



KEMENTERIAN PENGAJIAN TINGGI

SPEECH
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NETWORKING SESSION WITH
LADY HEADS OF MISSION IN MALAYSIA

22 SEPTEMBER 2022 | THURSDAY | 12.30 P.M.
ZENITH HOTEL, PUTRAJAYA

Assalamualaikum Warahmatulahi Wabarakatuh and a very good afternoon.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

[OPENING REMARKS]

1. First and foremost, I would like to welcome everyone to the **Networking Session with the Lady Heads of Mission in Malaysia.**
2. I am honoured to be surrounded by prominent figures from various foreign missions in Malaysia.
3. Your attendance is a testament to your commitment to strengthening the foundation of our higher education sector.

[BACKGROUND OF MALAYSIA'S HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE]

4. Allow me to begin by providing some background on Malaysia's higher education landscape.
5. There are currently 1.2 million students under the purview of the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE).
6. These students come from 20 public universities, 435 private higher education institutions, 105 community colleges and 36 polytechnics.
7. The north star of Malaysia's higher education is the Malaysia Education Blueprint for Higher Education 2015-2025.

8. Alongside the blueprint, we also have an Internationalization Policy for Higher Education.

9. The combination of these, as well as several other policies, aids us in providing quality education, which is the 4th United Nations Sustainable Development Goal.

10. And we believe that education is the bedrock to achieving all other SDGs.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

[INTERNATIONALIZATION INITIATIVES]

11. We believe that the internationalization of higher education will increase competitiveness, which is an important driver of quality among our graduates.

12. We also aim for our education system to cater to the demands of the job market and society.

13. Therefore, we are committed to enhancing cooperation and reducing barriers in education services with our international counterparts.

14. To this end, our higher education institutions (HEIs) have launched many initiatives such as forging Memorandum of Understandings and Agreements.

15. This year alone, I had the privilege to witness the signing of 12 MoUs and 1 MoA in India, Qatar, the United Kingdom, Romania, Turkiye, and Canada. I am sure there will be more to come.

16. These partnerships are geared to ease collaborative research and innovation activities, student and staff mobility programs, the organization of joint seminars and more.

17. Another initiative we have been working on is the establishment of offshore programs by our local universities.

18. Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) established its offshore programs in Turkiye last year and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) will begin its offshore programs in Qatar this October.

19. UKM will also be opening its branch campus in Doha in 2025, making it our first public university to have a physical campus abroad.

20. Additionally, there are ongoing discussions on the establishment of the Malay Studies Chair at Jawaharlal Nehru University in India and the School of Oriental and African Studies, at the University of London.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

[INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN]

21. It cannot be denied that women have played a significant role in our country's achievements, including those in the higher education sector.

22. Malaysia's ongoing support for the SDGs has been translated in the 12th Malaysia Plan which includes empowering gender in development.

23. This addresses the 5th United Nations SDG on Gender Equality.

24. We currently have 5 Ministers' portfolios and 3 Deputy Ministers' portfolios that are filled by women.

25. Additionally, 38.2% of women hold decision-making positions in Malaysian government agencies.

26. This includes 8 women Secretary Generals from a total of 26 Ministries.

27. Aside from that, Malaysia is targeting for women's participation in the labour market to be at 59% by 2025.

28. I am happy to learn that 16 out of 87 Ambassadors or High Commissioners in Malaysia are women.

29. On the higher education front, I am proud to share with you that 56% of the workforce in the Ministry of Higher Education are women.

30. Since my tenure as the Minister of Higher Education, we have seen the appointment of 2 women Vice Chancellors in our public universities.

31. One of which is Prof. Ts. Dr. Roziah Mohd Janor, who spearheads Universiti Technology MARA (UiTM), which is the largest university in Malaysia.

32. And the other is Prof. Dr. Massila Kamalrudin, who leads Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM).

33. Additionally, Malaysia's public universities have 11 women in the position of Deputy Vice Chancellors.

34. In total, 55 per cent of our academicians are women who continue to succeed in various subjects of education.

35. Furthermore, the number of women who are enrolled in our Public higher education institutions (HEIs) is more than 350,000 which constitutes 61% of the overall student enrolment.

36. On the other hand, more than 530,000, which is 53% of students who are enrolled in our private HEIs are women.

37. With increased student enrolments, I believe that the corporate sector will consist of more women leaders in the near future.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

[MALAYSIA'S FUTURE PLAN]

38. Malaysia currently hosts 131,000 international students and we target to welcome 250,000 international students by 2025.

39. This increase also includes a significantly larger student body consisting of women.

40. This has therefore sparked the idea for Malaysia to establish a university that specifically caters to women.

41. Malaysian universities have been performing well in terms of rankings thus far.

42. In the QS World University Rankings (WUR) 2023, we have one university listed in the top 100 and 4 out of our 5 research universities are listed in the top 200.

43. In total, 24 of our universities have climbed in ranks, making this year one of our most successful years in higher education concerning rankings.

44. Should we establish a university catering to women, I believe we can help it rise in the QS WUR as well.

45. This will increase Malaysia's visibility in higher education and further strengthen our position as an international higher education hub.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

[CLOSING]

46. MoHE welcomes any proposals for cooperation in the field of higher education that will bring mutual benefit.

47. And as we pledge to continuously work towards empowering women in higher education, I end my speech with a quote by Malala : **“There are two powers in the world; one is the sword and the other is the pen. There is a third power stronger than both, that of women.”**

With that, I thank you very much. *Terima kasih.*