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Title : SPEECH AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF MTCP COURSES CONDUCTED BY INTAN

Yang Berbahagia Dr. Zulkefli Hassan
Deputy Director of INTAN,

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Course Participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. It is indeed a pleasure for me to be here this morning and I would like to thank INTAN for inviting me to officiate the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) Courses conducted for international participants and also for Malaysian officials. I would like to extend a warm "Selamat Datang" or welcome to all international participants and also the local participants attending the course.

2. Just over a month ago, Malaysia hosted a gathering of the leaders of 116 nations attending the XIII Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement. In the Final Document adopted by the Summit, references was made to the importance of giving effect to South-South Cooperation, so that the notion will go beyond political rhetoric and sloganeering but instead, produce concrete and tangible results. Malaysia certainly subscribes to this view.

3. I believe that to achieve this goal we have to undertake efforts to strengthen contacts, especially people to people relations between countries of the South. The foundation of strong relations between countries has at its heart, strong, friendly and mutually beneficial relations between its people, which can be built through various activities, be they sports, cultural, economic exchanges or in your particular case, exchanging views and ideas in your specialized areas. The programmes of the MTCP are manifestations of the Malaysian government's strong belief in the importance of strengthening people to people relations between countries of the South.

4. Since its relatively modest beginnings in 1980, the MTCP has grown to become one of the primary vehicles for Malaysia in promoting South-South cooperation. Under the MTCP programme, some 25 training institutions conduct more than 50 training courses which are offered to 133 countries.

5. The MTCP's emphasis on human resource development demonstrates the Malaysian government's belief that a country's most prized resources are its people. The MTCP gives us the opportunity to share our experience with others. Having said

that, I wish to emphasise that the primary objective of programmes conducted under the MTCP is not for Malaysian experts to impart their knowledge, but rather to provide an opportunity for us to learn from each other.

6. Since its inception in 1980, more than 8000 foreign participants from 133 countries have benefited from MTCP training programmes. INTAN has itself to date trained 2360 international participants from 91 countries under its INTAN-MTCP courses. Today's 73 participants will take part in the 5 courses on International Training Methodology, Leadership and Organizational Management, Human Resource Management in the Public Sector, Quality Services in the Public Sector, and Information Technology Management in the Public Sector.

7. From the courses mentioned above, participants will be able to acquire some new ideas on training, effective leadership, Total Quality Management (TQM), human resource development and Information Technology. At the same time, it is also hoped that participants will also take this opportunity to establish contacts between each other and perhaps learn about Malaysia, not only about the policies of the government, but also its people, religions and culture.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Rapid changes in technology demand that training institutions be quick on their feet, not only in terms of reacting to these changes, but just as importantly, anticipating them. In order to ensure that courses remain relevant and topical, it is essential that training institutions constantly update the course contents as well as training methods. I believe that these are hallmarks of a good training institution. In order to achieve this, training institutions all over the world need to establish close linkages not only among themselves, but also with other related institutions such as academia, think tanks as well as developmental agencies, be they governmental or intergovernmental.

9. In this regard, I am happy to note that MTCP collaborates closely with international organizations such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Economic Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) as well as local agencies like INTAN, Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) and Japan-Malaysia Training Institute (JMTI) to seek their assistance especially in specific technical areas. Participants therefore have the benefit of drawing from the well of not only INTAN, but also of the other institutions.

10. On the part of the participants, it is essential that you participate actively in the courses, not only within the formal setting, but the informal setting as well. It is often that we learn more through the informal process than through formal means. In this connection, it is essential that an appreciation of the importance of lifetime learning, involving the process of learning, unlearning and relearning, be inculcated.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. New challenges and problems in and around the world are constantly emerging, the main ones of which include the fight against terrorism, bridging the digital divide, challenges to the environment as well as an uncertain world economy, which given the interdependence of the world today, spares no one.

12. To successfully confront all these challenges, all nations big and small need to work closely within the framework of a strong multilateral system. Given this, it is disheartening to note that the multilateral system, as embodied in the United Nations and its Charter, is under its greatest threat since its establishment. It is therefore incumbent upon all of us who believe in the primacy of the multilateral principle and international law to come together to stem this tide, before it drowns us all.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

13. In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate INTAN for carrying out the MTCP programme for the past twenty - two years. My appreciation also goes to the Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister's Department for acting as a focal point for the MTCP and the Training Division of the Public Service Department of Malaysia for their role and co-operation in enabling these courses to take place. Certainly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to give its fullest support to ensure the smooth running of the programme.

14. With these few words of introduction, it gives me great pleasure in declaring open the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme 1/2003 and wish all participants a fruitful pleasant stay in Malaysia.

Thank you.