

Respecting differences and living together in peace

YESTERDAY, the world marked the International Day of Living

Together in Peace.

In 2017, the United Nations

General-Assembly declared the

Day would be marked annually on

May 16 "as a means of regularly

mobilising the efforts of the inter-

national community to promote

peace, tolerance, inclusion, and

solidarity. The Day aims to uphold

the desire to live and act together,

united in differences and diversity,

in order to build a sustainable

world of peace, solidarity and

harmony."

It is pertinent to note that those

four words – peace, tolerance,

inclusion, and solidarity – are

very relevant to Malaysia's

diverse peoples. Put simply, it is

about striving to be united within

our differences and diversity.

Living together in peace comes

from accepting differences and

having the ability to recognise,

respect and appreciate those who

are "other".

Mutual respect allows us to live

together in a peaceful and united

way, which is key in developing a

progressive, sustainable and fair

nation.

In times of division, the poten-

tial for fractured relations among

Malaysians must be firmly put to

rest for the sake of harmony and

peace.

Respecting others helps to

lessen social tensions. And I

believe respect is achieved when

issues such as meritocracy in

workplaces and in access to educa-

tion as well as the creation of

needs-based, fair and equitable

policies are addressed properly.

Respect is also enhanced in an

open society when we learn to

share information and experient-

es that promote understanding

and enlightenment.

Please heed the wise words of

Nelson Mandela, who said that

building a nation means building

a spirit of tolerance, love and

respect among its people.

SZE LOONG

STEVE NGEOW

Kajang

Selangor