

**SPEECH BY YAB DATUK SERI MOHD ALI MOHD RUSTAM**

**CHIEF MINISTER OF MALACCA**

**AT THE OPENING OF THE**

**INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WORK CAMP**

**Ayer Keroh Recreational Forest, Malacca**

**May 15, 2002**

I am pleased to welcome you all to Malaysia, and to the state of Malacca, for this Malaysian International Youth Work Camp. I am happy to see all the different nationalities represented here, and I believe that you shall enjoy your stay here in Malacca.

The Malaysian International Youth Work Camp is organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Malaysia, in conjunction with the World Assembly of Youth, Malaysian Youth Council and the Scouts Association of Malaysia. It coincides with the National Youth Day of Malaysia, which will be celebrated in Malacca on May 15. The state government of Malacca has a very progressive policy of supporting youth and youth-related organisations. We would like to invest in the future of our state and our country, to ensure that we have good leaders in the coming generations.

At this camp, the selected theme is on volunteerism. This is a very important element that is often lacking in young people. In this age of information technology and rapid development, we often forget about the importance of volunteerism and helping our neighbours. It is now, more than ever, that we need volunteers to assist the less fortunate and needy.

We are now living in a globalised society, in which the role of the volunteer is becoming increasingly important. Globalisation is supposed to join the world together, so that all states can act together as one entity. However, as far as we have seen, this Globalisation has caused divisions between the developed and the developing nations. It is this division that gives volunteers their role in transforming the world.

In one side of the world, there are people who live in luxuries, who consume abundant food and water, and who have plentiful resources, many of which they import from developing countries. In this world, there is capital, there is employment for most of the population, and the life expectancy age is high.

On the other side of the world, there are some who live in poverty and suffering. A world in which there is insufficient water, insufficient nutrition, inadequate shelter. In this world there is high unemployment, and life expectancy is constantly lowered by the increasing health pandemics.

In spite of these differences, there remains one common theme in both worlds: the ultimate desire for peace, justice and equality. How can we unite these world and create equality and peace in this interconnected maze of political economies?

It is certain that all people of the world must be involved in order to create a sustainable development. The role of the volunteer world in this globalised world will increase, as the volunteer becomes a powerhouse, at the helm of this transition. The volunteer has a role as the initiator, the doer, and the stakeholder.

The role of the volunteer as the initiator is a very important one. The position of the volunteer is one that is very different from any other position because it encourages and consists of people from all walks of life. All of these different perspectives that volunteers come from provide him or her with the opportunity to view the world from all angles. This helps the volunteer to identify the vulnerabilities that are present in society. Once the vulnerabilities have been identified, the volunteer is able to devise a plan of action that will focus on relieving this vulnerability.

Although there are thousands of organisations around the world focused on tackling the inequalities of the world, they are not able to identify all issues. Yet the volunteer, who comes from a variety of backgrounds, is more easily able to identify the disparities and initiate a resolution.

As the volunteer takes on the role of the initiator, he or she is then put in the role of a doer as well. When the volunteer formulates a plan of action to address the vulnerabilities of society, he or she automatically becomes a doer. Therefore a volunteer becomes a doer who acts with organisations, the community and other volunteers in order to bring about positive change.

The role of a stakeholder is also fundamental for the volunteer. If a volunteer initiates and executes a plan, he becomes a stakeholder in ensuring the success of the project, not just because of the time and effort put in, but also because a positive outcome will have an effect on the volunteer,

In all of this, the role of the young volunteer must not be forgotten. Young people are the greatest treasures in the world. We are preparing the world for them to inherit, and thus our actions will cause their reactions. Although they may not have as much experience as adults have, they possess the vitality and energy to accomplish anything. As Nelson Mandela once said: *"Young people are capable, when aroused, of bringing down the towers of oppression and raising the banners of freedom."*

As you go through this Malaysian International Youth Work Camp, remember that you, the youth, are the greatest stakeholders in the affairs of the world. As globalisation begins to take place in the world now, it will settle and

become part of the foundation of the world in the future. You, as participants in this work camp can form your miniature global community, and we hope that you will set the example here, of how all world civilisations could one day live in peace, justice and equality.

Finally, I hope all participants can develop and display the characteristics of volunteerism, sportsmanship, teamwork, exemplary leadership and intercultural understanding.

The state government would like to extend its appreciation to the Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia, for organising this meeting, as well as the Scouts Association of Malaysia, the Malaysian Youth Council and the World Assembly of Youth.

We hope that one day Malacca can become a convention centre of choice, as we can offer good hotel and conference facilities, in the beautiful surroundings of the historic city of Malacca. Several international youth meetings are held year, including the annual Malacca International Youth Dialogue.

I thank you for coming to Malacca and to Malaysia, and I hope that you enjoy yourselves here!

Thank you.