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THE PATRONSHIP AWARD FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
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1. It is indeed a pleasure and an honour for me to be here tonight to receive this Honourary Patronship Award which the University of Victoria has kindly given me. This Award marks another memorable event in my life. To University of Victoria, I wish to express my heart-felt gratitude. The awarding of this Honourary Patronship is not only significant to me personally but it mirrors as a whole the stance of the Malaysian government's policy on education. This is especially significant in the current context of Malaysia's aspiration to be a developed nation by the year 2020 and to be the centre of education excellence in this region. I believe this event will also enhance further the bonds of friendship between Canada and Malaysia.

2. I still remember vividly and fondly the time when I was conferred an Honourary Doctorate degree by the University of Victoria in 1994. Those moments were unforgettable and especially memorable were the beautiful landscapes and the friendly people of Victoria.

3. Malaysia and Canada have not only enjoyed peace and stability but have great prospects for better relations. There are a number of areas that can be tapped towards enhancing this cooperation. One obvious area is in the field of education. It would be mutually beneficial for Malaysia and Canada if more efforts were made to link up educational institutions between our two countries. According to the latest figure (1993), I was made to understand that there were only about 2,309 Malaysian students studying in Canada compared to about 11,955 in the United Kingdom and about 19,382 in the United States of America. Although the figure of Malaysian students in Canada is increasing it is hoped that more programmes will include additional places for Malaysian students to study in Canada in the near future.

4. Canada and Malaysia share almost the same beliefs and commitment with regard to education. Malaysia believes that the pursuit of education is a lifelong process and it is the right of every individual to have access to education. Education enhances one's capability and can be an important determinant in improving one's socio-economic status. It is for this reason that the Government of Malaysia encourages access to education to everybody. It is my hope that Canada and Malaysia will continue to maintain this cordial relations that already exist and to work toward enhancing closer relations in the future.

5. Once again I wish to thank the University of Victoria for so kindly conferring me with this Honourary Patronship Award.