

By : **DATO' SRI MOHD NAJIB BIN TUN HAJI ABDUL RAZAK
PERDANA MENTERI MALAYSIA**

Venue : **KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTRE**

Date : **18/02/2011**

Title : **LAUNCHING OF ANNUAL REPORT AND DINNER WITH PEMUDAH**

1. Let me say I am delighted to be here this evening and this evening we are going to say a big “THANK YOU”. In fact more than that to pay tribute to a group of very special people. I know you have been working tirelessly behind the scenes over the past four years to change the country for the better, so tonight I want to give all of you – public and private sector members of PEMUDAH – the recognition that you truly deserve.

2. PEMUDAH’s successes and there have been many would not have been possible without your dedication, your commitment, your deep conviction, and even in some cases your tenacity, and thirdly your perseverance, and above all your hard work and for that I want to say, quite simply, thank you and terima kasih.

3. I also would like to thank and express my heartfelt gratitude to the civil service for their cooperation, and support in responding to the proposals and ideas generated from the Pemudah’s discussion. It is their dedication and support in implementing Pemudah’s initiatives that made all achievements that you have accomplished to date possible and successful.

4. I know you have been buoyed in your endeavours by the enthusiasm of the many Malaysians who have responded so readily to your proposals and ideas. The ability to spark imaginations and to stimulate minds is indeed a rare gift indeed, and here I must pay tribute to the leadership of Tan Sri Sidek and Tan Sri Yong Poh Kong – a hugely dynamic and successful partnership and one for which I think that we should all be grateful.

5. For another reason, I am delighted because I see in what PEMUDAH stands for and what it has accomplished embodies the philosophy of 1Malaysia – people first and performance now. Your membership is inclusive, your objectives are crystal clear, and your wide-ranged engagement with the people, with the business community in particular has brought together people from all back ground together. And you have listened to them, you have learned from them and you have made some very important strategic decisions that can lead Malaysia to become even more competitive. It has also brought about a very fundamental change, a change in the nature of relationship between the public and private sector– no longer the public sector views the private sector with suspicion but instead as partners; a shared project, a shared goal to be

accomplished, and together you have pursued the goal that you have set for yourself.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. I believe that in Pemudah's meetings, Tan Sri Sidek often uses the art of metaphor, often peppering his remarks with insights and examples drawn from literature and Greek mythology. I'm not about to match him, but if you recall the tale of Sisyphus: that fallen king of legend whose punishment it was to roll a rock uphill for all eternity, only to see it roll back down each time – an allegory of pointless toil and, perhaps, man's search for that elusive goal.

7. Four years ago when you came together the challenges were clear; the way to solve them, not so. I am sure that at the time of your appointment to PEMUDAH some of you – especially those from the private sector – must have felt you were pushing the boulder of bureaucracy up the steep hill of progress only to see it roll back down time and time again.

8. But like Sisyphus you persisted -- and unlike him, you found great meaning in your task. Also unlike the king of Greek mythology you had help, you had each other – and because you supported each other, you lifted together by so many willing hands and able hands, and thus the weight of the boulder grew lighter and lighter as you progress as partners. Yes, there were times when the rock broke free and rolled back down, but you didn't give up instead together you pushed it up again – and that is what I mean by perseverance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. Over the past 4 years, PEMUDAH has taken great strides on many fronts. You have made huge important – and highly valued – contributions to reviews of trade and competition policy; you have been a driving force in setting up our country's New Commercial Courts; and you have worked to improve the Malaysia My Second Home Programme and to overhaul procedures for the high-skilled immigration that will boost our knowledge economy.

10. Your achievements did not stop there. Last year alone you worked with Government to reduce the time taken to register property from 41 days to just 1 day –from almost 6 weeks to just 24 hours; a quantum leap in terms of productivity.

11. You reduced the time for the incorporation of companies from 11 days to just 1 - another substantial saving. You introduced the MyCoID, and a new points system to help decide who qualifies for Permanent Resident.

12. And, not content on your success, you are now reaching for even greater heights, a more challenging one -- to review Malaysia's Labour Laws, to make it more transparent, market-friendly public procurement system, and the continued liberalization of our country's services sector.

13. All of these initiatives will reduce time and will increase efficiency, but to do that you are having to confront age-old, entrenched processes and procedures -- and in particular dealing with people whose mindsets are mould in rather rigid ways. For that I would say, changing procedure and system is easier, but changing mindset is a gigantic task, it is like having to keep pushing the boulder up that hill.

14. So I think no-one here tonight, no-one who has been engaged in the work so far, can doubt our ability to collaborate and to innovate which will play a vital role in tackling our future challenges. Malaysians today and quite rightly so, are more demanding, expectation has increased by leaps and bounds. And therefore we need to do things not as business as usual but as business unusual, to embrace change and even reform in a very fundamental and strategic way as well as in terms of the way we do things, the way we implement things.

15. I am convinced as we move towards the attainment of a new knowledge economy, the role of Government and the public sector has to be fundamentally different than in the past, with all of us working harder than ever before to drive innovations in all sectors of society.

16. So I am delighted to see PEMUDAH engaging directly with the individual members of the public sector through the PEMUDAH Challenge – challenging our country's public servants to highlight processes and procedures, rules and regulations that are archaic or redundant, and to propose major changes. I know that already, just one month into the competition, you have received more than a thousand entries – and like you I am looking forward to the launch of PEMUDAH Challenge “Season 2”, taking the conversation one step further to ask the wider public for their ideas and suggestions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

17. Our goal is to enhance Malaysia's competitiveness; it is as simple as that. It is heartening to know that your drive for efficiency and progress has been recognized not simply here at home but right across the world. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of PEMUDAH and our public sector organisations, Malaysia improved its ranking in the World Bank Doing Business report, from 23rd to 21st position for 2010. Malaysia's ranking also improved significantly from 18th position to 10th in the Institute of Management Development's 2010 World Competitiveness Yearbook. They may not drive us, but these

international rankings and comparisons will help us keep focused and help us keep score, and I certainly look forward to seeing further improvements in the year ahead.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

18. They say a picture paints a thousand words, and when I was handed the advanced copy of your 2010 report, I saw the front cover a picture of a very intense boat race. I am trying to decipher and interpret the message of that. I suppose it is quite evident that is all about a race. A race to stay ahead so that we won't be left behind; and a race for us to reach the finishing line soon or ahead of our competitors.

19. Such a closely fought race, in such a competitive environment, should of course only be entered because we have a clear strategy and because we prepared for it. I believe that if you want to enter a race you should be prepared for it. As a nation, we have strategized through the NEM, the 10th Malaysia Plan, the GTP and the ETP. We have trained and practiced through the labs. It is now time to execute and time to deliver – but our race towards our 2020 goals can only be won through collective and synchronised action. If we work in isolation and if we slow down – even just a little – we risk being left behind.

20. That is why I am so pleased to see PEMUDAH working closely with PEMANDU and the new Talent Corp to ensure that our initiatives are moving ahead in sync – because it is going to take the skills and the talents of all those who care about our country to bring about the changes that we want to see: making Malaysia the preferred investment destination, making Malaysia a profitable place to do business for foreigners as well as all Malaysians, and for Malaysia to be a wonderful place to live.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

21. The race is on, and I have no doubt that with your skills, your talents and your dedication it is one that we intend to win.

Thank you.

Wabillahi Taufik Walhidayah Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.