

SPEECH BY RT. HON. DATIN PADUKA SERI ROSMAH MANSOR

AT THE LUNCHEON TALK OF THE

11TH MELAKA INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DIALOGUE

“SHAPPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENTREPRENEURS”

@ 1200 HRS, ON 28TH JUNE 2011

EVERLY RESORT MALACCA, MELAKA, MALAYSIA

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Hello everyone,

I am very thankful to Allah S.W.T. for His Grace, that I am able to be with you today for the Luncheon Talk of the 11th Melaka International Youth Dialogue or else known as MIYD. I would like to thank the organizers for inviting me to deliver this keynote address.

I am also glad to be here with all of you for this important initiative that will provide a forum not only for improving the well being of World Assembly of Youth members, but also in articulating and addressing the challenges facing the youth in the areas of improving their economy. It is a privilege to be among the present entrepreneurs and also the future enterprising entrepreneurs of the world.

I am very optimistic that the 11th Melaka International Youth Dialogue with the theme “Shaping the Next Generation of Entrepreneurs” will indeed, challenge the youth delegates present here and that they will benefit from the many empowerment activities to be held this week. I know that you my dear young people who are vibrant with life and full of enthusiasm will excel in this area with the right guidance and skills provided. We are here today to support that zest and invest in shaping you to be successful entrepreneurs of the future. I believed in education and the development of our future leaders and thus make this dialogue in Melaka a very pertinent and significant event in history.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am a strong proponent in advancing, developing and nurturing program for our youth. It is important that we should empower our youth to reach a higher plateau at every level they are involved in. Educating and training them with the proper skills required for the tasks before them. The youth are an important asset in the driving force of a nation development. The world population has reached its seventh (7) billion mark this year and fifty percent (50%) of them are the youth. We cannot and must not deny the fact that we need to get them geared up and ready to face the many challenges that the world has to offer. We need them with the energy and synergy that they have to be channeled accordingly for success especially in the economy of the nations.

It is truly important for us to come to the realization that the youth is not only a vital source of the development of a nation but they are also a change agent. The youths are the pioneers of economic, social, political and cultural transformation and change driving force. They are the important asset of the

nation because of their courage, innovativeness, inquisitiveness and high level of self-confidence, which is also considered to be a main source of nation building. Given that youth are the backbone of nations from both the qualitative and quantitative perspectives, it is essential for us to formulate and take as a whole the development of our youth and include their capacity in the mainstream of national development. We must assist in the imparting of loyalty of youths to the nation, and one of the ways is by fulfilling the basic needs of the youth and promoting basic values and norms.

The principles of equality and equitable distribution, individual freedom, universal principles of human rights, democratic values and norms, protection and promotion of ethnic, linguistic and environmental heritages and co-existence must all be taken in full consideration. The youth are the important human resources of the nation. Their contribution is necessary and in order to forge their involvement we need to develop their capacity in the nation development including economic, social, political and cultural spheres.

World Assembly of Youth has really hit the nail on the issue of young people and entrepreneurship. In order to shape the next generation of entrepreneurs we must build up capacity inherent in them in order to build up an uncontaminated social life founded on justice and morality. There are many ways that we can contribute to their growth process. We have to work together in developing their creativity, systematic behavior, entrepreneurship, civic sense and responsibility. We must create many opportunities for them to participate in nation building programs, supporting their creativity and innovation in the areas of entrepreneurship. The youth are looking to us as an example in their walk in this world, we want to shape and create young entrepreneurs that are bold, risk takers, innovative, possess integrity and a

team player among their peers and willing to step out and create paths for others to follow locally and internationally.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Entrepreneurs without borders, bringing new ideas, visions and businesses that will build up their sense of worth, economic and sustainability throughout the world. We need to enhance the capacity of our young women and young men to effectively participate in their effort for the development of the nation; we need to increase and improve their access to education; we need to make more capital resources available for them, to enable them embark on productive ventures; we need to invest in science and technology and the training of our young women and young men in appropriate skills.

It is an escapable fact that the youth constitute the most socially active and energetic segment of the population of every country. They are endowed with energy, creativity and dynamism and being the pride of every nation, it is they who will constitute the driving force needed to move our nations forward. They have the greatest potential to contribute positively to the nation and we must tap on their resources.

Another way, we can shape our youth in entrepreneurship, is to empower them. We must show forth to them the choices in life to enable them to make informed decisions. Empowering them requires a certain obligation from us; we must train them to become self-reliant citizens. There has to be emphasis on appropriate education and training for them to understand and appreciate all that is happening in the world around them. We need to instill in them the values of good democracy and good governance. This is the prerequisite for national development and international peace.

We are always on the lookout for youth to be in leadership in the different areas to develop the future economy of the nation. There are so many segments in empowering and in providing a supportive environment for our young entrepreneurs.

Some of the ways for the support to be shown would be:

- ❖ To promote youth entrepreneurship by fostering the delivery of relevant skills training and real-life work experiences;
- ❖ To promote entrepreneurship as a desirable career path helping to grow our knowledge-based workforce;
- ❖ To maximize every opportunity for youth, to learn life skills and have access to valuable entrepreneur support;
- ❖ To enable meaningful mentorship program and networking with entrepreneurial expertise and guidance;
- ❖ To encourage and foster experience based learning prospects where the exploration of self employment, application of their learning and the gaining of confidence can be accumulated.

There has to be a collaborative effort by the leadership across private, public and non-profit sectors and those in the service providers to assist them in their entrepreneurial endeavors. Any program on entrepreneurship that involves the youth must be focused and driven by the true needs of the young entrepreneurs.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In Malaysia, the level of youth engagement in self-employment or entrepreneurship is not as high as one would imagine and expect. Nonetheless, youth entrepreneurial efforts are lauded by the government and society, especially in these current times of economic crisis. Prominent governmental agencies such as the Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia and The Institute of Youth Development Research Malaysia (IPPBM) has organized various programs, training, and research pertaining to youth development, in entrepreneurship. The government also organizes entrepreneurship program in schools, public universities and through various public youth organizations aiming to cultivate entrepreneurship potentials among the young people (Ninth Malaysia Plan, 2006). About RM5.4 billion has been allocated in the Ninth Malaysia Plan (RMK 9) by the government for youth development through various youth skills training and leadership (Ninth Malaysia Plan, 2006).

The ninth challenge in the Malaysia 2020 vision is the challenge of establishing a prosperous society, with an economy that is fully competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient. We believe that youth entrepreneurship development is a long term strategy and any programs conducted are sustainable over time.

Vision Rakan Muda is "A New Vision for the Youth", a part of the development of Vision 2020, is the Malaysian blueprint for social and economic development for the country. It was created to effectively capture the imagination of our youth. To make them purposeful, dynamic partners and active contributors in the development of the goals and strategies of Malaysia. There are ten (10) lifestyles in the program but I want to zero in on the Rakan

Wirausaha dan Wiramahir or Entrepreneurship. Here is where the dream to manage and have an enterprising career in business or self-management is enhanced. They are given the needed exposure, advice, motivation and resource which enables the youth to gain knowledge that is beneficial and required to achieve the ultimate success.

I am well aware that all of you present today have the same desire and purpose to see the youth of our future be fully prepared especially in the areas of entrepreneurship. Their success means success for us as individuals, as a community, as a society and as a nation. Let us come together and make a firm decision with one accord that we will do all that is needed and required to shape the next generation of entrepreneurs. We have many successful entrepreneurs who are willing to contribute their time and effort to train, to empower and to guide the youth. We have to be genuine in what we do for them as we are passing on traits, visions, ideas, characteristics, enthusiasm and the list goes on to our youth.

One day soon they will be in our place, standing and encouraging in the building up of their next future generation of leaders. Let us not fail them because of our own fears and shortcomings. I am sure that we will learn a great deal from them. Remember in life we learn more from watching, observing and living in the school of life.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you an informative and successful dialogue!

Once again, I would like to thank you all for giving me these few minutes to share my perspective of entrepreneurship with you. Thank you.