

REMARKS BY
YB PUAN ISNARAISSAH MUNIRAH BINTI MAJILIS
DEPUTY MINISTER OF ENERGY, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY,
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (MESTECC)

AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE EIGHTH MALAYSIAN
INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON ANTARCTICA

18 JUNE, 2019

UPM, SERDANG, SELANGOR

TERIMA KASIH TUAN/PUAN Pengerusi Majlis

MENGADAP KEBAWAH DULI YANG MAHA MULIA AL-WATIQUHU
BILLAH SULTAN MIZAN ZAINAL ABIDIN IBNI ALMARHUM SULTAN
MAHMUD AL-MUKTAFI BILLAH SHAH,
SULTAN DAN YANG DI-PERTUAN BAGI NEGERI TERENGGANU
DARUL IMAN SERTA SEGALA JAJAHAN TAKLUKNYA DAN JUGA
PENAUNG, YAYASAN PENYELIDIKAN ANTARTIKA SULTAN MIZAN.

SEMOGA TUANKU DILANJUTKAN USIA, DILIMPAH RAHMAT DAN
DIKURNIAKAN HIDAYAH OLEH TUHAN YANG MAHA ESA.

TERLEBIH DAHULU, PATIK DAN SEMUA PARA HADIRIN
MENJUNJUNG DULI DAN MENJUNJUNG SETINGGI-TINGGI KASIH
SERTA BERASA AMAT BERBESAR HATI DAN BERTUAH DI ATAS
PERKENAN TUANKU MENCEMAR DULI BERANGKAT KE MAJLIS INI
DAN SETERUSNYA MERASMIKAN SEMINAR ANTARABANGSA

ANTARTIKA MALAYSIA KALI KE LAPAN ATAU *EIGHTH MALAYSIAN INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON ANTARCTICA*.

SESUNGGUHNYA INI JELAS MENUNJUKKAN KEPERIHATINAN DAN KOMITMEN TINGGI KE BAWAH DULI YANG MAHA MULIA TUANKU TERHADAP PERKEMBANGAN SAINS, KHUSUSNYA SAINS KUTUB.

AMPUN TUANKU

SETERUSNYA PATIK MEMOHON LIMPAH PERKENAN KE BAWAH DULI YANG MAHA MULIA TUANKU UNTUK PATIK MENERUSKAN UCAPAN DALAM BAHASA INGGERIS KEPADA SIDANG HADIRIN SEKALIAN.

AMPUN TUANKU

YAB DR. AHMAD SAMSURI BIN MOKHTAR,
MENTERI BESAR TERENGGANU

YBHG. DATUK SERI DR. MOHD AZHAR BIN HJ. YAHAYA,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF MESTECC

YB DATO' HAJI A. RAHMAN BIN YAHYA
STATE SECRETARY OF TERENGGANU

YBHG. PROF. DATIN PADUKA DATO' DR. AINI BINTI IDERIS,
VICE CHANCELLOR OF UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

YBHG. TAN SRI DATO' SERI DR. SALLEH BIN MOHD NOR,
BOARD OF TRUSTEE, YPASM

YBHG. PROF. DATO' AZIZAN ABU SAMAH,
CHAIRMAN OF LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE

PROF. TIMORTY NAISH,
DIRECTOR OF THE ANTARCTIC RESEARCH CENTRE,
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

REPRESENTATIVES FROM GOVERNMENT AGENCIES,
EXCELLENCY, INVITED SPEAKERS, MEDIA AND ALL
PARTICIPANTS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

1. I am indeed much enthused to be in august company of such a vibrant and energetic people at the official opening of the *Eighth Malaysian International Seminar on Antarctica*. I take this opportunity to thank the organisers for inviting me to deliver the Opening Session remarks. I also like to extend to all foreign guests and participants a warm welcome to Malaysia.

2. The Antarctic continues to evoke a sense of mystery and excitement among all. The world scientific community is especially curious about the potential benefits that the Antarctic can offer for the world. With the ever-increasing understanding of the Great White Continent, it makes us understand the importance of this unique ecosystem. For instance, the highly reflective surfaces of the Antarctic ice sheets make a significant contribution to regulating global climate by reflecting 80% of incoming solar radiation into space. Climatic changes symbolised by the melting of Antarctic ice sheets are predicted to continue and accelerate. The excessive freshwater from the melting ice promotes ocean acidification and sea level rise, seriously affecting areas with considerable coastal populations, fishery, and farming such as Malaysia.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

3. As early as 1982, our Prime Minister, Yang Amat Berhormat Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad raised the “Question of Antarctica” at the Thirty-seventh United Nations General Assembly. Malaysia advocated that “Antarctica should be an area of common interest for the benefit of all

mankind". Malaysia's involvement in Antarctic research began even earlier in 1997. Following this, we had made significant progress in our participation in the icy continent, both in science and governance.

4. I am pleased to bring your attention to the achievements of Malaysian involvement in Antarctic research. In acknowledging our scientific achievements and contribution, we were admitted as a full member of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research in 2008. A study conducted by researchers from the British Antarctic Survey, one of our partners in Antarctic endeavour indicated that the total number of publications published by Malaysian scientists between 2011 and 2015 was 93. This is a very encouraging figure and we should continue in our research and publishing our findings.

5. In terms of quality of scientific publications, the mean numbers of citations received by Antarctic papers published by Malaysian scientists during the study period, as of October 2016 was 5.75. While this study found out that the mean citations for ATCP, non-consultative parties, and non-treaty nations are not significantly different, nevertheless I like to urge Malaysian scientists to continue to give emphasise on the quality of Antarctic publications.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

6. Other than making progress in science, we have taken several steps to participate in the governance of Antarctic. Malaysia had acceded to the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS), 1959 in October 2011 and in August 2016, we had ratified the Madrid Protocol or Protocol on the Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty. We also have been accepted as an

observer in the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs or COMNAP since 2017. On the home front we are in the process of drafting an Antarctic Bill. This Act is required to implement our obligations under the 1959 Antarctic Treaty and 1998 Madrid Protocol. In this regard, I like to inform that the Ministry is working closely with the Attorney General Chambers' in finalising the draft Bill.

7. Since the beginning, MESTECC, then known as MOSTI has always given support to Malaysia's involvement in the Antarctic especially in making sure the institutional framework is put in place. In 2012, the Ministry established the Sultan Mizan Antarctic Research Foundation (YPASM) with the mission to sustain Malaysia's presence in Polar research and to strengthen research capacity in the area of global frontier sciences. To-date, the Foundation has signed memorandums of understanding on Smart Partnership Initiative for Polar Research with eight local universities towards enhancing collaboration between parties and strengthening Malaysia's research activities in the Antarctic. I like to take this opportunity to thank all participating universities and to urge other universities to join this initiative.

8. I am also pleased to share that since its establishment, the Foundation has awarded 20 research grants, 12 fellowships, and eight Antarctic berth supports worth RM 4.3 million to Malaysian researchers mainly the young scientists. Today at this Opening Session, the Foundation will also award its 2019 research grants to selected Malaysian scientists.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

9. I hope you all will have a fruitful seminar and workshop. Finally, I would like to thank the organisers, notably the YPASM, UPM and the National Antarctic Research Centre and all those involved for their hard work in organising this event. I would also like to record our utmost appreciation to the Government of Terengganu for its continuous support to the Foundation. With these brief remarks, I thank you all for your indulgence.

AMPUN TUANKU

SEKIANLAH SAHAJA PERSEMBAHAN UCAPAN PATIK, PATIK SEKALI LAGI MENJUNJUNG DULI DAN MENJUNJUNG SETINGGI-TINGGI KASIH DI ATAS KEBERANGKATAN TUANKU KE MAJLIS YANG PENUH BERMAKNA INI.

AMPUN TUANKU

WABILLAH TAUFIQ WAL HIDAYAH.

WASSALAMUALAIKUM WARAHMATULLAH WABARAKATUH.