

Speech Text In Conjunction With The Opening Ceremony Of WCIT 2022

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SPEECH TEXT YAB DATO' SRI ISMAIL SABRI BIN YAAKOB PRIME MINISTER

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THE OPENING CEREMONY OF WCIT 2022

**13 SEPTEMBER 2022 (TUESDAY) | 10 AM
SETIA SPICE CONVENTION CENTRE, PENANG**

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,
Salam Sejahtera dan Salam Keluarga Malaysia.

SALUTATIONS

1. Alhamdulillah, my deepest gratitude goes to ALLAH SWT because it is with His grace and permission, we are gathered here this morning for the

official opening ceremony of the **World Congress of Technology and Innovation 2022 (WCIT 2022)**.

2. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to The National Technology Association of Malaysia (PIKOM) and its main partner, the Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), Human Resource Development Corporation (HRDC), the Penang State government, as well as all parties involved in making WCIT 2022 – themed **“Connecting and Transforming the World”** – a reality.

3. Playing host to WCIT 2022 showcases Malaysia’s capabilities as a competitive digital nation. At the same time, this effort ensures that Malaysia is not left behind in the technology and innovation ecosystem.

4. Through digital literacy, this effort will increase awareness on the importance of technology adoption and innovation among Malaysians, in line with current developments that are happening around the world.

5. Malaysia’s ability in utilising new and innovative technology to ensure the country’s recovery amid the pandemic was evident.

6. For example, the use of digital applications with various functions of information technology successfully contained the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia, in addition to helping save businesses and jobs as well as ensuring continuity in the learning process.

7. As such, science and technology-based measures that have been implemented played key roles in our success. Therefore, the theme of this year's WCIT 2022 is very relevant and opportune. Congratulations!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Malaysia has played an important role as a digital investment hub in ASEAN. Since the introduction of Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC Malaysia) initiative in 1996, the Government has successfully attracted digital investment worth RM384 billion.

9. This has led to the creation of 180,000 high skilled jobs, generating income amounting to RM588 billion.

10. After 26 successful years, MSC Malaysia was given a new lease of life and has been rebranded and relaunched as **Malaysia Digital (or MD)**.
MD

plays a central role in transforming the country's digital economy ecosystem, driving more impactful programmes for Keluarga Malaysia.

11. Despite being launched in July 2022, the **Malaysia Digital** initiative has successfully achieved a value of **RM42 billion in Foreign Direct Digital Investments (FDI)** in a mere two months.

12. This revenue was generated through the investments of **28 foreign companies** from various sectors, namely Data Centres, IT Service Providers, Creative Content Technology, and Global Business Services or GBS.

13. This achievement is crucial towards the nation's economic recovery, as it creates high skilled job opportunities, encourage innovation, and further elevates the digital economy.

14. Simultaneously, the development of **Domestic Direct Digital Investment (DDI)** as of 24 August 2022 hit **RM4.76 billion**.

15. Through this effort, up to **6,000 high value jobs have been created**. These job opportunities are expected to continuously increase in the future.

16. These positive achievements have placed Malaysia in the best position to **achieve the digital investment target of up to RM70 billion by 2025**, in line with the Malaysian Digital Economy Blueprint (MyDIGITAL).

17. With its world-class infrastructure, holistic and comprehensive digital ecosystem and highly skilled digital talents, Malaysia today has the makings of being a prime digital investment destination in ASEAN.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

18. The world is currently facing three severe and overlapping crises – the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and rising issues pertaining to food.

19. Thus, the digital tech sector has a key role to play in addressing the issue of climate change. According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), digital technology solutions have the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent by 2030.

20. Digitalisation is the latest initiative used in various aspects of societal life today, and we can observe emerging key digital trends and challenges:

First: Digital adoption is key in ensuring productivity and business continuity, as observed from the implications of COVID-19.

This is proven when small businesses, all the way up to high-value companies, adopted digital applications to enhance their businesses.

Second: The need to empower the use of digital technology in addressing the issue of food and energy security. As an example, digital agriculture technology has the capability to reduce reliance on labor, it is more environmentally friendly, and helps increase productivity. At the same time, it ensures a sustainable global food supply chain.

Third: The COVID-19 pandemic has become the main driver in the field of digital healthcare. This is evident that the use of digital healthcare solutions is not only capable in helping reduce the spread of COVID-19, but also increases awareness on other ailments and diseases and their risks, including mental health.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

21. In a bid to spark new innovations, the Malaysian Government designed a digital ecosystem through the MyDIGITAL initiative that encompasses

the Digital Economy Blueprint and the National Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) Policy.

22. These policies are set to equip Keluarga Malaysia with the relevant knowledge and digital skills. It will shape a connected nation through the development of digital infrastructure; the implementation of regulation in accordance with the needs of the time and is flexible with changes of technology while accelerating innovation.

23. The MyDIGITAL initiative is also aligned to Malaysia's nation building goals, especially the Twelfth Malaysia Plan (RMK12), in transforming Malaysia into a high-income nation driven by digitalisation, in addition to being a regional leader in the digital economy.

24. I have high hopes that close collaborations between ministries and agencies that we see today can be multiplied, in an effort to stimulate the technology and innovation ecosystem, for the sake of the nation's prosperity and well-being of Keluarga Malaysia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

25. Malaysia's success in winning the right to host WCIT this year is something we should be proud of. It is evident that Malaysia is ready to welcome our friends from all over the world with open arms.

26. Once again, the Malaysian Government would like to extend a hearty congratulations to PIKOM and its key partners – MDEC, HRDC, and the Penang State Government for leading this momentous event.

27. The Government hopes WCIT 2022 can make history in accelerating the nation's digital economy by attracting more foreign digital investment to Malaysia, as part of our ongoing efforts to drive the technology and innovation sector.

28. It is my sincerest wish that this platform would be utilised in the best way possible to aid discussion, inspire and spark new ideas in the development of technology and innovation to elevate the country to an international level.

29. With these wishes and words, I end my speech with **Wabillahi Taufik Wal Hidayah Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.**

30. Thank you.

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