

**By : DATUK SERI SYED HAMID ALBAR**  
**Venue : PAN PACIFIC HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR**  
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**Title : OPENING REMARKS AT THE LAUNCHING CEREMONY OF**  
**"FOREIGN WORKER EMPLOYER'S HANDBOOK"**

Saudara Pengerusi Majlis,

YBhg. Dato' Dr. Kang Chin Seng  
Principal Consultant of Inter Resources Consulting

YBhg. Tan Sri / Datuk / Dato'

Members of the Press

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great pleasure to be here this morning on the occasion of the launching of the "Foreign Worker Employer's Handbook". I must say that what makes this occasion particularly special is because the handbook is written and compiled by an old friend of mine, Dato' Dr Kang Chin Seng, whom I have known for many years, since the days when he was an EXCO member in Penang. Having served the portfolio of Human Resource, Science and Technology and Industrial Transformation, Dato' Dr. Kang is a person in-the-know and surely most competent to produce this handbook. We ought to extend our sincere thanks to him for sharing his knowledge and experience on the subject.

2. I was made to understand that this handbook, among others, provides up to-date professional and detailed guideline on the application, recruitment and management of foreign workers. As such, I am certain that many, particularly Human Resources Managers, will find it a most useful reference. This should contribute further towards the productivity of the various sectors that are currently permitted to employ foreign workers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. As you all aware, foreign workers have been a mainstay in our country for a number of decades now. This was mainly due to the strong economic growth and development experienced by Malaysia which had created more jobs than the availability of work force or people to work. Apart from the pressing need for labour in the plantation sector, the foreign workers (both skilled and unskilled) are also employed in the manufacturing, construction and services sectors. These are the four sectors where there is a high concentration of foreign workers.

4. In this regard, I am sure that you will agree with me in that these workers have indeed played an important role in the sustained economic growth that we have posted in the last three decades or so. At the same time, we are confident that the foreign workers themselves have benefited from their stint here both financially as well as in the form of experience acquired. Having been exposed to new technology and modern manufacturing practices in the country they serve, these skilled workers are indeed an asset and would be in a position to do their bit in the industrialisation process back in their own countries. As such, the employment of foreign workers within the third world countries is, in itself, one form of South-South cooperation. With this cooperation, the south countries would be able to develop and build a stronger tie within the community of nations. This too, in a way, helps put into practice the Government of Malaysia's policy of "prosper thy neighbour" whereby economic growth and development achieved by our neighbours will benefit their peoples. Progressive neighbours will enable the South East Asian region to prosper and aid in the continued stability of the region as a whole.

5. Nevertheless, it would be pertinent for me to stress that it does not mean that the employment of foreign workers is without problems. To cite a couple of examples - taxes and other administrative procedures and regulations are ever changing and this makes it even more necessary for employers to be aware of them; language barriers and a mismatch in cultures, not just with Malaysians but among the foreign workers of different nationalities themselves, are also circumstances that may give rise to difficulties that need to be resolved. The sheer lack of reliable and accurate information regarding the rules and regulations pertaining to the recruitment and employment of foreign workers complicates matters. This is why, I believe, that the publication of the handbook by Inter Resources Consulting is a big step in the right direction. It seeks to fill the void in addressing some of the problems faced by the foreign workers as well as the employers themselves. I hope all those involved in this field, be it recruiting agents or employers, will make full use of this handbook.

6. Lastly, allow me to also underline the importance of having the publishers continuously updating the handbook in order to keep it current in the light of the constant development and changes in our labour laws. On that note, I now have the pleasure to launch the handbook and let me wish Dato' Dr Kang every success in his endeavours.

Thank you.