

## *Curriculum Vitae*

### **Zarizana Abdul Aziz**

#### **Education**

**Columbia University Law School**, New York, USA

Masters in Law (LL.M.) 2010

James Kent Scholar

Human Rights Fellow

Parker School Certificate for Achievement in International and Comparative Law

**University of Sydney Law School**, Sydney, Australia

Bachelors in Law (LL.B.) 1990

Admitted to Supreme Court of New South Wales, Australia (1990)

Admitted to High Court of Malaya, Malaysia (1992)

#### **Experience**

*Extensive experience:-*

- *on law reform towards protection against discrimination, including violence against women and promotion of gender equality at national, regional and international levels;*
- *working with various stakeholders including national governments, United Nations agencies, other international organisations, NGOs, academics, legal experts, religious authorities and religious scholars; and*
- *working in diverse settings and in different legal systems including plural legal systems.*

**Research Project: Developing Due Diligence Standards and Indicators on Violence against Women**, United States

September 2010 - present

*Researcher and Co-Director*

This is a two year global research project on developing due diligence standards and indicators on State obligations to prevent, protect, investigate, punish and provide reparations on violence against women housed at Northeastern University School of Law, Boston, USA.

**M/s K Ahmad & Yong, Advocates & Solicitors**, Malaysia

February 1992 - present

*Partner*

Undertook pro bono work, mostly in relation to policy and law reform pertaining to women's human rights, gender, and equality including to Malaysian Laws (Domestic Violence legislation, proposed Sexual Harassment legislation, review of Child Act, proposed Gender Equality legislation), Domestic Violence Act in Timor Leste for United Nations Population Fund and study and report on violence against women including acid throwing in Bangladesh (the International Commission of Jurists). Trained advocates and lawyers in court intervention briefs, particularly in relation to issues on women's rights and gender discrimination (amici briefs).

**United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)**, Bangkok May 2007 - Dec. 2008

*Consultant*

Trained and collaborated with local Aceh team comprising lawyers, academics, Islamic scholars and advocates to draft legislation on Women Empowerment and Protection of Women's Rights and to audit laws through a gender lens.

**University Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia (USM)** 1992 - 1993  
*Lecturer* in the laws of tort and contract. USM is a public university.

**Harcharan Law Tutorials, Penang, Malaysia** 1993 - 1994  
*Lecturer* in Public International Law for students taking external law examinations from UK colleges and universities.

**Asia Cause Lawyers Network (ACLN)** 2009 - present  
*Steering Committee Member*  
ACLN is a network of cause lawyers in Asia, who advocate for women's rights.

**Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML), London** 1994 - present  
*Director and former Program Implementation Committee Member*  
WLUML is an international solidarity network that provides information and support to women discriminated by laws. Networker since 1994, program implementation committee member since 2003, and director since 2006. Jointly with other directors, chart direction and policy of the network. Conducted WLUML's leadership institute. Undertook research on women and the law.

**Women's Centre for Change (formerly Women's Crisis Centre, WCC), Malaysia** 1992 - present  
*Former President and Member*  
WCC is a crisis intervention centre which is also involved in advocacy focusing on discrimination and violence against women and girls. Member since 1991, President (1999-2000 & 2005). Provided crisis intervention services particularly in legal counseling. Achievement include:- Incorporating a strong legal advocacy program including court research, amici briefs and law reform as well as establishing international networking. Developing international legal internship program. Organising jointly with WLUML an international roundtable meeting on *Mechanisms and Legislations to Promote Gender Equality* in 2005 and jointly with Asia Foundation an International Women and Justice Legal Experts Meeting on *Women in Detention* in 2004.

**Musawah Global Movement for Equality** 2009 - present  
Involved as legal expert. Musawah is a global movement for equality, justice and dignity in the Muslim family which seeks to work within the paradigms and frameworks of Islam, human rights and national laws.

**Malaysian Bar** 1992 - present  
*Former elected Bar Council Member (2009) and  
Former Co-Chairperson of the Human Rights Committee (2009)*  
The Malaysian Bar is the statutory professional body for lawyers. One of twelve Bar Council members elected for the 2009 term by the national membership of about 12,000 lawyers. The Human Rights Committee works on advocacy promoting human rights including implementing international human rights norms and treaty obligations. Deputy Chairperson in 2007-2008. Co-chairperson in 2009.

**Malaysian Youth Consultative Council** 2006 - 2008  
*Council Member*  
This is a national council established by the Ministry for Youth and Sports. Proposed and oversaw development of programmes for Malaysian youth.

**Methodist Girls School, Penang, Malaysia**

2004 - 2009

*Member of Board of Governors - Representative of the Ministry of Education*

The Board of Governors oversees the running of the school and students' extracurricular activities.

**RECENT CONSULTANCY / LEGAL EXPERT / TRAINING**

- *The Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women - Challenges, Good Practices and Opportunities*, 24-25 November 2010, Geneva (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights)  
Expert Workshop to discuss State practices in relation to violence against women.
- *National Action Plans on Violence Against Women* - September 2010, Trinidad (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, now part of UN Women)  
Expert Group Meeting to discuss National Action Plans on Violence against Women.
- *Gender and Islam* – October 2008, New York (United Nations Development Fund)  
Working group meeting to discuss and review a report prepared and commissioned by UNDP on “The Relationship between Gender and Islamic Law: A Comparative Study of Malaysia, Nigeria, Tunisia and Egypt” (UNDP)
- *Negotiating Equality through the Law* – 2<sup>nd</sup> training programme for Asia Cause Lawyers Network, 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2008, Kathmandu, Nepal  
*Trainer*
- *CEDAW Compliance Legislative Indicators for Asia Pacific*, 18-19<sup>th</sup> February 2008, Bangkok (United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM, now part of UN Women)  
Expert Group Meeting to discuss CEDAW legislative indicators in Nine Pacific Island Countries for wider application.
- *Feminisms in the Muslim World Institute* – November 2007, Malaysia (WLUML)  
*Trainer and organiser*  
The Institute was established to nurture, guide and train women advocates. The institute seeks to provide both substantive knowledge as well as strategic, advocacy and leadership skills. The 2007 institute was conducted over 12 days. There were 28 participants from 18 countries.
- *South East Asia Regional Conference of Young Progressives: Helping Build Gender-Fair Democracies*, 16-19<sup>th</sup> June 2007, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. *Trainer* (Frederich Ebert Stiftung)  
Trained youth involved in politics, government and NGOs who are interested in building progressive societies in their respective countries.
- *Expert Group Meeting on Good Practices pursuant to the United Nations Secretary-General in-depth study on all forms of violence against women in addressing violence against women*

(UN General Assembly resolution 58/185) 17-20 May 2005, Vienna (United Nations Division of Advancement of Women now part of UN Women)

Expert meeting to provide input and prepare papers on specific areas of good practices for incorporation into the in-depth study directed by the UN Secretary- General. The findings of the meeting contributed towards the publication of *Ending Violence against Women: From Words to Action - Study of the Secretary General* (United Nations Publication).

## RECENT LEGAL REFORM EFFORTS

- *Proposed Women's Empowerment and Protection of Women's Rights Legislation* (Aceh, Indonesia) 2007 - 2009 (UNIFEM)  
Consultancy to draft the proposed Women's Empowerment and Protection of Women legislation for Aceh, Indonesia. Trained local team lawyers, legal academics, advocates, religious scholars and legal drafters on gender equality, empowerment, role of law in society, gender and Islam and legislative drafting techniques. The *Women Empowerment and Protection of Women Qanun* was passed in October 2009.
- *Gender Audit of Indonesian and Aceh Legislation* (Aceh, Indonesia) – Consultancy to provide training on incorporating gender perspective into laws – 2008 - 2009, (UNIFEM)  
Trained a core team of lawyers, legal academics, advocates, religious scholars and legal drafters in Aceh, Indonesia, to audit legislations and policies with gender lens and to sharpen legislative drafting skills to reform laws.
- Seminar on *Mechanism and Legislation to Promote Gender Equality* (Aceh, Indonesia) in Aceh, 4-6 Dec 2006, Banda Aceh, Indonesia, (UNIFEM)  
Seminar to introduce the importance of gender equality and its compatibility within the Muslim context which was the preliminary step towards identifying and working with a local legislative drafting team to draft laws on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- *Draft Gender Equality Bill* (Malaysia) - principal drafter (Joint Action Group for Gender Equality, a coalition of Malaysian women's NGOs), 2005 - 2009  
The bill was presented to the Ministry for Women, National Unity and Family Development. The Ministry has in 2010 revived discussions on a gender equality bill.
- *Mechanisms and Legislations to Promote Gender Equality*, August 2005, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (WLUML and WCC). International round-table meeting on mechanisms and legislations to promote gender equality. The Malaysian draft gender equality legislation was also presented for critique by international experts at this meeting.
- *Draft amendments to the Marriage and Family Laws* (Malaysia), 2006, (jointly prepared in committee on behalf of the Bar Council of Malaysia ) - presented to the Attorney General's Chambers, Malaysia
- *Memorandum on Review and Amendments to Criminal Laws and Procedures* (Malaysia) - jointly prepared in committee (Joint Action Group for Gender Equality, a coalition of Malaysian women's NGOs), 2006 – submitted to the Malaysian Parliamentary Select Committee on review of criminal laws and procedures

- *Draft Sexual Harassment Bill* (Malaysia) - principal drafter (2002-2006) presented to the Deputy Minister for Human Resources, Malaysia and the Ministry for Women and Family Development on behalf of the women's groups
- *Draft amendments to the Islamic Family Laws* (Malaysia) - jointly prepared in committee on behalf of Sisters in Islam (2005) – presented to the Gender Advisor to the Prime Minister and Attorney General's Chambers, Malaysia
- *Fact Finding and Assessment Mission to Bangladesh on Acid Attacks and Domestic Violence*, September 2003, International Commission of Jurists  
One of three member mission to assess domestic violence and acid throwing, its causes, medical and legal responses, as well as the relationship between violence and economic empowerment. Conducted fact finding and studies on the incidences of and response to violence as well as proposed legislative and non-legislative intervention.
- *Formulation of Domestic Violence Legislation*, (Timor Leste) November 2000 and *Formulation of Policy Paper on Domestic Violence* (Timor Leste) November 2002, United Nations Transitory Authority for East Timor / United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Office for Promotion of Equality of Timor Leste  
Addressing heightened violence against the family immediately following independence of Timor Leste, the challenges and obstacles to legislation particularly those said to derive from culture and religion as well as discussing framework for and continuous input on the proposed legislation on domestic violence.
- *Memorandum on Review of the Child Bill 2000* (Malaysia) - jointly prepared in committee, May 2000 (WCC), presented to the Deputy Director for Ministry of National Unity and Social Development and Members of Parliament. This was a critique of the *Child Bill 2000* which tabled in Parliament.
- *Review and Proposals for Amendments to the Domestic Violence Act* (Malaysia) - principal drafter, March 1999 (WCC) – submitted to the Prime Minister's Department.

## **RECENT PAPERS PUBLISHED OR PRESENTED**

- *Culture, Power and Narratives in Domestic Violence Discourse* presented at *Domestic Violence in Asia : The Ambiguity of Family as Private - Public Domain*, 7-8 October 2010, National University of Singapore
- *Islam in the Constitutional Framework* in Rangita de Silva de Alwis (ed) : *Women Leading Change*, Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley College, USA (2010) : pp 22 – 44
- *Mechanisms to Promote Gender Equality: The Need for Legislation*, Dossier No. 29, *Women Living Under Muslim Laws* (2008) : pp 79 - 94.
- *Memorandum on Lifting of Malaysia's Reservation to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (principal drafter)* – May 2008 on behalf of the

Bar Council of Malaysia, submitted to the Ministry for Women, Family Development and National Unity, Malaysia

- *Gender Jihad – Friends and Foes from the Asian Perspective* presented at *Women & Islam – Between Empowerment and Oppression*, 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> March 2007, Cologne, Germany (Frederich Ebert Stiftung )
- *Need for Gender Equality Act* presented at the Seminar of Gender Equality in Kuala Lumpur organised by the Swedish Embassy in Malaysia (June 2006)  
This constitutes the first formal announcement that gender equality legislation is required in Malaysia and a draft would be prepared for discussion with the Ministry of Women and Family Development
- *Developing the Doctrine of Gender Equality – Sameness and Difference*, presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> Malaysian Law Conference in Kuala Lumpur, organised by the Malaysian Bar Council (November 2005)
- *Rights in Detention in Malaysia*, Women in Action, ISIS International Manila (2004)  
This is edited from a paper presented at International Legal Experts Meeting on Women and Justice in Malaysia (organised by Asian Women’s Fund and WCC)
- *Combating Sexual Harassment : The Way Forward* (jointly with Associate Professor Dr. Cecilia Ng) presented at the 11<sup>th</sup> Malaysian Law Conference, November 2002, Kuala Lumpur (Malaysian Bar Council)
- *Proposal for Sexual Harassment Laws in Malaysia*, May 2002 presented at International Roundtable Discussion on Sexual Harassment Strategies, Kuala Lumpur (organised by the Women’s Centre for Change)  
An expert from the International Labour Organisation was invited to provide a critique of the draft sexual harassment bill, of which I was the principal drafter. The bill was also tabled for open discussion with the other international experts invited to this roundtable discussion.
- *Women Victims in Criminal Cases and Court Proceedings* presented at International Legal Experts Meeting on Women and Justice, November 2001, Kyoto, Japan (Asian Women’s Fund)
- *Protecting Women’s Dignity and Rights in Court Proceedings* presented at International Legal Experts Meeting on Women and Justice, November 2000, Hakone, Japan (Asian Women’s Fund)