

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY YAB PRIME MINISTER: THE ASIAN
CONFEDERATION OF INSTITUTES OF INTERNAL AUDITORS
(ACIIA) CONFERENCE 2025**

By : DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM
Venue : KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTRE
Date : 09/09/2025

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

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YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM

PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

FOR

THE ASIAN CONFEDERATION OF INSTITUTES OF INTERNAL
AUDITORS (ACIIA) CONFERENCE 2025

9th SEPTEMBER 2025 (TUESDAY) | 9.00 AM

KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTRE

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh,

Salam Sejahtera,

YBhg. Dato' Seri Wan Suraya Wan Mohd Radzi; Ketua Audit Negara

Puan Suhailah Abdullah, Manoj Agawal daripada ACIIA, Pimpinan IIA, rakan-rakan dari Bursa dan Suruhanjaya Security, dan rakan-rakan yang saya muliakan.

1. Saya kira tidak perlu dipanjangkan atau tekankan keperluan audit dan audit dalaman dalam mana-mana sistem pentadbiran negara, jika kita serius dalam menyelesaikan di antara permasalahan besar, cabaran besar, iaitu ketirisan, keterlanjuran, rasuah, dan isu-isu yang terkait dengan tatakelola atau governance.
2. Sebab itu, saya, sepertimana Dato' Seri Suraya tahu, memberikan ruang dan wewenang seluas mungkin supaya jentera kerajaan diawasi dan dipantau dari dekat.
3. Dan ini harus mendapatkan kerjasama sepenuhnya dengan Bursa dan juga Suruhanjaya Sekuriti dan syarikat-syarikat swasta. Kita bicara tentang perlunya kita pacu pertubuhan, tetapi dalam mana-mana negara, dengan kekuatan ekonomi, tidak mungkin dapat menyelesaikan masalah sekiranya dibiarkan keterlanjuran dari segi ketirisan dan juga rasuah, penyelewengan yang terus berlaku.

4. Dan dalam sejarah negara mana-mana pun, paling sukar untuk menangani masalah ini kerana mereka sendiri punya kekuatan, dana, dan pengaruh. Tetapi saya ucap terima kasih dan penghargaan kepada rakan-rakan kerana mereka tunjukkan sikap, keberanian, dan ketegasan membersihkan jentera sama ada kerajaan atau syarikat-syarikat kerajaan dan swasta daripada kebiasaan melanggar peraturan ini.

5. It is, therefore, my profound pleasure to welcome to Kuala Lumpur the Asian Confederation of Institutes of Internal Auditors Conference.

6. Now, this gathering is, as I am made to understand, Manoj, correct me if I'm wrong, unique. It's the largest of its kind in Asia because we have 1,500 not only just auditors and internal auditors and practitioners from 26 countries, but they have shown such commitment. As I said referred to in Bahasa in my introduction, the issue of governance is a major challenge.

7. We talk about democracy, but we don't refer to democratic accountability. Democracy is just not about elections. Leadership is not about crafting a plan, but making sure it is totally accountable to the public and, for those believers, finally answerable to the Almighty.

8. That's why I think, in the Muslim tradition, one of the most profound traditions of the Prophet Muhammad SAW is the saying that we are all accountable. We cannot escape that accountability; Kullukum Ra'in Wa Kullukum Mas'ulun An Ra-yyatihi, that you are responsible

and accountable. You are trained from a very young age about principal accountability, of course, to yourself, to the family, to your department, to your company, and ultimately to the Almighty Allah SWT. Which means the inculcation of the correct values of integrity that come along with transparency, which therefore require clear, responsible auditors and internal auditors who are well-trained, accountable, and with integrity. So, the challenges before us are many, and they may well strike all at once.

9. We talk about pandemics or economic uncertainty or technological disruption. But notwithstanding whether the government is stable or rich, the issue of accountability, the role of accountants and internal auditors is paramount.
10. We have seen in the past. Notable, prominent audit or companies or rating agencies under scrutiny because the lack of integrity, the complicity with the excesses purely because of greed. And as we have experienced in many of the financial scandals in the past, including the infamous 1MDB, it could not have happened without the complicity of auditors, internal auditors and international financial institutions. We must take this as a challenge and save our society and nations from these transgressions.
11. So, we have therefore to understand what systems oversight all is about. The need to act, prevail with transparency, accountability and trust. Because these are the foundations that allow institutions to endure, particularly when tested.

12. Now, the issue (of) checks and balances are not optional. One of the key players, of course, the auditors and internal auditors predicated upon their capability and integrity. Now, James Madison, sure you are familiar, reminded us more than two centuries ago; “If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to government, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men or women over men. The great difficulty lies in this; you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.”
13. Now, a profound statement by one of the founders of the President United States of America, James Madison. But what is relevant today in this context is that accountability must remain the core pillar in order to ensure the practice of a responsible, incorruptible government.
14. Now, it is in this spirit that the MADANI Government has pursued Malaysia’s reforms. Our ambition is to move the nation closer to high income status and to build one of the world’s most competitive economies. But ambition cannot endure without confidence in our institutions. Auditors – in both public and private sectors – are central to safeguarding that confidence.
15. This is precisely the reason why we have to strengthen the mandate of the National Audit Department led by of course, the Auditor General a tough lady you see, of steel and through the first

amendment to the Audit Act in 33 years it may not have been a glamorous reform, but it was an essential one.

16. We also established a serious Irregularities Committee to deal swiftly with critical breaches again, it did not make front page news, but it goes to the matter holding offenders to account and protecting public funds.
17. Since 2024, follow up audits have already recovered and safeguarded RM159 million. Now, earlier this year I launched four new auditing guidelines extending the Department's authority to any entity receiving public funds, this was not the case in the past government linked companies, foundations, whatever but once you receive public funds, you follow the public money approach that would help curb leakages and corruption we have seen in the past for example foundations, civil society, welfare organizations getting full support of the government but in the process abuse the position to enrich the board members and probably 10%, 20% goes to the welfare work.
18. So again, issue of good governance remains to me a central pillar even when we announce introduce the 13th Malaysia Plan, our latest five-year economic strategy for 2030. Our obsession has always been with growth, investments and economic success but that cannot and would not happen if we do not consider the issue of accountability, transparency and again, here comes the role of internal auditors.

19. I always emphasize the need for integrity because with due respect to you all, we have seen excesses political leaders, civil servants, even auditors. So, the issue of integrity accountability must be again at the core in our work. So what I'm trying to emphasize is the need to create that awareness they call it in my younger days, popularized by the Latin Americans, philosopher thinker, conscientization to get more questionable to be more conscious and have that dictates of our conscience and therefore I commend the Institute of Internal Auditors to continue this work and the launch of the statement on Risk Management and Internal control (SOMIC) Guide 2025 with Bursa Malaysia.

20. It's of course, a remarkable first step because it also provides firms with a blueprint for embedding risk awareness, strengthening investor confidence and preparing for ESG and other emerging risks.

So, ladies and gentlemen,

21. We must seek governance therefore, not as a burden but as strategic asset the anchor of credibility in our markets, the magnet for investment and the guarantee for progress to be shared fairly. In this age of overlapping risk, it is sound governance again I reiterate, sound governance, steady, trusted and fair that will decide whether our nations flourish or falter.

22. Your responsibility, mine and our responsibility, therefore, is enormous but opportunity is greater still to build institutions that earn trust at home, command respect abroad, hand down a legacy of

integrity to the generations to come, and finally accountability accountable to ourselves, our family or society and Allah.

Wassalamu Alaikum Warahmatullah. Thank you.

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