

It is with great pleasure that I welcome all participants to the 4th Melaka International Youth Dialogue.

The Malaysian Ministry of Youth & Sports is pleased to note that you have chosen the theme of *youth participation in decision making* for this years MIYD. This is an important issue that calls for young people to be actively involved in the life of their society within their nation and in the world at large.

Young people have bountiful energy, enthusiasm and zeal and when they are given opportunity to engage in constructive activity these attributes develop to allow every youth to contribute positively to their communities. The Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports aims to enhance and engage young people in all aspects of decision making in Malaysia for this reason and our National Youth Policy ensures that youth participation takes place in decision making at the highest of levels meeting our obligations under article 12 of the United Nations Charter of the Rights of the Child.

As each of us work towards creating a progressive global society the Melaka International Youth Dialogue brings together youth and the organizations that represent them from around the world and presents them with the opportunity to learn in an environment that has been designed to meet each of your needs. It will be a wonderful and unique opportunity that allows each of you, who come from very different backgrounds to build relationship by sharing knowledge and experiences that transcend national boundaries. It is an experience that will change each of your lives and one that present you with the opportunity to experience the proud cultural and historical heritage of Malaysia.

I encourage you to take what knowledge and skills you learn back to your local communities and utilize it there for it is within your own communities that you can bring about the most effective positive change.

I would like to give a special tribute to the World Assembly of Youth for convening this important dialogue and also acknowledge the support provided by the Melaka State Government, Malaysian Youth Council, Asian Youth Council, UNICEF and all other partners and contributors to the event.

I wish you a pleasant stay in Malaysia and hope that you will come back again to experience its beauty again in the future.