

## NEWS CLIPPING – PRESS

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HEADLINE: MALAYSIA TO SEND MORE AID TO PHILIPPINES AS MARAWI STANDOFF ENTERS THIRD MONTH



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Asia Pacific

### Malaysia to send more aid to Philippines as Marawi standoff enters third month

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Malaysian Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein speaks to reporters on Jul 25, 2017.  
(Photo: Melissa Goh)

**KUALA LUMPUR:** As the standoff in the Philippine city of Marawi entered its third month, Malaysia is sending more aid to southern Philippines to ensure the internally displaced people do not easily fall prey to pro-Islamic State (IS) militants.

Malaysian Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein said on Tuesday (Jul 25), based on the ground reports he had received, the displaced people in Marawi need fresh water and medical help.

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Hence, in the second phase of its humanitarian mission, Malaysia will be sending water purification equipment and medical assistance to Marawi, including a team from the military religious corps known as Kagat.

"We are going to engage those who have been displaced in Marawi - those facing hardship. We have to know what their needs are, from initial findings drinking water and medical assistance, because ... if we don't engage them, they will join IS," said Hishammuddin.

"They have no other option. When people don't care for them, they take the easy option that has been promised by IS, which is a shortcut to heaven and also a family that will care for them. This is a false promise which I have found out in experience in Syria and Iraq."

Foreign militants who are reportedly fleeing the Middle East cannot be allowed to have a foothold in this region, Hishammuddin said, because the Islamic State terror network has announced their intention to set up a caliphate in the region that includes Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and extends to Japan.

"If they continue to have a foothold I can assure you more will come, this is what happened in Syria and Iraq and even in the West. Australia and New Zealand are monitoring closely because they (IS) already announced a caliphate in this region."

Hishammuddin, speaking after launching the Defence Services Asia Exhibition and Conference 2018 that will be held in Kuala Lumpur next April, also urged Manila to convene a special meeting among Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) defence ministers in Manila to share experiences and enhance intelligence cooperation.

He added that the current trilateral maritime patrol by Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines will be further expanded to include the participation of Brunei and Singapore to enhance safety and security in the Sulu Sea and fight the spread of IS militancy.

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