

Penyampai : DATIN SERI DR. SITI HASMAH BINTI HAJI MOHD. ALI
Tajuk : THE OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP ON "INNOVATIVE, INTERSECTORAL LEADERSHIP FOR CHILD SURVIVAL AND HEALTH FOR ALL"
Lokasi : LECTURE HALL 2, FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA, KL
Tarikh : 21-01-1988

Yang Mulia Professor Di-Raja Ungku Abdul Aziz, Naib Canselor, Universiti Malaya; Dr. Debhanom Muangman, President, Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health; His Excellency Ambassador John Monjo; Distinguished delegates; Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am pleased to be here this morning to officiate the opening of today's workshop. I would like to thank the organising committee for giving me the opportunity to address this distinguished gathering.

2. Before I proceed I would like to especially welcome the foreign participants which include distinguished deans of schools of public health and heads of institutions of preventive medicine of the Asia-Pacific region. May we benefit from your participation.

3. I would like to commend the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, the University of Malaya for their initiative and efforts to bring together this impressive group of leaders in public health to discuss the challenging theme of this workshop, namely "Innovative, Intersectoral Leadership for Child Survival and Health For All." I would also like to thank the Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health for selecting Malaysia as the venue for your workshop. The exchange of ideas and views and the sharing of information at this workshop will no doubt contribute towards an enhancement of our knowledge on health and other aspects that will surely facilitate an improved health standard for all by the year 2000 and ensure the survival rate of children.

4. I believe every person has a right to demand high health standards and the means to obtaining and preserving good health should be vigorously promoted. This is a task to which institutions of public health and medicine are well suited. It cannot be denied that inter-sectoral cooperation is vital if public health is to improve.

5. "Child Survival and Health For All" are not entirely dependent on medical technology. Intersectoral coordination is necessary because there are many factors affecting "Child Survival and Health For All," for example environmental, socio-cultural and behavioural factors. They are all of equal importance.

6. The prevention or reduction of the incidence of diseases for which medical technology is available are easier to reduce e.g. diphtheria, polio, tetanus and other diseases where immunisation as a preventive technology is available as compared to the reduction of the incidence of diarrhoeal diseases of children. The latter is an example of a disease which is affected by environmental, socio-cultural factors, and habits hygiene, personal behavior and life style of the patient. Because children are exposed to various influences of the environment, an intersectoral approach is needed.

7. What is important in intersectoral approach is that we need to address ourselves to problems and issues to be solved rather than on individual priority or sectoral interest.

8. Problems relating to intersectoral approach are problems mainly of attitude and the need to strengthen the intersectoral coordination mechanism. In the Malaysian context, intersectoral coordination exists and is resolved to a certain extent through existing structures and committees. However, it needs to be strengthened, especially the mechanism for more effective functioning so that intersectoral programmes can be implemented effectively and efficiently with maximal utilisation of existing resources.

9. Leadership for intersectoral coordination is very important. The choice and qualities of a leader are issues which are vital and should be considered carefully. For health programmes, the Ministry of Health should provide the leadership for intersectoral coordination.

10. It is important for all sectors involved in intersectoral coordination to have a common vision and

common goal. That vision must be the same vision of all -- health and other sectoral workers, planners, media, the public etc. "Mobilisation of all for health," the World Health Organisation's theme for 1988, is apt and this makes this workshop all the more timely. I am pleased that the Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health is playing a significant role in this mission together with UNICEF.

11. In our efforts to achieve "Health For all" and "Child Survival" community education and creating awareness is important if our final goal is to effect behavioural change towards the positive elements of health care. For this, commitment and will is vital.

12. Lastly I hope the foreign participants will take the opportunity of this workshop to know our country at close range and to make friends with local participants and with each other. Beside the benefit of exchanging knowledge and experience I believe the friendship that you make out of such gatherings will serve to bring our peoples and countries closer together. It will also facilitate greater cooperative and professional endeavours between us in the future in line with the aims of with the aims of the founders of the Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health.

13. Before I end I would like to wish you all success in your deliberations and hope that this workshop will achieve its objectives. On this note it now gives me great pleasure to declare this workshop officially open.

Thank you.