

17/10/2015 - Opening Remarks - 7th Joint Seminar & 38th Malaysia-Singapore Public Service Games For Malaysia And Singapore Public Sector Leaders 2015

His Excellency Tan Sri Peter Ong,
Head of Civil Service of the Government of Singapore;

The Honourable Tan Sri Mohamad Zabidi Zainal;
Director General of Public Service of Malaysia

The Honourable Tan Sri Datuk Amar Hj. Mohamad Morshidi Abdul Ghani
State Secretary of Sarawak

The Honourable Ms. Yong Ying-I
Permanent Secretary
Public Service Division, Singapore

The Honourable Ms. Ong Toon Hui
Dean & Chief Executive Officer
Civil Service College, Singapore

Distinguished senior officials from Malaysia and Singapore;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning. Let me begin by taking this opportunity to bid His Excellency Tan Sri Peter Ong, as well as the Permanent Secretaries and Senior Officials from Singapore *Selamat Datang* to the beautiful and serene city of Kuching, Sarawak.

2. My deepest appreciation also goes to the State Government of Sarawak for graciously hosting this edition of the 38th Malaysia-Singapore Public Service Games, and 7th Joint Seminar

Programme for Malaysia and Singapore Public Sector Leaders. In fact, this is the first time that this programme is being held outside Kuala Lumpur or Putrajaya.

3. As most of you are aware, Sarawak or also known as the "Land of the Hornbills" is home to friendly people, lush forests, stunning heritage sites and mouth-watering local cuisine. I do hope that you will be able to experience all that Sarawak can offer during your stay here.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. The global geopolitical environment has become more unpredictable, and the challenges to domestic governance has grown even more complex and multi-faceted. Experience has shown that the task ahead of us is indeed challenging and demanding. Public servants now face numerous issues never faced before; critical issues which affect the Public Service and require public servants to think strategically, be more creative and innovative, in order to shape a Public Service that remains relevant, and is able to change with the needs of the time.

5. The Malaysian government has put in place a comprehensive transformation agenda encompassing the Government, Economic, Social and Political Transformation Programmes to achieve Vision 2020. Our Public Service transformation is no exception.

6. In the context of Public Service transformation in Malaysia, these involve changes to actions, attitude and the environment that must occur in an orderly manner towards becoming a Public Service that is fast, accurate, proactive and responsive. Malaysia has indeed seen significant progress following this transformation, such as the recent positive rating as the 8th most efficient government in the world in the World Competitiveness Report by the World Economic Forum (WEF). **The same report also ranked Singapore as the 2nd most efficient government, globally.**

7. In this regard, Malaysia is aware that in order to develop and prosper, we cannot do it alone. We must seek partnerships with other countries in the world. We must be ready to seek

advice and be open to learn from the experiences of other Governments. In this vein, we thank our friends from the Singapore Civil Service for sharing their experiences and expertise in our journey towards becoming a high-income developed nation by 2020.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Malaysia and Singapore's relations are special, symbiotic and unique due to our shared history, geography and culture. That closeness was further emphasized under the leadership of Prime Minister Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak, and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. Both Leaders agreed that Malaysia and Singapore should not be encumbered with issues coloured by historical baggage that hinder the relations of the two nations.

9. Prime Minister Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak at the recent Leaders' Retreat on 5 May 2015 in Singapore also described bilateral ties between the two countries is at the best level in history where both sides could leverage in creating better opportunities to go forward.

10. There is no doubt that the rising warmth in bilateral ties under the current leadership has translated into greater economic, security, and social cooperation. There is a focus on positive and mutual benefits, with an understanding that the approach to bilateral ties should be to garner win-win results.

11. These deep-seated, well-founded, and close ties at all levels, underpinned significantly by the active interactions at the government-to-government level, have been pivotal to the steady expansion of the bilateral cooperation. I am sure that you would agree with me Tan Sri that this annual event of ours has at least, in a small way, contributed towards expanding and strengthening our bilateral ties.

12. It is therefore my hope that our meeting this time would add further value to our longstanding ties as we celebrate this year the 50th anniversary of bilateral relations between Malaysia and Singapore.

13. In fact, the close bond between the Malaysian and Singaporean civil service is being used as a model by Malaysia in our interaction with civil service from other countries. I certainly look forward to the active and productive interactions among all of us as we share the common drive to enhance collaborative efforts for the good of our two countries.

14. As all of you are aware, at the regional level, being the current Chair of ASEAN, Malaysia will host the inaugural ASEAN Heads of Civil Service Retreat, ASEAN Civil Service Innovation Conference, and the First ASEAN Civil Service Games next month (from 17 to 19 November 2015). I certainly look forward to a big and strong delegation from Singapore!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

15. I am confident that the bilateral cooperation between the Public Service of Malaysia and Singapore will be further intensified in the years ahead. Therefore, it is imperative that we continue to do our best to strengthen and bring this relationship to new heights. This can be attained by building better understanding, greater trust and confidence to expand further mutually beneficial cooperation.

16. I believe our interaction and gathering in this 38th Malaysia-Singapore Public Service Games and 7th Joint Seminar Programme for Malaysia and Singapore Public Sector Leaders will provide us with valuable insights that would be useful in improving our Public Service delivery.

17. On that note, I wish you all a fruitful Seminar, and enjoyable games today as well as a memorable stay in Sarawak.

Thank you.

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