harm-reducing communication around suicide across all media platforms.

The drafting of the Guidelines came as a result of a broad, multi-stakeholder collaboration, grounded in trust, inclusivity, and shared responsibility. With strong backing from the Ministry of Communications and the Ministry of Health, the initiative brought together key sectors to co-create a framework that is both practical and reflective of Malaysia's unique media and social landscape. This cross-sector commitment was instrumental in ensuring the Guidelines were not only comprehensive but also embraced by those tasked with putting them into practice.

This spirit of collaboration was also reflected during the symposium, with the presence of three distinguished members of the working group that developed the Guidelines, Prof Chan Lai Fong (UKM), Dr Ravivarma Rao Panirselvam (Hospital Miri), and Dr Ng Yin Ping (i-Life Suicide Prevention Association of Penang), whose on-ground experience and academic insight played a crucial role in shaping the Guidelines into what they are today.

"We're proud that the Guidelines were shaped not only by media practitioners, mental health experts, and those with lived experience, but also with strong support from the Ministry of Communications, the Ministry of Health and the National Centre of Excellence for Mental Health. Their trust in an industry-led, collaborative process was key to making this a truly

Malaysian model - one that others are now looking to with great interest. We're also honoured to have had the opportunity to share this initiative on the global stage," said Mediha.

International participants responded positively, noting the scale, inclusivity, and collaborative strength of Malaysia's approach. What stood out in particular was the active involvement of media organisations, not just as stakeholders to be informed, but as key contributors in shaping the Guidelines from the ground up.

In many countries, engaging the media on sensitive issues like suicide remains a major challenge, with efforts often met with resistance or limited buy-in, where such guidelines are typically developed by regulators or mental health advocates, often with minimal input from journalists or content creators. This has led to a narrow focus on news reporting, with limited engagement across the broader content ecosystem.

Malaysia's approach stood out as a departure from this norm. The country's ability to bring media practitioners into the process, as co-creators rather than passive recipients of regulation, was seen as a significant achievement. It demonstrated a shared commitment to ethical reporting, grounded in mutual respect and a genuine understanding of the media's role in suicide prevention. Delegates also expressed appreciation for the fact that the initiative is industry-led, supported by the government, and shaped through strong cross-sector collaboration.

This inclusive, trust-based model reinforces the value of Malaysia's self-regulatory framework under the Content Code, and the ongoing efforts by the Content Forum to promote content responsibility through education, guidance, and multi-agency partnerships.

Following the encouraging response at the IASP World Congress, the Content Forum is committed to continue working alongside its members, government partners and industry stakeholders to expand the reach of the Guidelines, deepen their training efforts, and support more creators, media professionals, and institutions in making safer, more compassionate content choices.

Content Forum also extends its appreciation to its members for their continued support and commitment to upholding ethical content standards, which have played a vital role in the success of this initiative.

For media inquiries or access to the Guidelines, please visit www.contentforum.my.

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ABOUT THE CONTENT FORUM

The Communications and Multimedia Content Forum of Malaysia (Content Forum) is an industry forum registered under the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) and designated by the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (CMA'98) to oversee and promote self-regulation of content over the electronic networked medium. The Content Forum consists of key players in the content industry, i.e., advertisers, advertising agencies, broadcasters, content creators/distributors, audiotext hosting service providers, advertising agencies, internet service providers, and civic groups.



Aimed at facilitating self-regulation, which provides an additional layer of consumer protection that complements the legal framework, the Content Forum is committed to governing and promoting the creation, distribution, and consumption of electronic-networked content.

As an industry self-regulatory body, the Content Forum comprises key members of the communications and multimedia content industry, including broadcasters, advertisers, content creators, internet access service providers, and civic groups. This dynamic and robust representation of industry practitioners ensures that content standards continue to be developed with the objective of establishing a level playing field in the industry.

The Content Forum is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Content Code ("the Content Code"). The Content Code was prepared by the Content Forum and first registered with MCMC on 1st September 2004. The Content Code is the principal source for industry self-regulation as it contains governing standards and best practises for content dissemination within the communications and multimedia industry in Malaysia. The main objective of the Content Code is to outline procedures of self-regulation that provides the platform for creativity, innovation and healthy growth of a fast-evolving industry.

The Content Forum houses a Complaints Bureau that is empowered to address all complaints relating to content disseminated over electronic networks. The Complaints Bureau is empowered to investigate possible breaches of the Content Code, mediate disputes, adjudicate cases, publish orders, and impose sanctions where necessary. The Complaints Bureau accepts complaints from industry players and the general public. Additionally, it plays an advisory role to any party that requires guidance on electronic content matters.

Issued by GO Communications on behalf of the Content Forum

For media enquiries, kindly contact:

GO Communications

Lim Huei Yuih, Senior Brand Director

+6012 635 3278

hueiyuih@gocomm.com.my

Celine Lau, Senior Brand Manager

+6012 962 2111

celinelau@gocomm.com.my