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Bismillahir rahmanir rahim

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh and a very good morning to all,

Y.A.B. Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi  
Prime Minister Of Malaysia

H.E Dr. Surin Pitsuwan  
Secretary-General Of ASEAN

Honorable Ministers, Deputy Ministers

Y.Bhg. Datuk Dr. Mohd Tap Bin Salleh, President,  
Malaysian Institute of Integrity

Excellencies / Ambassadors / High Commissioners,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome all distinguished guests to the Malaysian Institute of Integrity for the inaugural ASEAN Integrity Dialogue 2008. This dialogue is timely as it coincides with the 4th Anniversary of the National Integrity Plan and the formation of the Malaysian Integrity Institute, or IIM.

2. We are honoured this morning to have with us Y.A.B. Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi, the Prime Minister of Malaysia. Y.A.B. Dato' Seri, we are extremely pleased that you have made time to be here today. I know just how busy you are, sir, and your presence here is clearly reflective of the importance you place on integrity. I must record here our gratitude to you Dato' Seri for your continuous support of IIM's programmes and activities.

3. We are also delighted to have with us today His Excellency Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, who will be sharing his thoughts on the subject later this morning. I also want to congratulate Dr Surin on his recent appointment, about 100 days ago, as the Secretary-General of ASEAN.

4. I wish to also extend a warm welcome to delegates from ASEAN member countries. Selamat Datang ke Malaysia. I am sure this is not your first time in Kuala Lumpur. Nevertheless, I recommend that you take time out later to enjoy the lights and night sights of the city.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. This dialogue, which is held over the next two days, aims to enhance regional discourse and information sharing among ASEAN member states as well as to facilitate networking among institutions involved in the promotion of integrity.

6. For the benefit of our ASEAN friends allow me to say a few words about the Malaysian Institute of Integrity. IIM was born out of the National Integrity Plan that was launched by Prime Minister Y.A.B. Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi on 23rd April 2004, almost exactly 4 years ago.

7. IIM has 5 primary targets towards achieving the goals of the first phase of the National Integrity Plan which covers 2004 to 2008. The targets are:

- i. To effectively reduce corruption, malpractices and abuse of power;
- ii. To increase efficiency of the public delivery system and overcome bureaucratic red tape;
- iii. To enhance corporate governance and business ethics;
- iv. To strengthen the family institution; and
- v. To improve the quality of life and people's well being.

8. To meet these targets, IIM undertakes research, training and communications programmes. IIM's outreach covers the family, ordinary citizens, civil society, as well as international communities and organisations involved in transparency and anti-corruption concerns.

9. Details of these targets and implementation initiatives will be shared with participants in the course of this two-day Dialogue. I am sure the exchange of information at this Dialogue will further enrich efforts within the region to deal with issues of governance and transparency.  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. From an ASEAN perspective, issues of transparency and integrity can impact the realisation of the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015. This is because, increasingly such concerns are being used as measures of a region or a nation's competitiveness. We are all aware of the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index. What we need to also note is that from this year, the World Bank will be including transparency and corruption measures in its Ease of Doing Business Survey. Clearly, ASEAN as a region cannot ignore these concerns as such reports impact investment decisions and can negate initiatives to enhance ASEAN's attractiveness for trade and investment.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. In Dialogues of this nature we get from it only as much as we are willing to put in. This is an important platform on which to build networks and partnerships for our collective good. I am sure all participants will be contributing and sharing ideas to further the initiatives to enhance integrity in our region.

12. Given the importance of such an event, I must thank all who have collaborated to make this Dialogue possible. My thanks to all the speakers, discussants and moderators. I must also acknowledge the contribution of the Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister's Department, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Anti-Corruption Agency, as well as the staff of the Institute.

13. It is now with great pleasure that I invite Y.A.B. Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia to deliver his keynote address.

Thank you.