

**THE MALAYSIA DAY IN CONJUNCTION WITH EXPO 2012 YEOSU**  
**11/06/2012**

Honourable Dato' Sri Douglas Uggah Embas,  
Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Malaysia;

His Excellency Dato' Ramlan bin Ibrahim,  
Ambassador of Malaysia to the Republic of Korea;

Excellencies; Distinguished delegates; Ladies and Gentlemen.

Annyong Haseyo and Good Morning.

1. First and foremost, I would like to thank the Organising Committee of EXPO 2012 Yeosu for inviting me to celebrate the Malaysia Day in conjunction with EXPO 2012 Yeosu. In fact, this is my third time visiting the Republic of Korea as the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia but this is my first opportunity to visit this beautiful city of Yeosu. I am indeed privileged to be accorded the honour to grace this celebration together with the distinguished delegates from the Expo Organising Committee.

2. Malaysia is grateful to the Government of the Republic of Korea for extending the invitation to Malaysia as one of the 105 participating countries of this EXPO. Indeed, Malaysia considers the Republic of Korea as one of Malaysia's closest international friend. We enjoy strong, substantive and solid trading and investment links, with the Republic of Korea being Malaysia's 8th largest trading partner and the second largest foreign investor in 2011. Both our countries enjoy close, deep and amicable relations in a number of bilateral cooperation such as education, tourism, culture, sports and youth exchange and as two Asian neighbours we share, agree and understand many issues of mutual concern in the regional and international arena.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. The Malaysia Day celebration today is indeed a very important platform for Malaysia to showcase and share our rich and vibrant culture, heritage and diversity which makes Malaysia Truly Asia. It is also a wonderful opportunity for us to present the beautiful fabric of Malaysian culture which is built upon the multiracial diversity of our country, living in harmony in true Malaysian spirit. Besides having this wonderful cultural richness, Malaysia is blessed with rich natural heritage.

4. Malaysia is recognized as one of the world's 12 mega-diverse countries which together house 60% of the earth's species, some not to be found anywhere else on this planet. Malaysia is also home to an extensive network of coral reefs and globally significant marine biodiversity. Malaysia is indeed a tropical paradise and is blessed with beautiful islands fringed with coral reefs. The uniqueness of its biological diversity is an asset to the country. Malaysia places utmost importance towards environmental preservation and the conservation and management of our natural resources are best reflected in our commitments in the various international conventions, regional agreements and our own national programmes.

5. The theme for Malaysia's Pavilion, 'Malaysia's Biodiversity Haven: A Gift from Nature', highlights the country's rich flora and fauna as well as marine biodiversity. A walk through the Malaysia Pavilion will give a breathtaking experience and the feel of a real tropical rainforest and marine environment. With the sub-themes of Living Reef, Islands of Dreams, Haven of Biodiversity, Land of Harmony and green innovation, visitors will be able to sample Malaysia's amazing biodiversity, latest green innovations, culture and culinary richness. We assure all our visitors an experience that will make you want to visit Malaysia and discover its many ecotourism wonders. Furthermore, be rest assured that you will be welcomed by very friendly immigration officers, friendly taxi drivers, courteous Malaysian living in a peaceful and safe country.

6. Malaysia has always advocated sustainable development, taking into account economic growth, societal well-being and environmental protection in its development planning. A well balanced socio-economic development that mainstreams biodiversity in its agenda has been the foundation for the success of the country. In Malaysia, we are guided by the National Policy on Biological Diversity as well as the Common Vision on Biodiversity which gives clear direction to all stakeholders in managing biodiversity – our natural heritage. In fact, we are committed to ensure at least 50% of our land area remain under forest cover as pledged in the Rio Summit in 1992. The future of our biodiversity heritage is in our hands. Realizing that unsustainable development will contribute to climatic changes and consequently affecting its biological diversity, biodiversity loss and the lives that depend on it, the Malaysian government has embarked on the Economic Transformation Programme towards becoming a high income developed country by 2020. Nevertheless, Malaysia has taken the conscious decision to ensure sustainability of its natural resources is taken into account on the road towards achieving economic success. No more could countries like Malaysia take the "grow first, clean later" model of development.

7. The tourism sector will continue to be in the forefront of Malaysia's economic development. This sustainable and high-yield sector will continue to drive Malaysia's economy, providing income and job opportunities to its People. Malaysia has a strong global tourism position today. We are the 9th most visited country in the world and we receive RM1 billion receipts per week from foreign visitors. In 2011, tourists arrival from the Republic of Korea was over 260,000 with the Homestay Programme as the most popular attraction. Realising the advantage and strong position in the tourism industry globally, the Government is committed to further develop this sector together with the private sector.

8. Under the Government Transformation Programme, we have set sight on the target of 2020:36:168. That is, in the year 2020, Malaysia will receive 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion tourist receipts. This strategic ambition will be achieved through the 12 initiatives or entry point projects (EPP) proposed under the Tourism National Key Economic Areas (NKEA). Among others, to establish Malaysia as the Malaysia Mega Biodiversity Hub (MMBH), developments of eco-nature integrated resorts and promoting Malaysia as a leading business tourism destination.

9. Malaysia seeks to take the path of sustainable development as we aspire to become a developed nation by 2020. In doing so, Malaysia seeks the hand of friendship and cooperation with the Republic of Korea, as well as other international partners. As a nation that emphasizes free enterprise and trade, we encourage private-to-public sector cooperation as well as private-to-private sector cooperation and investment through ethical, environmental and eco-conscious initiatives. I am absolutely certain that the Republic of

Korea, through its government and its private sector, could do and achieve more in continuing to cooperate with Malaysia towards this end.

10. Malaysia is now more selective in our search for foreign investment. We are looking for not just any FDI, but “quality” FDIs. By this we mean investments that bring in high technology, green and alternative energy technologies, and knowledge intensive industries. These are the kinds of technologies we need to make the transition from a middle income to a high income nation.

11. The Government of Malaysia also vows to ensure that the country continues to be stable, peaceful and a safe place for anyone, including its citizen as well as foreigners. Efforts undertaken under Government Transformation Programme has already shown tremendous outcome. According to the Global Peace Index Report 2011, Malaysia is the safest country in Southeast Asia and 19th safest in the world.

12. I would like to invite more investors from the Republic of Korea to take a close look at the many investment opportunities that Malaysia offers. Investing in Malaysia is a gateway to expand your business in emerging Asian economies, as well as in the ASEAN region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

13. On that note, it gives me great pleasure to invite all of you here today to experience a glimpse of Malaysia by visiting our Malaysia Pavilion and of course I am deeply honoured to extend our warm welcome or “Selamat Datang” and Annyong Haseyo.

Lastly, Kamsa Hamnida. Thank you and I wish you all success in EXPO 2012 Yeosu, Korea.