

DRAFT SPEECH

11TH MELAKA INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DIALOGUE

“SHAPPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENTREPRENEURS”

27-29 JUNE 2011

EVERLY RESORT MALACCA, MELAKA, MALAYSIA

Distinguished guests,

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

I am optimistic that the 11th Melaka International Youth Dialogue with the theme “Shaping the Next Generation of Entrepreneurs” will indeed, challenge the youth 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 the area of entrepreneurship 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 event in Melaka very pertinent and significant.

In 1994, under the Malaysian Vision 2020 a new program and idea was launched specifically for the youth. It is called the Rakan Muda; it is a “New Vision for the Youth”. The main core of this program is to produce the highest potential for generation of youth to support national development goals. This program is designed to enable young people to find their own identity and generation.

As a physical entity, Rakan Muda is an all-inclusive, ground breaking youth focal point; created to effectively capture the imagination of the young people. We want our youth to purposeful and active contributors in nation building. They are without a doubt our biggest dynamic partners. Rakan Muda is a 100% "Malaysia Incorporated" effort. A world's first, where the resources of every sector of the nation's economy was pooled together for one singular purpose: the strengthening of its youth.

Briefly, I would like to share with the ten(10) different components that are evident in the Rakan Muda program.

RAKAN SUKAN (SPORTS)

Malaysia is sports-loving. From water and racquet sports, athletics, bowling, right up to weight training - the youth can try it all. Participation also opens many avenues for self-development and personal satisfaction by giving our young people opportunities to strike gold.

RAKAN WAJADIRI (MARTIAL ARTS)

Martial arts offer not just a healthy lifestyle pursuit but also teach our youth self-discipline, whilst building their confidence. As a multi-ethnic country, participants can learn the self-defence skills of the different communities.. Study of these arts also instills the values of mental alertness, concentration and patience. Training builds the determination to persevere against all odds. Furthermore, as exponents, they will be helping to preserve these arts for the coming generations.

RAKAN CINTA ALAM (THE ENVIRONMENT)

Malaysia is a country blessed with a rich and diverse natural heritage. This programme aims at opening the eyes of participants to the conservation and appreciation of our natural environment. Under the guidance of experts, the youth will rediscover the magic of historical sites, virgin forests, ancient caves right up to the study of the cosmos as well as understanding the importance of conservation and preservation of our natural heritage.

RAKAN SENI BUDAYA (CULTURE & ARTS)

Culture, like a fingerprint, reflects the uniqueness of one's national identity. Participants can develop their creative writing skills. Refine their talent for calligraphy. Learn about theatre. Take up new skills like batik painting or even photography. Explore new dimensions in visual art. No matter what they choose, participants will be given every avenue to explore and develop their interests.

RAKAN REKA CIPTA (INNOVATIONS)

For the country to progress, it needs innovators and those who dare go beyond the ordinary. This lifestyle programme opens a whole new world of discovery, innovation, technological leaps, analytical skills - to excite the mind's of our youth. Infused with a pioneering spirit and fresh perspectives, they can get ready to take on the new challenges ahead. This will give them the skills and confidence to steer the country's drive towards industrialization.

RAKAN WIRUSAHA DAN WIRAMAHIR (ENTREPRENEURSHIP)

Our enterprising youth will gain the professional advice needed to start a business. First-hand exposure will be given to expanding business ventures. The values of business networking will be underscored. Training sessions will be organised under the direction of the private sector to motivate youths to upgrade their skills and refine their talents, giving them the encouragement to pursue their dreams with zeal. Because if they succeed, the nation also succeeds.

RAKAN KECERGASAN (PHYSICAL FITNESS)

A healthy mind builds a healthy body. By taking up a lifestyle centered around health and fitness, the youth will be prepared both mentally and physically to face the challenges of tomorrow. This lifestyle programme exposes them to the finer points of athletics, aerobic exercises, endurance tests, mass gym routines and the excitement of physical fitness. Participation in these programmes will inculcate a respect for the mind and body and the will to resist the many social ills. Factors which are essential to them is enjoying a long, productive life.

RAKAN MASYARAKAT (COMMUNITY SERVICE)

One of the main aims of Vision 2020 is the realization of a Caring Society. To help the young people understand their role in society, this lifestyle programme exposes them to every aspect of social service. They will gain the leadership skills to make them assets to the community, particularly in times of crisis. Exposure in first aid and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) will hold them in good stead. They can also choose to learn counseling skills to mentor the young or develop the talents necessary to guide the handicapped. Whatever they learn, it will be of benefit to the neighborhood and the community at large.

RAKAN REKREASI (RECREATION)

The youth of today are dynamic and full of enthusiasm. They need outlets through which to direct their energies. A wonderful way is the taking up of a healthy recreational activity. Mountain climbing, canoeing, and indoor activities like chess or scrabble or traditional pastimes like top spinning are amongst the many interesting activities lined up to engage the youth in fun-filled activities. These activities will teach them the values of self-discipline, will also give them the motivation to take on bigger and better challenges. But more importantly, it allows for the strengthening of the family unit.

BRIGED RAKAN MUDA (UNIFORMED CORPS)

This has been created as an elite corp. of youth leaders equipped to deal with every adversity: physical or mental. Envisioned as the model of today's youth who will be tomorrow's leaders, it symbolizes the building of moral

integrity against social ills. Participants will be exposed to a wide variety of skills that will help them be lead players in the community.

We want to prepare them to face the future gregariously and boldly, standing firm against the tides of life and winning the battle. In order to accomplish that, we at strive hard in our vision and planning to equip the young people, for they are the future entrepreneurs, leaders, teachers, trainers, activists for our nation.

We empowered the participants by improving their self-esteem, resilience, assertive behavior and the alignment of competency and leadership. We enhance excellent human capital and reduce their involvement in illegal racing activities. We encourage their involvement in the community through voluntary participation

All of these are vital as we need to show them that we care not only in words but also in action. Every step and measure we take that affects even one young person makes an impact among their peers. We must not only set the examples but we must also walk alongside them, be their guide and their mentor.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very encouraged with the work of World Assembly of Youth among the young people around the world. They have demonstrated their practical readiness to address not only the concerns of the youth, but also the challenges to improve their economic status.

I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to youth organizations, youth leaders and community leaders and NGO's and others to extend their support to work of reaching, equipping, educating, empowering and the

training of business skills of our youth who are our future leaders globally. Our Rakan Muda program is supported strongly by the NGOs and community leaders and we now have a few millions young people who are involved in this program.

The youth constitute the largest segment of most societies globally and I believe that it is hard to have a meaningful national development without the involvement or participation of the youth. It is imperative that we all join hands in the effort to address the challenges constraining the development of the full potential of our young people.

The creation of adequate employment opportunities represents to most critical challenge. What an awesome advantage we have here this week to totally center our attention and focus in equipping our youth in the areas of entrepreneurship. It has always been my many aspirations to advance development in the lives of young people that will change their economic lifestyles.

I urge, you, the young people that are present this week for the Dialogue to immerse yourself in the discussion and workshops; do take full advantage of what is being offered to you. The speakers for the next few days have been chosen specifically to help prepare you to be great entrepreneurs of the future. They have walked where you are now learning to experience.

Glean from their journey as they share their experiences, the ups and down and the joy of success. Learn to network with others and discover ways on how you can start your own enterprises. Let us all facilitate the appropriate framework in shaping the next generation of entrepreneurs. We need new and young entrepreneurs who are willing to be risk takers and uphold high standards of integrity, discipline and commitment in their business endeavors.

Our future entrepreneurs need to work hard and be aware and shun lifestyles that will expose them to the dangers of modern day society. Entrepreneurship and small business creations are the growth of any economy. I would like to encourage the young people to be excited about entrepreneurship and make efforts to expand the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be successful entrepreneurs.

I would like to see the young people take their position in the society and seek the business leadership positions with confidence, as the country you are from is very much yours as it is for those who lead you today. Help each other with the challenges of modern-day living, for it is in helping one another and working together that you not only become strong but also acquire your objectives as young entrepreneurs. Given the opportunity to develop their own businesses, young people will gain real life skills that can only be gained by doing.

These LIFE skills include business management, finances, leadership service, public speaking, problem solving and so much more.

With these remarks, it is now my pleasure to formally launch/open the 11th Melaka International Youth Dialogue and to wish you success in all your endeavors.

Thank You and have a great and successful dialogue.