

## **The Official Launch Of Siemens [Futurel@b](mailto:Futurel@b) <mailto:Futurel@b> (Future Lab)**

Petronas Twin Towers, KLCC 6 July 1999

I am very pleased to be here and to have been given the honour to officially launch Siemens' Futurel@b (Future Lab). Let me begin by congratulating Siemens for making the right choice to set up this state-of-the-art lab in Malaysia. Siemens has also made the right decision to locate this centre right here at the world's tallest buildings - the Petronas Twin Towers. Having the tallest building in the world does not make Malaysia a player on the international scene but I would agree that the building being the tallest reflects many facets of us, Malaysians. Malaysia has achieved a significant degree of stability, development and progress, sustained over the years until the financial crisis in mid-1997.

2. Following the financial crisis, many so-called analysts had "written off" Malaysia, saying that the country was doomed. But we have yet again proved the prophets of doom wrong. The increasing well-being of Malaysia have imbued us with a sense of confidence to be competitive, to tackle the tasks ahead in the national, regional and the international context. Having decided to be on the fast track does not mean that we think the world is our oyster, but we are certainly interested in joining efforts to make the world a better place and to be party to the widening decision-making processes on major issues.

3. Futurel@b will, I am sure, live up to its name -- the future. This centre which is said to be the first in this region and the best in the world, will help to achieve the Government's vision of a Malaysia that is a regional hub for high-technology, information technology and software companies. Malaysia is already the world's largest exporter of microchips. The Government of Malaysia has accorded greater emphasis to the services sector, value-added manufacturing and high technology industries targeted at the world market. In the process of industrialisation, Malaysia has progressed from the humble beginning of labour-intensive semi conductor assembly of the 1970's to today's sophisticated, value-added manufacturing that includes marketing and customer support which have all been pioneered by foreign companies. Recognising the need to develop a strong foundation in IT in order to be at the forefront of economic development, the Malaysian Government is actively promoting the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

4. The MSC will serve as the gateway for Malaysia to become a regional hub for high-technology, IT and software companies. We have the advantage of planning and working on a green field site, taking the best ideas from Japan, United States and even Germany to incorporate in this massive project. The MSC will encompass the Kuala Lumpur City Centre, the new Federal Government Administrative Centre Putrajaya, and of course the all new KL International Airport in Sepang.

5. In between, large tracts of land have been made available for IT industries, hardware and software as well as operations centres for worldwide businesses.

We are confident that our target of 200 MSC-status companies by the year 2000 will be surpassed. As of September last year, there were already 175 MSC-status companies with investments worth more than RM3 billion. Of these, 109 companies are already in operation.

6. The International Advisory Panel (IAP) meeting which will be held soon in Cyberjaya, a core component of the MSC where Siemens is a member, will re-access and re-evaluate the MSC progress. The dialogue sessions, one on one meetings, seminars, roundtable sessions, conferences, visits and general networking have made it amply clear that the MSC, with its mission to become a testbed for IT and multimedia solutions, has captured the attention and indeed the imagination of global IT entrepreneurs.

7. The companies taking up offers in the MSC project will create value for themselves in an environment uniquely suited to their needs. While they will help transform Malaysia and the region, they would also be contributing towards their own role in the information age. What the companies learn and test in the MSC will help prepare them to solve problems faced when applying their technologies and expertise worldwide.

8. The MSC offers many opportunities for companies to explore multimedia technologies to their limits. It is by far the most comprehensive test bed devised for the purpose of innovation and testing of technologies and their applications in the information age.

9. Malaysia is indeed proud to have Siemens play an important role in the MSC. We are going to great lengths and taking great pains to harness the power of information technology. The Government believes that foreign firms such as Siemens will be able to test all its ideas on the application of IT not only without hindrance, but with the support in terms of cost, infrastructure and policies of the Government. Siemens could also help Malaysia to be more than just an assembler of products. Siemens, we believe, can help us to become the product designers. We will make available the land, the physical infrastructures, the fiscal incentives and the soft infrastructure in terms of Cyberlaws and a determined and disciplined workforce. But we are shorts of the right technology to become innovators of multimedia contents and applications.

10. By being actively involved in the MSC, Siemens could share its technological know-how with Malaysian companies for mutual benefit. Siemens can help us create and develop applications that are culturally compatible with the various cultures of Asia. Through the MSC, Siemens can also assist local companies to intensify their R & D programmes.

11. Apart from its commitment to the MSC, we are also happy to note that Siemens is the employer for some 7,000 people. Despite the recent financial crisis that witnessed many foreign and local companies winding up while millions lost their jobs in some Asian countries, Siemens has continued to invest in Malaysia. It testifies to the fact that foreign investors still have confidence in the Malaysian economy. With our economy on the road to recovery, we are

confident that more and more foreign investors will invest and re-invest in Malaysia.

12. Siemens' involvement in the expansion of Malaysia' s infrastructure is indeed welcome. Siemens has the potential to bring in and develop new technologies as well as to utilise and blend these technologies to create and meet new demands as the industry evolves. Malaysia continues to welcome an active German economic role in Malaysia. Specifically, we welcome your trade and investments.

13. Malaysia is keen to attract more investors that can enhance the development of the high-technology industries in the country. We hope you will see the potential of Malaysia - standing at the crossroads of Asia, confident of its future, determined to achieve its Vision 2020 - as a reliable and trustworthy partner. We welcome Siemens and other foreign companies to join with us in our quest to upgrade our industries.

14. On this note, I have the pleasure to officially launch Siemens [Futurel@b](mailto:Futurel@b)  
<<mailto:Futurel@b>>