

## **Malaysia SDG Summit 2019**

By : YAB. TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD, PERDANA  
MENTERI MALAYSIA

Venue : AT PLENARY HALL, KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION  
CENTRE (KLCC)

Date : 06/11/2019

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### **INTRODUCTION**

1. First of all, I would like to thank the organisers – the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the United Nations Country Team or UNCT – for holding this significant and timely summit. It is indeed a pleasure to be here this morning.

2. I am sure the participation of delegates from both Malaysia's public and private sectors as well as those from abroad would make this summit meaningful and beneficial to us.

3. On behalf of the Malaysian Government, I would like to extend a warm welcome and wish everyone fruitful discussions here.

## **AN ENDURING RELATION WITH THE UN**

4. Malaysia has a long-standing relationship with the United Nations, and I am pleased with the strengthened coordination and integrated support from a host of UN agencies. We look forward to a continued relationship via the proposed country-specific Cooperation Framework covering the period 2021 to 2025, which is the next partnership strategy between the Government of Malaysia and the UNCT towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs.

5. Recently, at the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, in my statement during the General Debate, among others, I stressed on the need for the international community to pay attention to climate change and natural disasters. I am glad that Malaysia's statement was well received.

6. The UN Summit on the SDGs was also held during the UN General Assembly this year. On this occasion, Malaysia reiterated its commitment to institutionalising the SDGs in its medium-term development plans. Moving forward, the 17 SDGs will continue to be embedded within Malaysia's long-term plan of Shared Prosperity Vision, 2021-2030.

7. This new Vision will be the mainstay of our five-year national development plans, the 12th and 13th Malaysia Plans.

## **MALAYSIA'S JOURNEY IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

8. Malaysia is blessed with so much diversities across many socio-economic dimensions. As such, it is necessary for us to have a balanced and sustainable growth path, a necessary condition to ensure development is equitably shared across ethnic groups, income classes and regions, if a harmonious and peaceful nation is to be realised.

9. Sustainability and inclusivity have always been the hallmark of Malaysia's development. Since gaining Independence in 1957, Malaysia has consistently taken into account the economic, social and environmental aspects in our development plans. And Malaysia has experienced good growth and development since then.

10. Malaysia's Vision 2020 was introduced nearly three decades ago as a roadmap towards becoming an advanced nation. Recently, we launched the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 with the overarching philosophy of development for all with a specific thrust that intends to address wealth and income disparities and in turn achieve the objectives of becoming a united, prosperous and peaceful nation.

11. The Shared Prosperity Vision will continue this policy imperative in the next decade with equitable growth of each value chain, class, community and geography to create a stronger sense of harmony, stability and unity among the people by 2030.

12. Significantly, all these blue-prints or roadmaps in developing Malaysia are underpinned with one common factor – sustainable development. They are Malaysia’s commitment to sustainable development and we will continue to align our policies and strategies on the same path.

## **CHALLENGES AHEAD**

13. There are several challenges faced, not only by Malaysia but also by countries all over the world in fulfilling its sustainable development goals.

14. Chief among the major global concerns over the last few decades is climate change. The concern relates to four major areas, namely:

- The degradation of forest, marine and freshwater resources;
- Increases in certain hydro-meteorological and geomorphological events;

- The decline in food production capacities and other environmentally driven economic systems; and
- Climate change's ethical-justice issues such as environmentally induced displacements and migration, the deprivation and sustenance of certain livelihood activities, and the safety and well-being of the more marginalised sectors of society.

15. It is therefore crucial that we find the right balance between growth and measures needed to address climate change, environmental degradation and sustainable utilisation of Malaysia's natural endowment.

16. Digital technology will play a critical role in the achievement of the SDGs, although innovation will most likely affect progress in both positive and negative ways. The deployment of new technologies is seen to be essential in achieving the SDGs, considering the need for accelerated progress to fulfil the goals by 2030.

17. At the same time, as new technologies are usually unavailable to marginalised populations, it will be a key challenge to ensure that no one is left behind, as new innovations often exacerbate existing divides in society between those who can benefit, and those who are left behind.

18. In addition, with the current speed of innovation, many opportunities and risks are still unknown but could rapidly crystallise, without regulators being able to respond in a timely manner. A mindful approach towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution is necessary.

## **THE WAY FORWARD**

19. In moving forward with the SDGs, Malaysia recognises that the social complexity of resolving sustainable development problems will require coordinated action by a range of stakeholders. This will include government agencies at different levels of government, non-profit organisations, the private sector, academia, organised civil society and individuals.

20. Malaysia has put in place an institutional framework to facilitate the operationalisation of the SDGs at all levels. Efforts will continue to be taken to ensure coordinated action involving all sectors of society.

21. In line with the Shared Prosperity Vision, Malaysia will focus on governance reforms based on two core principles, namely integrity and good governance.

22. The principles of integrity and good governance will be applied across six identified sectors including political governance, public sector administration, public procurement, legal and judicial, law enforcement and corporate governance.

23. This is expected to result in favourable outcomes such as strengthening accountability and integrity, elevating the credibility of the legal system in tandem with social change and improving the people's perception and trust towards public administration and institutions.

24. I would like to highlight however, that achieving the ambitious global SDGs – which include ending poverty, improving global health, ensuring universal education, and mitigating climate change by 2030 – will require a substantial amount of funding.

25. The expected financial burden is beyond the capacity of the Government, and cannot be met by official development assistance. The role of the private sector, as well as updated financial markets, will be essential.

## **CONCLUSION**

26. In line with the SDGs, Malaysia's new development model, the 2030 Shared Prosperity Vision, aims to bridge the income and wealth gaps between economic classes, ethnic groups and geographical territories, and will ensure inclusive development and fulfil the objective of not leaving anyone behind.

27. The New Malaysia will be defined by a new set of policy tools that ensure economic growth, social harmony, economic inclusivity, environmental preservation and good governance. Government policies will address both B40 and M40 needs, particularly through more active engagements and consultations with these groups, with the ultimate aim of having macroeconomic growth that permeates and is realised on the ground.

28. I wish to iterate that while we face an array of global challenges, the 2030 Agenda is our collective key to unlocking hope and opportunities in facing those challenges.

29. In this regard, I urge everyone to work together with the Government in realising the Agenda. I hope we can emerge from this Summit with creative solutions and a renewed commitment for the common good.

Thank you.

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Source: <https://www.pmo.gov.my/2019/11/malaysia-sdg-summit-2019/>