

By : DATUK SERI SYED HAMID ALBAR
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YM Tengku Tan Sri Ahmad Rithaudeen Tengku Ismail,
President Malaysian Islamic Chamber of Commerce

YBhg Dato' Raja Mohamad, CEO Ramcel Media Sdn. Bhd.

YBhg Dato' Mohd Fadzli Yusof, CEO Takaful Malaysia

YBhg Dato' Paduka Sri Mir Khan, Group Chief Executive Officer, Dinar & Dirham International Sdn. Bhd.

Distinguished Members of the Press

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am indeed honoured to be invited to officiate the inaugural Official OIC Trade Directory or OICTD in conjunction with Malaysia hosting the 10th Summit of the OIC in Putrajaya as it represents a significant step towards Malaysia's aspiration to be both the information pulse as well as trade hub for the OIC.

The launching of this inaugural edition of the OIC Trade Directory is a positive, proactive and constructive milestone for a variety of reasons. That the OICTD is the first of its kind to promote greater intra-trade between OIC member nations is indeed praiseworthy. That it is specially published in conjunction with Malaysia playing host to the 10th OIC Summit and assuming leadership of the organisation for the next three years is timely and welcome.

It thus gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest commendation to the Official OIC Trade Directory Publisher, Ramcel Media, in association with Malaysian Islamic Chamber of Commerce, for initiating and realising this inaugural Made-in-Malaysia OIC Trade Directory. In that same spirit, I take this opportunity to record my thanks to Takaful Malaysia for their praiseworthy deed of exemplary Islamic corporate citizenship in being the Main Sponsor for this inaugural OICTD directory. It is also a timely promotion of Islamic insurance among the 57 member nations.

The OICTD serves as a reliable and dynamic reference and showcase of Malaysian producers, manufacturers, suppliers and dealers of every descript and category of products and services. True to Malaysia's standing in the league of top 20 trading nations of the 21st century, the OICTD in essence provides the first necessary vital trade information on Malaysia as well as listing out vital Malaysian business

introductions to assist intra-trade opportunities between Malaysian business and OIC nations.

Malaysia under the distinguished leadership of YAB Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad has emerged as a vibrant and dynamic 21st century trading nation. Given the fact that Malaysia is to assume the OIC leadership, Malaysia is in a meaningful position to extend and share the benefit of its vibrant nation building and economic productivity and prosperity formula with other members of the OIC.

In this respect, Malaysia is committed to fostering and furthering trade initiatives and business opportunities for mutual benefiting ends among OIC nations and I am confident that the OIC Trade Directory will eventually prove to be a meaningful first trade and business reference guide among OIC nations and vital tool to organize trade events for its members to OIC nations.

Ladies and Gentleman,

The OIC is the custodian of more than two thirds of the world's oil reserves. There are about 200 financial Islamic institutions in the world. There are also more than 100 multi-national corporations originating from Islamic countries with a combined asset value of more than USD 200 billion. In 2000-2001, total trading volume among OIC nations totaled USD918.2 billion, comprising of USD 417.1 billion in total annual imports and USD 501 billion in total annual exports.

It is thus the onus of individuals, businesses and corporations to initiate and exercise the right motivations to meaningfully, productively and profitably embarks on vigorous intra-trade initiatives among OIC nations. And there is no reason why the OIC cannot become a cohesive and dynamic emerging economic power in the new millennium. In a nutshell, the world Muslim market offers exciting and challenging opportunities to Malaysian businesses and their ability to meet global demand for quality products and services.

I am confident that this Official OIC Trade Directory realised in conjunction with Malaysia hosting the 10th OIC Summit can serve as a focal reference in finding ways, means and opportunities for the Malaysian business community to meaningfully share and exchange business networking and know-how to further invigorate business linkage.

Once again I would like to commend Ramcel Media for playing a major role not only publishing this OICTD but also taking the initiative to promote the directory in its entirety via billboards, buntings, banners and car stickers and newspaper promotions and at the same time promoting the 10th OIC Summit. It is my sincere hope that this inaugural official OIC Trade Directory will blossom into an annual edition.

Thank you.