

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

**Venue : ROYAL CHULAN HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR**

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**Title : CLOSING CERMONY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS IN  
SPORTS AND EXERCISE MEDICINE**

It gives me great pleasure to be here with you today to mark the closing of what has been a very special event for Malaysia and a truly International Congress – sports specialists, doctors and delegates from 26 countries and from all 5 continents of the world coming together to listen, to learn and to inspire.

From the moment FIMS was conceived in the wake of the first modern Olympics back in 1928, world class sporting endeavour and the science of sports medicine have been inextricably bound together. Those links have only got stronger down the years, and FIMS has continued to lead the way in fostering excellence in the prevention and treatment of sports injuries, working tirelessly to help athletes everywhere optimise their training, unlock their full potential and achieve their goals.

Here in Malaysia, our own Society of Sports and Exercise Medicine is by comparison still in its infancy, but it has quickly established a dynamic presence on the ground. Despite our status as a relative newcomer Malaysia only narrowly missed out in our bid to host the prestigious 33<sup>rd</sup> FIMS World Congress in, but it seems we managed to impress the FIMS Executive Committee and, convinced we had the capacity and capability to host such big events, they made it possible for all of us to come together at this Congress here today. So I would like to thank the Executive for the faith you have shown in our country, and I have no doubt that the legacy of this congress, as well as the two advanced Sports Medicine courses that have been held with such success, will be felt for many years to come.

On a personal level, I have long been a passionate believer in the transformational power of sport. Shortly after I first became an MP back in 1986 I was appointed Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, and immediately set about improving Malaysian sports, introducing the National Sports Policy in 1988. Many years later, older and perhaps a bit more senior, I remain wholly committed to building a culture of sport in Malaysia that stretches from the grassroots to the elite.

We are a young nation, and I think it's probably fair to say that sport plays a very special role as part of that nation-building process – making friends out of strangers and serving as a means of building links between the different cultures, races and religions that shape our vibrant and diverse society.

I am committed not only to achieving national sporting excellence but to making sure that sport remains a part of life for all Malaysians, which is why I set up a high-level Cabinet Committee for Sports involving 10 different ministries and chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin. The committee's current focus is on the eight core sports – football, hockey, badminton, squash, bowling, gymnastics, aquatics and athletics, and I would like to say that so far it seems to be paying dividends! In badminton, our home-

grown Malaysian hero Dato' Lee Chong Wei just won the All-England Open men's single title, and of course we are still basking in the glory of that win!

But of course, all of our efforts to support our world-class athletes must be matched with world-class advances in medical care, nutrition and support – sporting accomplishment and achievement born out of the achievements and accomplishments of science.

Here in Malaysia we are lucky enough to have a National Sports Institute equipped with the latest technology, including a Sports Medical Clinic, medical laboratory, radiology unit, physiotherapy, injury rehabilitation gym, conditioning gym, biomechanics hall, physiological laboratory, nutrition facilities... the list is endless!

And I am delighted that, through exciting higher educational opportunities like the new 18 month training programme in association with the University of Bath, which will have an inaugural intake of 10 doctors, including 2 professors and 3 orthopaedic surgeons, SSEMM is helping to create a pool of specialists and consultants in sports medicine – one of the fastest growing industries in the world, and one that brings huge economic benefits.

So, faster, higher, stronger: that is Malaysia's goal! I have no doubt that sports medicine under SSEMM has a critical role to play in creating a fitter, healthier Malaysia, and I would like to thank them and FIMS for supporting this Congress and for making it such a success. We look forward to continuing to play an active role in sports and exercise medicine both nationally and on the global stage.

Thank you.