

Penyampai : DATO SERI DR. SITI HASMAH BT HJ MOHD ALI
Tajuk : LUNCHEON IN HONOUR OF SPOUSES OF HEADS OF STATE/GOVERNMENT AND
HEADS OF DELEGATION AT THE 10TH SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE
Lokasi : SERI PERDANA, PUTRAJAYA
Tarikh : 16-10-2003

Welcome to Seri Perdana and Malaysia. I am honoured to receive you today and am especially pleased that you decided to accompany your esteemed spouse to the 10th OIC Summit here in Malaysia's administrative capital, Putrajaya. As you saw for yourselves, Putrajaya is a city that harmonizes the traditional elements of Malaysia with contemporary facilities and amenities towards a modern, self-contained and environmentally friendly city in the future. Of course, there's still a lot of work to be done but insyaAllah, we will meet our target. I hope you had an informative tour of Putrajaya, albeit short.

2. After the relatively full programme this morning, I believe we are all ready to enjoy a leisurely and relaxing lunch. To that end, we have prepared for you a selection of dishes typical to Malaysia's three main races namely; the Malays, Chinese and Indian. Locally, this selection is popularly known as the "muhibbah" or "racial harmony" cuisine. To complement the food, we have arranged a performance of traditional Malay dances to entertain you. The dances portray the rich cultural heritage of Malays from the various states as evident from the colourful costumes worn by the performers.

3. Malaysia is a stable, dynamic and thriving nation, which is moderate, peace loving and friendly. To ensure you have a fulfilling and memorable visit, we have arranged a special programme for you that include substantive discussions, shopping and cultural events. I assure you that throughout your stay here, you would encounter warm and friendly Malaysians from different races and ethnic groups, young and old. We very much hope that by the end of your brief stay, you would have a better understanding of the country and its peoples including its economic development, racial integration, social and cultural diversity.

4. For those of you who have visited Malaysia before and enjoyed the trip, you will know that the attractions of Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya are but a small part of what this diverse country has to offer.

Malaysia is now known as a premier destination in the East Asian region with historical cities, beautiful beaches, scenic hills and mountains and fabulous shopping centres not to mention a food haven. We have also established ourselves as a centre of educational excellence, with high quality institutions of higher education affiliated with many major colleges and Universities from countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States. You many have noticed that we have a sizeable foreign student population from the Middle East, China and Indonesia, to name a few. We continue to welcome foreign students.

5. I am proud to inform that present among you are some prominent Malaysian ladies who have each achieved excellence in their respective fields and won accolades both locally and internationally. They are but a small number among an increasing pool of intelligent, distinctive women professionals who have contributed significantly to Malaysia's success.

6. Lastly, I do hope this lunch would afford you the occasion to get better acquainted with Malaysia as you socialize with other Malaysians present today. I wish you a pleasant and wonderful stay in Malaysia.

Although brief, I am convinced that your visit here will go a long way towards promoting understanding and harmony between Malaysia and your respective countries while further enhancing the existing close and cordial relations.