

By : TAN SRI MOHD. SIDEK BIN HJ. HASSAN  
KETUA SETIAUSAHA NEGARA  
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Bismillahir rahmanir rahim

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh and a very good evening.

Y. Bhg. First Admiral Dato' Tan Eng Seng, Commandant  
Malaysia Armed Forces Defence College

Y. Bhg. Dato' Normah binti Mohd Yusoff, Ketua Pengarah MAMPU

Distinguished Fellow and Lecturers of National University of Malaysia

Staff of the Malaysia Armed Forces Defence College

Course Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to thank the Malaysian Armed Forces Defence College for inviting me to address this gathering of military leaders, academicians and participants of the Masters in Social Science (Defence Studies) programme from around the region, particularly the ASEAN countries. I wish to also congratulate the Academy for successfully hosting this event as part of its strategic collaboration with the National University of Malaysia (UKM). It is a credit to the Defence College and UKM that their joint Masters Degree Programme has been able to attract international students from various countries. This reflects the potential and recognition of the College's effort at the international level. It is something that we can be proud of, and therefore we should work to move forward by further enhancing the technical and academic capacity and capabilities of the College.

2. Tonight I have been asked to share my thoughts on civil and military relations, focusing on integrity and the public service delivery system.

#### CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

3. Civil-military relations, or CMR is a discipline in itself. The literature on the subject is wide and varied. And I do not intend to delve into the conceptual framework of CMR as this is best left to the classroom deliberations. Of importance is that we understand and appreciate that CMR describes the relationship between the executive or elected leaders on the one hand and the military on the other. The Civil Service, in carrying out the policies and programmes of the executive, naturally has to interact and interface with the military. History provides us ample examples of civil-military tensions particularly in cases that are transitioning into more democratic forms of Government. More recent examples of such cases are seen in Latin America, post-Communist Europe and sub-Saharan Africa. The civilian-led leadership of these countries have had to focus on how to control the military as they moved away from their authoritarian past. Obviously, their experience in civilian-military relations impacted the way they set about establishing their own rules of governance.

5. In Malaysia, our experience has thankfully been positive. The issue of civilian control over the Armed Forces, the core element of any discussion of civilian-military relations, is not a matter of contention. The origins of our Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF), initially established by the civilian government to safeguard the nation and its interests, can be traced back to 1933, when the first indigenous armed forces unit was established by the British as a result of demands from the Malay royals. The unit assumed its role in safeguarding the Malay states alongside the Commonwealth troops especially in overcoming threats of

the invading Japanese army, confrontation with Indonesia and during the period of emergency.

6. After independence, and as the British withdrew under the Malayanisation process, the MAF came into its own by developing its unique organisational and strategic mission within the context of a newly independent nation. The legacy of strong military loyalty to civil authority continued. Civil-military relations were further enhanced in the wake of its commitment to nation building efforts. This relationship is defined and reinforced in the Federal Constitution. Article 132, states that the Armed Forces are part and parcel of the Public Service. Hence the lines of control are clearly drawn and have been buttressed by legal provisions.

#### THE MILITARY'S CHANGING ROLE AND FUNCTION

7. MAF, like armed forces elsewhere in the world, has seen its role, focus and mission undergoing a major shift from the traditional paradigm of fighting and being prepared to fight external wars. Today, increasingly the armed forces, including the MAF, are assuming new roles and functions including policing and law enforcement, social development work and international or multinational peacekeeping. Today, MAF exists not only to defend the sovereignty and strategic interests of Malaysia from all forms of threats, but its mission has expanded to include:

i. assisting civilian authorities in overcoming internal threats, preserving public order, assisting in natural disasters such as flood, tsunami, search and rescue missions and more recently the landslide in Bukit Antarabangsa, Kuala Lumpur, and also participating in national development programmes such as research and development in defence science and technology; and

ii. sustaining and upgrading its capabilities in the international sphere in upholding national foreign policy under the ambit of the United Nations.

8. Given this scenario, MAF complements the government in not only preserving national security but also promoting nation-building. As demarcation of functional lines blur, the co-relation between civilian and military resources and capabilities become critical and this will drive civil-military relations. Ultimately all components of our society and organs of government have to work in unison to ensure national resilience. The notion of a military that remains isolated from society and is concerned only with the achievement of victory in the battlefield is no longer tenable. As it moves increasingly into the non-military arena of public services in times of peace, the need for integrity in the operations of the military will be of paramount importance. One would expect that MAF, being a highly structured and disciplined entity, would provide a natural environment to embed the element of integrity within the core military values and ethics.

#### DEFINING INTEGRITY

Ladies and gentlemen,

9. Before we go any further, it would be useful to establish common ground in our understanding of the operative term, INTEGRITY, for the purpose of our discussion tonight. Integrity, can be defined as "continuous adherence to moral principles, honesty, wholeness, the quality of being unimpaired; soundness". The Malaysian Integrity Institute or IIM defines integrity as wholesome attributes of an individual or organisation based on values such as honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, competence, transparency and accountability.

10. When we deliberate the topic of integrity, the general take is to link integrity to corruption. The level of corruption is a reflection of the state of integrity of a public service and the effectiveness of its delivery systems. But integrity is more than just fighting against corruption. Integrity lies in the conduct of both institutions and individuals. It can be reflected in the implementation of control mechanisms and level of compliance with prescribed rules as mandated by an institution. It is also evident in the conduct of public officers in the execution of their duties.

11. Delivering services with a sense of urgency is as much a matter of integrity as it is to ensure the proper execution of a tender process for procurement of goods and services. Likewise the case of staff manning counters – providing services to our customers within the time and quality standards promised in the client’s charter, service with a smile, also reflects integrity. On the other hand not taking action to improve work processes when there is room for us to do so is a reflection of a lack of integrity. Therefore integrity, or the lack thereof, is demonstrated in all dimensions of our actions whether at the organisational or individual level. And, this applies to both civilian and military services.

## INTEGRITY AND THE EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES

12. The issue of efficiency in the use of resources is a critical factor for the whole of the public sector. In the case of the military, the Government provides significant resources to develop and maintain the armed forces to cover its running cost as well as for the acquisition of new weapons systems. A total of RM15.8 billion was allocated to the Ministry of Defence under the 9th Malaysia Plan from 2006 to 2010 while RM18.6 billion was spent during the 8th Malaysia Plan. As a considerable portion of national expenditure goes to the development and maintenance of the armed forces, it is only fair that citizens demand and expect the highest level of integrity within the military organisation. It is thus necessary to ensure that the allocated funds are used in a transparent, ethical and efficient manner. In this there can be no compromise. The MAF must ensure the highest level of integrity when utilising its financial provisions for its development and operations.

13. As indicated earlier, integrity encompasses all processes and procedures. Careful planning and good governance is necessary in the procurement of military hardware and weaponry systems that may require long term funding commitments. The Government has the right to demand value-for-money. There should be no repeat of the incidences of highly questionable procurement and maintenance contracts. The use of public funds within the context of a democratic platform demands that the necessary oversight and control mechanisms are put in place and are seen to be effective. MAF must ensure systematic assessment of its programmes and projects to ensure results and cost-effectiveness.

14. Maintenance and battle readiness of military equipment also require critical attention. We are referring here to the highly sophisticated and expensive equipment including fleet management. Naturally all of these call for a maintenance culture of the highest order encompassing systems, processes and people. When we do not pay sufficient attention to maintenance schedules, do not ensure personnel are trained on the correct use of equipment or are lackadaisical in the safe storage of equipment, it reflects an institutional environment that does not place enough emphasis on integrity. All, regardless of whether in the civil and military side, need to consistently build the necessary support infrastructure for a maintenance culture that works with clockwork precision. In the constrained financial times that we are facing now, it is even more imperative that upkeep and maintenance be given priority to mitigate the difficulty in procuring new resources.

15. Another area of importance is in the implementation of development projects. Our performance on the execution of development projects is often used as a yardstick to evaluate and measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the Government’s service delivery system. Issues such as project delays, cost over-runs and substandard quality of work are often cited when assessing the implementation of development projects.

16. The mechanisms for monitoring and control are in place. Rules and regulations have been prescribed. Personnel have been trained and exposed to good project management practices. Yet often the results show otherwise. In many cases they point to weak implementation and supervision. We need to be serious about monitoring and supervision. If we are not thorough and lack the stamina to follow through on agreed timelines and deadlines, it means that we have failed the integrity test yet again.

## UPHOLDING INTEGRITY

17. All of us, regardless of who we are, civil officers or military personnel, are the “Nation’s Keepers” and it is thus unethical for us to compromise on the issue of integrity. Hence, integrity has been the platform

for developing holistic human capital under the Prime Minister who is also the Defence Minister. The National Integrity Plan (commonly known as PIN) that was launched in 2004 is an integrated approach towards enhancing integrity. It is predicated upon the spirit and principles of the Federal Constitution, the philosophy and principles of the Rukun as well as the aspirations of Vision 2020. The overall objective of PIN is to fulfil the fourth challenge of Vision 2020, namely, "to establish a fully moral and ethical society whose citizens are strong in religious and spiritual values and imbued with the highest ethical standards."

18. All agencies in the Public Service, including the armed forces need to establish their own PIN as the corporate integrity framework for our respective organisations. Through such a framework, every individual within the organisation will be able to understand his or her personal commitment to organisational integrity. Collectively, this will form a strong foundation for a consistent level of integrity across the Public Service of Malaysia.

## IMPLICATIONS OF CORRUPTION

Ladies and Gentlemen,

19. Corruption has the power to stymie economic and social development. It undermines development by compromising the rule of law and weakens the institutional foundations upon which economic growth depends. Even the perception of corruption can have dire consequences on the image of a country. Corruption has an immediate effect on the cost of doing business which will escalate and the country will find its foreign and domestic investors shying away. In this instance, economic expansion is stalled, the country loses competitiveness, income levels fall, jobs are lost, and the people suffer.

20. Today, even though we have seen a significant rise in public awareness of anti-corruption initiatives, Transparency International Malaysia's annual Corruption Perception Index or CPI scores have not seen any significant improvement. The CPI score continues to range between 5.0 and 5.1 on a scale of 10, with 10 being the best. Therefore, it seems that there is still much more for us to do. We have to overcome the negative public perception towards the public service on the issue of integrity, especially regarding issues closely linked to corruption. Each of us has a role in this if we are to prevent the situation from getting worse. We need to personally take charge and ensure that integrity standards within our institutions are adhered to. We must make it known that we will not tolerate any form of corruption will not be tolerated. Those caught doing so must be punished. Deterrent punishment must be made the norm.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

21. In order to combat corruption effectively, we can no longer afford quick and ad-hoc short-term solutions. Rather, we must fight it comprehensively from all fronts, with a myriad of tools. The fight against corruption must necessarily begin with inculcating the right attitude and values in all of society, particularly among those who wield power.

## ENHANCING INTEGRITY

Inculcating Values

22. Inculcating values, attitudes and behaviours based on the principles of integrity and justice is arguably the most important element in the fight against corruption. Values and attitudes are shaped by an individual's upbringing and his or her life experiences. In organisations, whether private or public or the military, leaders must be at the forefront against corrupt practices. They lead honest lives based on principles of justice and integrity, and in so doing lead by example.

23. However, merely appealing to a person's sense of right and wrong alone may not be sufficient to fight corruption. I believe that to be successful, we must always consider a systems-wide approach. Our actions, especially in the area of good governance and anti-corruption, should not only be aimed at instilling the right values and attitudes, but should go beyond that, to strengthening processes, institutions, as well as punitive measures.

## Improving the Public Service Delivery System

24. Integral to a public service of integrity is one with good governance. And as many of you may be aware, in the past years, we have vigorously pursued efforts to improve the public service delivery system to make it more efficient, transparent and accountable.

25. The benefits of an improved public service delivery system are wide-ranging, encompassing positive effects on the economy through a reduction in the cost of doing business, through better allocation of resources, and through shorter time needed to complete a transaction. In enhancing the delivery of services, both big businesses and the man-on-the-street can benefit but equally, if not more important, it ensures a better functioning public service delivery system.

26. Today, customers demand fast, efficient and quality service in a conducive environment, when dealing with the Government. Effective and optimum use of information and communication technology (ICT) will definitely contribute towards improving the quality of the public service delivery system.

## MOVING FORWARD

Ladies and Gentlemen,

27. Having outlined the importance of upholding integrity in delivering our services and challenges stemming from the ever growing expectations from the public, both civil and military leadership should focus on issues which required highest element of integrity. In this regard, it is also important for us to look at the strategic components of the civil-military relations that need to be further enhanced and developed.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

28. I would also like to take this opportunity, to congratulate all our participants here tonight, for being a part of this quest for continuous learning, in line with the capacity building agenda of our organisations. Only through constant learning and human capital development, can we develop competent personnel who will deliver nothing less than the highest quality of service to the public. At the same time, the provision of the highest quality of service to the public can only be achieved when we understand the needs of our internal and external customers. This customer-centric approach requires the Public Service to place customers at the core of its service through effective engagement built on trust.

29. The current economic situation, while being the worst of times, is also the best of times, to translate these into actions to improve the public service delivery systems. Whatever that we do, must be done with the nation's best interest in mind.

Ladies and gentlemen,

## CLOSING

30. Our calling as public servants is to deliver the highest standard of services to the people. And in order to do this we must deliver with integrity. Let us remind ourselves that all of us, irrespective of our rank or status, must always give our best and not tarnish the image of the Public Service. Integrity should be the bedrock of our work culture.

31. The armed forces, as an organisation of high credibility and responsibility, must ensure that integrity is the main criterion it is to be judged on, not just by Malaysian society but also the international community.

32. Our challenge is simple, but yet difficult. Wear our armour of integrity. Take full measure of its weight. Find comfort in its protection. No one can take away our integrity, only we can give it away.

33. On that note, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for your kind attention and invite your feedback.

Thank you.  
Wabillahi taufiq wal hidayah  
Wassalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabaratu.