



MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

SPEECH TEXT
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FOR:
STAKEHOLDERS INAUGURAL APPRECIATION
CEREMONY FOR UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

DATE | TIME:
16TH MARCH 2023 (THURSDAY) | 8:00 PM

VENUE:
HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL KUALA LUMPUR

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

1. **Alhamdulillah**, praise be to Allah SWT. With His grace and blessing, we can be together in this auspicious event of the Stakeholders Inaugural Appreciation Ceremony for UUM.
2. I would like to congratulate Universiti Utara Malaysia, particularly the Islamic Business School, for this event today.
3. Tonight marks two key highlights of UUM's strategic collaboration with the industry.
4. First, FWD Takaful's contribution of RM 15 million to UUM as the Endowment Fund for the Social Takaful Fund.
5. From my perspective, this Endowment Fund is truly a trailblazer for upholding financial inclusion and addressing economic inequality. This is a move towards a more equitable and sustainable financial system for our present and future generations.
6. Moreover, this contribution is an endorsement of the quality of education, research and community programs that the university provides.
7. This move sows the seeds for greater opportunities for increased collaboration and enhanced research.
8. Indeed, the success of every university depends on the support of society and industry.
9. Universities are never meant to be isolated entities. Far from being disengaged ivory towers.
10. Universities exist within a broader and holistic ecosystem of stakeholders. The government, the industry, the local society and the international community.
11. The success of the university is intricately linked to the success of that ecosystem.
12. Thus, universities must continue to be relevant. We must strive to be engaged, committed and connected to address the issues in our community.

13. We must contribute innovatively to new business ideas and industrial solutions. We must take this responsibility seriously to ensure universities remain at the forefront of innovation and progress.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. Second, I was also made to understand that UUM is exploring an international strategic collaboration with the Banking and Finance Academy of Uzbekistan.
15. On this special occasion, please allow me to extend my warmest welcome and appreciation to our friends from Uzbekistan. Thank you for investing in this exciting collaboration.
16. It was only last week that I personally extended an invitation to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of Uzbekistan to visit Malaysia to discuss further how both countries can work together on human capital development.
17. This is truly a testament to Malaysia's core strategic interest in Central Asia.
18. Central Asia has a rich cultural heritage and intellectual tradition, with a long history of scholarship in fields such as mathematics, astronomy, and literature.
19. Malaysia recognizes the value of engaging and building bridges between the different cultures and knowledge systems, to forge a better future together.
20. That is why this collaboration with the Banking and Finance Academy of Uzbekistan is a great milestone for both countries.
21. In addition, this strategic collaboration spearheads opportunities for lifelong learning.
22. In the past, it was a commonly held belief that once we graduate from university, our education is complete, and we can rest on our laurels. However, this notion couldn't be further from the truth.

23. In this ever-changing world of complex challenges and disruptive technology, we need to constantly improve to stay ahead of the curve.
24. We need to be willing to return to universities to learn and relearn. We need to equip ourselves with the resilience needed, to face a world marked by shocks and abnormal forces.
25. To this end, we must open up our universities to provide the knowledge and skills that our generation needs to navigate this increasingly complex landscape successfully.
26. We need to educate more industry and business leaders. To equip leaders in the government and stakeholders in bureaucracy. To empower a generation of innovators, visionaries and game changers.
27. Hence, we must be innovative and forward-thinking in our approach to education. We must be open to international cooperation and collaboration.
28. We must embrace new technologies, new methodologies, and new ways of thinking to be ready to tackle the challenges of the future.

Esteemed guests,

29. As outlined in my New Year's Mandate, the Ministry of Higher Education is committed to serve as Malaysia's brain trust.
30. We are committed to strengthen and expand our intellectual resources, to be better equipped to promote national development.
31. To make this a reality, we will ensure all our universities remain competitive on national and the international front.
32. And that is why I applaud UUM for spearheading industry and international collaboration for greater prospects.
33. I believe that with these strong and meaningful collaborations, UUM can be a trailblazer for other universities. To increase efforts in propelling Malaysia to the forefront of world-class higher education programs.

34. Our hope is that with these high-impact programs, we can all work together to produce egalitarian, knowledgeable, and highly cultured citizens, in line with Malaysia Madani.

Wabillahi Taufik Wal Hidayah. Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.