



**MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

OFFICIATING REMARKS:

**YB DATO' SERI MOHAMED KHALED NORDIN  
MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

FOR:

**8<sup>th</sup> GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION FORUM 2023  
(GHEF 2023)**

DATE | TIME:

**15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 (WEDNESDAY) | 9.00 AM**

VENUE:

**MOVENPICK HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTRE, KLIA,  
SEPANG, SELANGOR**

*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,*

*Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.*

Salam Sejahtera, Salam Malaysia Madani and a very good morning,

1. I am honoured to be here today.
2. On behalf of the Ministry of Higher Education and the government of Malaysia, I would like to welcome all participants of the 8<sup>th</sup> Global Higher Education Forum (GHEF2023). *Selamat Datang* to all.
3. With the theme '**Equity Recovery – Higher Education in the Post-Pandemic Era**', this forum aims at providing an open platform for stakeholders in the higher education sector, to meet and discuss the dynamics and challenges of post-pandemic with a particular focus on advancing equitable recovery efforts.
4. The theme is selected because the global pandemic has significantly impacted all segments of society. And the higher education sector is not spared.
5. While it is true that we are gradually transitioning out beyond the crisis, it is crucial to address emerging challenges and opportunities faced by higher education in the post-pandemic era.
6. This means, we must not only identify possible solutions and avenues for growth. More importantly, we must critically explore fresh ideas and new approaches.
7. As observed in many studies and reports, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in unavoidable closure of many higher education institutions in numerous countries worldwide, disrupting the education of millions of students in 2020 and 2021.
8. While higher educational systems are trying their level best to adapt to this unprecedented challenge in varying degrees, the pandemic has indeed exposed the vulnerability of the current systems to external factors.

9. It underscores **the importance of establishing educational systems that can withstand unforeseen challenges and ensure equitable outcomes for students during challenging times.**
10. Therefore, against this backdrop, GHEF 2023 will be focusing on four important sub-themes.
11. **First**, digital divide and inclusion. **Second**, talent and employability. **Third**, financial and socioeconomic standing. **And fourth**, teaching and learning – policies and practices.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

12. It is undisputed that equity in higher education has worsened during pandemic times.
13. The shift towards remote learning during the pandemic presented significant challenges, especially for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
14. For these students, **coping with learning has become more complex due to the digital divide.**
15. This issue must be viewed from the perspective of the ability for every student to reach their potential despite their background or any other challenges they faced.
16. Hence, providing support to these students in response to the new learning mode is crucial. **We need a more inclusive higher education environment.**
17. While many higher education institutions globally managed to face the challenges during the pandemic, **they must now prepare themselves for a higher education landscape which is highly volatile and unpredictable.**
18. The preparation must especially include, among others, prioritizing equity as the main agenda.

19. This is because, in times of crisis, it is often the most vulnerable and marginalised members of the community who suffer the most.
20. Hence, the big question here is, how can we reduce such inequity?
21. I believe there is no straight forward answer to that.
22. Nevertheless, I firmly believe that this calls for a more strategic and stronger collaborations among institutions, jurisdictional authorities, educators, and other stakeholders so that we will all be better prepared for future crises.
23. In many occasions and forums that I have appeared before this year, I have shared my view that collaborative and strategic engagements between governments, higher education institutions and industry players must be intensified.
24. The Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia believes that through multi-perspective discussions at the national, regional, and international levels, **we can develop new approaches to teaching and learning that will contribute to a more effective and equitable education system.**
25. By leveraging diverse perspectives, ideas, knowledge, and experience, we can develop innovative solutions to the current challenges.
26. In this regard, **Malaysia wishes to humbly draw valuable insights from the experiences and best practices of other countries while showcasing its own achievements and initiatives in higher education development.**
27. And I believe GHEF 2023 is again the right opportunity for us to do so.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

28. I would to also suggest that, in our efforts to strengthen global alliances and networking opportunities, we should take this opportunity to collectively examine at least 3 important aspects:

- a. **Firstly**, what are the best ways to bridge the gap between education and employment in term of syllabus and coverage,
  - b. **Secondly**, how do we enhance students' readiness for the future workforce especially in offering well curated exposure and experience,
  - c. **And thirdly**, with very limited sources, how do we build an ecosystem that will embrace and balance up the demands of digitalisation as well as other disruptive technologies with the very intellectual tradition that defines higher education.
29. More importantly, all the three focuses must be handled without neglecting our SDG or ESG commitment as well as the very goal of having an improved equity in the higher education.
30. I would argue that this forum stands as a unique platform that brings together global expertise for discussing the future of higher education in the context of reducing inequity in an era which is highly volatile and unpredictable.
31. I believe that all the innovative ideas and exciting recommendations generated in this forum should be considered as the basis for the development of a more equitable and future proof higher education policies.

Esteemed Speakers and Distinguished Guests,

32. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to staff at the Ministry of Higher Education, Universiti Sains Malaysia, and our strategic partner, Education Malaysia Global Services, along with all collaborators and esteemed journals for their invaluable contribution and participation in ensuring a smooth and successful running of this conference.
33. I would also like to extend my sincere congratulations to the secretariats involved, namely the Department of Higher Education (JPT), the National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN) and the Department of Polytechnic and Community Colleges (JPPKK) for their unwavering commitment.

34. Last but not least, I trust that all participants will find the sessions engaging and leave with invaluable experiences.
35. Let's us all forge a brighter future for higher education and its continued relevance in societal development in the years ahead.
36. **With *Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*, I hereby officiate the 8th Global Higher Education Forum (GHEF2023).**

Thank you