

SPEECH BY
YAB DATO' SERI ABDULLAH BIN HAJI AHMAD BADAWI
AT THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE 3RD MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL HALAL
SHOWCASE (MIHAS) 2006 AT MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION &
CONVENTION CENTRE AT MINES RESORT CITY, KUALA LUMPUR
10 MAY 2006

BISMILLAHIR RAHMANIR RAHIM

ASSALAMUALAIKUM WARAHMAHTULLAHI WABARAKATUH AND GOOD AFTERNOON

YB DATUK KHALED NORDIN
MINISTER OF ENTREPRENEUR AND COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT

DATUK NAKHAIE AHMAD
CHAIRMAN OF THE ISLAMIC DAKWAH FOUNDATION MALAYSIA

ENCIK MOHD SHUKRI ABDULLAH
CEO OF MIHAS

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

1. LET ME FIRST THANK THE JOINT-ORGANISERS FOR GIVING ME THE HONOUR OF LAUNCHING THIS→ 3RD MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL HALAL SHOWCASE, MIHAS 2006 – THEMED “NETWORKING, CONSOLIDATING AND ENERGISING”. IT WAS ONLY TWO YEARS AGO WHEN I LAUNCHED THE INAUGURAL MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL HALAL SHOWCASE, THEN THEMED ‘WINDOW TO THE GLOBAL HALAL NETWORK’, WHICH WAS MET WITH OVERWHELMING RESPONSE FROM PEOPLE THE WORLD OVER.

2. ALHAMDULILLAH, MIHAS 2005 LAST YEAR ALSO MET WITH CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS, WITH 330 EXHIBITORS PARTICIPATING FROM 18 COUNTRIES AND A TOTAL OF 425 BOOTHS ON DISPLAY. ITS SUCCESS WAS REFLECTED IN ALMOST 220 MILLION RINGGIT REAPED FROM DIRECT IMMEDIATE SALES MADE AT THE EVENT. THIS YEAR, I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT MIHAS 2006 IS PROVING TO BE AN EVEN LARGER EVENT, NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF NUMBERS, BUT ALSO IN TERMS OF FOCUS AND COVERAGE.

3. BEYOND THE SHOWCASE, I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT MIHAS 2006 HAS CAST THE NET WIDER WITH THE INCLUSION OF SEMINARS AND TALKS BY THE EMBASSIES OF IRAN, TURKEY AND THE U.S., THE AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION, THE E.U.-MALAYSIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY; AND ALSO BY THE PORT OF ROTTERDAM. IN ADDITION TO THAT, THERE WILL ALSO BE A NATIONAL SEMINAR ON DEVELOPING HALAL ENTREPRENEURS, WHICH I BELIEVE WILL BE BENEFICIAL TO ENHANCING THE HUMAN CAPITAL ELEMENT OF THE HALAL

INDUSTRY. SUCH A PROGRAMME WOULD NO DOUBT ENCOURAGE GREATER PARTICIPATION FROM HALAL FOOD PRODUCERS IN THE COUNTRY.

4. I WAS INFORMED THAT MIHAS 2006 WILL ALSO BRING TOGETHER MORE THAN 350 COMPANIES AND SHOWCASE MORE THAN 450 BOOTHS, WITH PARTICIPATION COMING FROM 19 COUNTRIES. I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT THIS MAKES IT THE BIGGEST INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE OF HALAL PRODUCTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD. IN ADDITION, MORE THAN 200 BUYERS HAVE BEEN INVITED UNDER MATRADE'S INTERNATIONAL BUYING MISSION. I UNDERSTAND THAT MATRADE WILL BE MATCHING THESE 200 FOREIGN BUYERS WITH 300 MALAYSIAN COMPANIES, OVER A SERIES OF 4,000 BUSINESS MEETINGS BETWEEN 10TH AND 11TH MAY ALONE. SUCH TRADE AND COMMERCE CAN ONLY AUGUR WELL FOR THE GLOBAL HALAL INDUSTRY, AS WE SOLIDIFY OUR RELATIONSHIPS AND DEEPEN OUR BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS.

5. I WOULD THEREFORE LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE JOINT ORGANISERS OF MIHAS 2006 – THE MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY, THE MINISTRY OF ENTREPRENEUR AND COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT, THE MALAYSIA EXTERNAL TRADE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MATRADE), AS WELL AS THE ISLAMIC DAKWAH FOUNDATION MALAYSIA (YADIM) FOR PUTTING TOGETHER SUCH A COMPREHENSIVE EVENT OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

6. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WELCOME THE PORT OF ROTTERDAM AUTHORITY AS THE GUEST OF HONOUR FOR THIS YEAR. I WAS INFORMED OF YOUR VENTURE IN THE PORT OF ROTTERDAM HALAL DISTRICT. I COMMEND YOUR MOVE AND HOPE THAT IT WILL BE BENEFICIAL FOR ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED, IN PARTICULAR HALAL ENTREPRENEURS AS THEY SEEK TO EXTEND THEIR MARKETS FURTHER.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

7. MUCH HAS BEEN ACHIEVED WITHIN JUST TWO YEARS OF THE INAUGURAL MIHAS IN 2004. JUDGING BY THE SCALE OF MIHAS 2006, AS WELL AS BY THE INAUGURAL WORLD HALAL FORUM BEING CONCURRENTLY HELD HERE IN KUALA LUMPUR, I BELIEVE THAT THE GLOBAL HALAL INDUSTRY IS INDEED MOVING AHEAD WITH ADDED VIGOUR. THIS SHOWCASING OF HALAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THROUGH MIHAS IS PART AND PARCEL OF A MUCH LARGER EFFORT TO BRING TOGETHER NOT ONLY MUSLIM NATIONS IN TRADE AND COMMERCE, BUT ALSO LIKE-MINDED ECONOMIES THAT WISH TO PURSUE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBAL HALAL MARKET.

8. I BELIEVE THAT THERE IS CONSIDERABLE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE THAT WE CAN SHARE AND TAP INTO FROM ONE ANOTHER, AND IN DOING SO, DEMONSTRATE GREATER SOLIDARITY AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES BROUGHT ABOUT BY MIHAS. IN THIS RESPECT, THE HALAL AGENDA IS A RALLYING POINT AND A UNIFYING CALL FOR ALL OF US TO WORK TOGETHER IN PURSUING GOD'S INJUNCTION TO ACT AND CONSUME ONLY THOSE

THAT ARE HALAL AND TAYYIB. INDEED, THE HALAL CONCEPT CAN BE APPLIED UNIVERSALLY AS IT INVOLVES THE CONSUMPTION OF CLEAN, HEALTHY, SAFE AND HIGH-QUALITY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES.

9. MY GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TOWARDS ACHIEVING GREATER AWARENESS OF THE GLOBAL HALAL INDUSTRY AND TO ENSURE THE CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT OF THE HALAL MARKETPLACE, NOT JUST IN MALAYSIA BUT THROUGHOUT THE GLOBE. TO UNDERLINE THIS COMMITMENT, THE FIVE YEAR 9TH MALAYSIA PLAN WHICH I RECENTLY LAUNCHED IN MARCH THIS YEAR CONTAIN A MULTITUDE OF INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT THIS AIM. THIS INCLUDES CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE HALAL INDUSTRY, AS WELL AS ENHANCING THE NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE VARIOUS INITIATIVES.

10. IN ADDITION, AS I ANNOUNCED EARLIER, MY GOVERNMENT IS IN THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING THE HALAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (H.D.C.) TO BE A KEY DRIVER AND COORDINATOR OF HALAL RELATED INITIATIVES IN THE COUNTRY. ALL THE RELEVANT GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES WILL SIMILARLY CONTINUE TO STEP UP THEIR RESPECTIVE EFFORTS TO DEVELOP THE HALAL MARKETPLACE, BY COVERING ALL ASPECTS OF THE INDUSTRY – INCLUDING HALAL STANDARDS, AUDIT AND CERTIFICATION, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTION, BRANDING AND MARKET ACCESS. WITH THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH PLANS AND INITIATIVES, THE GOVERNMENT AIMS TO ESTABLISH MALAYSIA AS A GLOBAL HUB FOR THE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF HALAL GOODS AND SERVICES.

11. I BELIEVE THAT THE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE HALAL MARKETPLACE ARE ABOUND AS THE HALAL CONCEPT ENCOMPASSES THE ENTIRE VALUE CHAIN, BEGINNING WITH THE PRODUCTION AND MANUFACTURING OF PRODUCTS, TO SHIPPING, LOGISTICS, EXPORTING AND RETAILING. EVEN BRANDING AND ADVERTISING CAN BE GEARED TOWARDS SPURRING DOWNSTREAM BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES. CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN PRODUCT AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT ARE ALSO KEY LEVERS IN PUSHING THE HALAL BRAND FURTHER. I THEREFORE CALL UPON EVERYONE HERE TO EXPLORE AND MAXIMISE THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN THIS GROWING AND LUCRATIVE MARKET. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO URGE EVERYONE HERE TO USE THIS EVENT AS A PLATFORM TO FORGE STRATEGIC COOPERATION AND ENHANCE SYNERGISTIC PARTNERSHIPS AMONG YOURSELVES, IN ORDER TO ENHANCE AND DIVERSIFY THE RANGE OF HALAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

12. I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT MIHAS HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AN ONGOING ENDEAVOUR; EVEN AS I SPEAK TODAY, PLANNING IS ALREADY WELL UNDERWAY TOWARDS MIHAS 2007, SET FOR 9TH TO 12TH MAY 2007. I BELIEVE THAT THROUGH MIHAS AND OTHER INITIATIVES, MALAYSIA WILL BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN ITS LEADING EDGE AND PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN FACILITATING THE EXPANSION OF THE HALAL MARKETPLACE. MY GOVERNMENT STANDS FIRMLY BEHIND THE MIHAS VISION FOR A GLOBAL MARKET SHAPED BY THE NEEDS OF THE HALAL

CONSUMER. THEREFORE, I URGE ALL GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES TO CONTINUE GIVING THEIR FULLEST SUPPORT TO MIHAS, AND TO LEND THEIR ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING MORE MUSLIM AND BUMIPUTERA ENTREPRENEURS. I WOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE ALL THE HALAL INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS TO WORK TOWARDS THIS ENDEAVOR – TO MAKE MIHAS EVEN BIGGER THAN WHAT IT IS TODAY – AND BY DOING SO, BE ABLE TO MATCH THE VISION WITH CONCRETE ACTION TOWARDS DEVELOPING A THRIVING GLOBAL HALAL INDUSTRY.

13. TO ALL THE TRADE EXHIBITORS, BUYERS AND VISITORS ALIKE, MUSLIM OR NON-MUSLIM, WHO HAVE COME FROM NEAR AND FAR, I WISH TO EXTEND A WARM WELCOME AND EXPRESS MY SINCERE THANKS FOR YOUR ENERGY AND ENTHUSIASM IN BEING PART OF MIHAS 2006 HERE IN MALAYSIA. IT IS MY HOPE THAT MIHAS 2006 WILL FACILITATE YOUR VENTURES, AND OPEN MANY DOORS TO A MORE DYNAMIC FUTURE AS WE MOVE FORWARD TOWARDS NETWORKING, CONSOLIDATING AND ENERGISING THE GLOBAL HALAL MARKET TOGETHER.

14. I HOPE THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE TRADE MATCHING ACTIVITIES, BUSINESS MEETINGS AND SEMINARS PLANNED FOR YOU. MALAYSIA IS ALL FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION AS WE ARE A 100 PERCENT COMMITTED TO MAKING MIHAS A SUCCESS TODAY AND IN THE YEARS TO COME. I BELIEVE THAT THIS CAN BE MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE JOINT ORGANISERS HERE, AS WELL AS BY WORKING TOGETHER WITH PARTIES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE. TO ALL EXHIBITORS AND PARTICIPANTS, I HOPE THAT YOU WILL HAVE A REWARDING TIME HERE, NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF SALES MADE, BUT ALSO BY THE NUMBER OF FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES GENERATED. MAY ALLAH CONTINUE TO PROTECT AND BLESS MIHAS AS AN IMPORTANT PLATFORM NOT ONLY TO ENHANCE TRADE AND COMMERCE AMONG MUSLIM NATIONS, BUT ALSO TO FORGE CLOSER RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE MUSLIM WORLD AND BEYOND.

15. ON THAT NOTE, IN THE NAME OF GOD, MOST GRACIOUS AND MOST MERCIFUL, I HEREBY DECLARE OPEN THE 3RD MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL HALAL SHOWCASE 2006.

THANK YOU.