



Jul 2023

MONTHLY FUND PERFORMANCE UPDATE AIA BALANCED FUND

Investment Objective

The Fund is to maximize total returns with reasonable safety of principal through investment in a diversified portfolio of equity, fixed income securities and cash equivalent securities. The Fund is suitable for investors who are willing to take moderate risk in order to achieve a reasonable return.

Notice: Please refer to the Fund Fact Sheet for more information about the Fund.

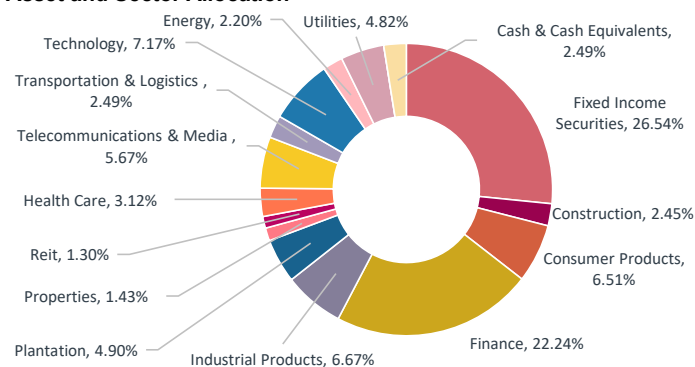
Fund Details

Unit NAV (31 Jul 2023)	: RM 4.11313
Fund Size (31 Jul 2023)	: RM 2,340.277 million
Fund Currency	: Ringgit Malaysia
Fund Inception	: 15 March 2000
Offer Price at Inception	: RM1.00
Fund Management Charge	: 1.20% p.a.
Investment Manager	: AIA Bhd.
Basis of Unit Valuation	: Net Asset Value
Frequency of Unit Valuation	: Daily

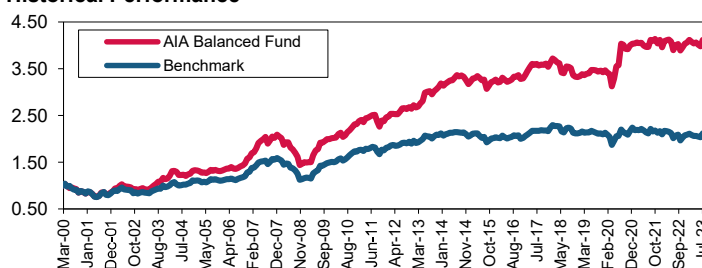
Top Holdings

1	MALAYSIA GOVERNMENT SECURITIES	7.16%
2	MALAYAN BANKING BHD	7.07%
3	CIMB GROUP HOLDINGS BHD	5.51%
4	PUBLIC BANK BHD	5.19%
5	TENAGA NASIONAL BHD	3.83%

Asset and Sector Allocation



Historical Performance



Cumulative Performance	1-Mth	6-Mth	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	Since Inception
Fund ^a	3.29%	-0.02%	2.76%	1.89%	16.01%	311.31%
Benchmark ^a	4.02%	0.04%	2.02%	-3.91%	-5.00%	111.55%
Excess	-0.73%	-0.06%	0.74%	5.80%	21.01%	199.76%

^a Calculation of past performance is based on NAV-to-NAV. This is strictly the performance of the investment fund, and not the returns earned on the actual premiums/contributions paid of the investment-linked product.

* 70% FBM 100 (Source: Bursa Malaysia) + 30% MGS All Index (Source: RAM QuantShop @ www.quantshop.com)

Notice: Past performance of the Fund is not an indication of its future performance.

Market Review

The FBMKLCI ("Index") posted a remarkable 6.0% Month-on-Month ("MoM") gain and closed at 1,459.43 pts on 31 July 2023. This market rally is driven by foreign buying, improved market sentiments following the launch of the Madani Economic Framework and National Energy Transition Roadmap, and the strengthening of the Malaysian ringgit ("MYR"). The Index outperformed the MSCI Asia Ex Japan Index, which rose 5.7% MoM in MYR terms over the same period. In July 2023, foreign investors returned as net buyers of MYR1.4 billion, while local institutions emerged as the largest net sellers with a net sell value of MYR748 million. Bursa Malaysia's average daily transaction value ("ADTV") rose by 9% MoM to MYR2.1 billion in July 2023. During the month, Petronas Chemical (+15.8%), IOI Corporation (+11.8%) and Dialog Group (+11.7%) were the key gainers while key detractors were Mr DIY (-7.5%), Westports (-3.8%) and Maxis (-1.5%). Sector wise, Property (+12%), Industrial Production (+7.5%) and Energy (+7.2%) were the key performers while REIT (+0%), Transport (+1.3%) and Telecommunication (+1.6%) were the key detractors. Major news during the month included the Malaysian government launched the Madani Economic Framework which outlined the government's policy direction for the next decade, promoting inclusive growth, a competitive economy and an equitable society. The Malaysian government also sets high-level objectives for key government blueprints and reviews, including the Energy Transition Masterplan (released on 27 July 2023), the New Industrial Master Plan, the 12th Malaysia Plan Mid-Term Review and the Budget 2024.

Malaysian Government Securities ("MGS") traded mixed in July 2023. Short-end yields came under pressure at the start of the month on expectations of tighter market liquidity and as market participants de-risked ahead of Bank Negara Malaysia's ("BNM") Monetary Policy Committee ("MPC") decision. Subsequently, local government bonds rallied and reversed some of their losses after the release of weaker-than-expected US Consumer Price Index ("CPI") data for June 2023, with the rally led by a good mix of buying flows from both onshore and offshore participants across the curve. Towards month-end, trading interests turned relatively subdued ahead of the key rate decision by the US Federal Open Market Committee ("FOMC") meeting, which eventually saw the US Federal Reserve ("Fed") hiking the federal funds rate by 25 bps following a pause in the May 2023 FOMC meeting. On the currency front, the Malaysia ringgit ("MYR") strengthened against the US dollar ("USD") by 3.42% to close at MYR4.5070 as at end-July 2023. MGS levels as of end-July 2023 were: 3Y at 3.49% (-1 bps), 5Y at 3.60% (- bps), 7Y at 3.76% (+2 bps), 10Y at 3.83% (-2 bps), 15Y at 4.02% (+1 bp), 20Y at 4.11% (+2 bps) and 30Y at 4.22% (+8 bps).

Foreign net inflows continued for the 6th successive month in June 2023, accelerating to MYR5.2 billion (May 2023: +MYR3.0 billion). Foreign holdings in MGS and Government Investment Issue ("GII") inched up to 23.4% in June 2023 (May 2023: 23.2%).

There were three government securities auctions during the month: 10Y MGS 11/33 auction with a tender size of MYR5.5 billion drew a bid-to-cover ("BTC") ratio of 2.64x at an average yield of 3.860%, 7Y GII 9/30 reopening auction with a tender size of MYR5.0 billion drew a BTC ratio of 2.295x at an average yield of 3.788% and 3Y MGS 7/26 reopening auction with a tender size of MYR4.5 billion drew a BTC of 1.908x at an average yield of 3.483%.

Malaysia's industrial production index rebounded 4.7% Year-on-Year ("YoY") in May 2023 (April 2023: -3.3% YoY), led by growth across Mining (+2.9%), Manufacturing (+5.1%) and Electricity (+5.0%). Malaysia's unemployment rate was unchanged at 3.5% in May 2023 (April 2023: 3.5%). BNM's foreign reserves increased to USD111.8 billion as at 14 July 2023 (30 June 2023: USD111.4 billion), sufficient to finance 5.1 months of imports of goods and services and is 1.0x of short-term external debt. Malaysia's exports posted a double-digit decline of 14.1% in June 2023 (May 2023: -0.7%) on lower exports of manufactured goods such as petroleum products, palm oil-based manufactured products, chemicals & chemicals product, as well as lower exports of agricultural and mining goods. Imports decelerated by a wider 18.9% YoY (May 2023: -3.3% YoY) due to the fall in imports of intermediate goods, consumption goods and capital goods. As a result, trade surplus widened to MYR25.8 billion (May 2023: +MYR15.7 billion). Malaysia's headline CPI for June 2023 decelerated further to 2.4% YoY (May 2023: 2.8% YoY). Deceleration was noted in the Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages, Housing, Utilities & Other Fuels and Transport sectors. Core inflation, which excludes the more volatile prices of fresh food as well as administered prices of goods by the government, increased more slowly at 3.1% (May 2023: +3.5%). 1H 2023 headline inflation now stands at 3.2%.

On the primary corporate space, notable issuances included MYR3.5 billion Sarawak Energy Berhad IMTN, MYR1.5 billion Johor Corporation IMTN, MYR935 million Cagamas IMTN and MYR700 million Cagamas MTN. There was one rating revision in July 2023. MARC Ratings downgraded the rating on TG Excellence Berhad's MYR3.0 billion Perpetual Sukuk Wakalah Programme to A+IS(cg) from AA-IS(cg), reflecting the continued weakness in Top Glove's financial performance. MARC Ratings also revised WCT Holdings' ratings outlook to negative from stable on the back of persistently high leverage position that WCT Holdings has not been able to address in a meaningful way. The rating action has also factored in the group's weakening liquidity position as cash reserves have been used to support the group's operations in recent operations.

Market Outlook

We are cautiously optimistic on the equity market in the near term. We are of the view that we have already seen the peak of the US Federal Reserve's ("Fed") hawkishness and equities valuation has been partially adjusted downwards accordingly. Investors are now watching the macro data closely to gauge the extent of the recession in the US and the timing of a fed rate cut going forward. Over in Asia, China's economic reopening was disappointing with weaker than expected recovery as consumer and corporate confidence remained soft with limited government stimulus. Domestically in Malaysia, we expect a better outlook given the lower political risk premium with a relatively more stable unity government coupled with corporate earnings recovery post the expiry of the one-off prosperity tax. Downside risks to the market could stem from a prolonged deep US recession, worsening geopolitical tension, weak China economic recovery and domestic politics.

For Fixed Income, recent inflation readings and economic data from the US have shown signs of moderation. Although the US Fed continues to reiterate the need to maintain tighter monetary policy amidst robust labour market data, stresses in the US banking sector have called into question the ability of financial institutions to absorb further tightening in financial conditions. Domestically, BNM has kept the overnight policy rate ("OPR") unchanged at its recent MPC meeting. Against the backdrop of moderating inflation expectations as well as growth outlook in 2H2023, the possibility of further OPR hikes for the rest of the year may be remote at this juncture, barring the uncertain timing of subsidy rationalization. For 2023, we expect rates volatility to linger due to uncertainties surrounding central banks' future monetary policy moves on the back of differing and changing views as market conditions evolve.