

ADDRESS BY

**YB DATUK DR. ABU BAKAR BIN MOHAMAD
DIAH**

**DEPUTY MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY
AND INNOVATION**

**AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE
5TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION CENTRE FOR
SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (ISTIC)**

22 MAY 2013, KUALA LUMPUR

YOUR EXCELLENCY, DR. IRINA BOKOVA, DIRECTOR–GENERAL OF UNESCO
YBHG. DATO' DR. ROSLI MOHAMED, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE MALAYSIAN
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO,
ACADEMICIAN DATO' IR. (DR.) LEE YEE CHEONG, CHAIRMAN OF ISTIC
GOVERNING BOARD,

YOUR EXCELLENCIES, HIGH COMMISSIONERS AND AMBASSADORS,

MEMBERS OF THE INTER-ACADEMY PANEL

HEADS OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

PARTNERS OF ISTIC

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA

DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

A VERY GOOD MORNING TO ALL.

1. IT IS MY PLEASURE TO WELCOME ALL PARTICIPANTS TO CELEBRATE THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION CENTRE FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION OR ISTIC, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UNESCO.

2. WE ARE INDEED HONOURED BY THE PRESENCE OF UNESCO'S DIRECTOR-GENERAL HER EXCELLENCY, DR. IRINA BOKOVA AND MANY DISTINGUISHED GUESTS AND HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS FROM ACROSS

THE WORLD AT THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION. DR. IRINA BOKOVA'S PRESENCE HERE TODAY IS ESPECIALLY SIGNIFICANT AND IS TESTIMONY OF HER STRONG COMMITMENT AND INTEREST IN MATTERS RELATING TO UNESCO CATEGORY II CENTRES SUCH AS ISTIC.

EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

3. GOING DOWN THE MEMORY LANE, THE IDEA OF HAVING AN INTERNATIONAL CENTRE TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PROGRAMME FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (STI) POLICY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WAS MOOTED IN 2005 BY UNESCO AFTER THE G77 MEETING. THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT AGREED TO SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ISTIC, A UNESCO CATEGORY II CENTRE IN KUALA LUMPUR IN 2008.

4. SINCE ITS INCEPTION, ISTIC HAS BEEN FACILITATING THE INTEGRATION OF A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH INTO NATIONAL STI POLICIES; FOCUSING ON CAPACITY BUILDING, AND PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR POLICY ADVICE, EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES AND BEST PRACTICES. THE CENTRE ALSO CONDUCTS RESEARCH AND HAS ESTABLISHED A PROBLEM-SOLVING NETWORK OF CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE IN STI POLICY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

5. BESIDES THIS, ISTIC HAS ALSO BEEN ACTIVELY IMMERSED IN PROVIDING CAPACITY BUILDING AND POLICY ADVICE TO THE G77 MEMBER COUNTRIES AS WELL AS CHINA UNDER THE FOLLOWING FOUR THEMES:

- a) SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION POLICY;
- b) INQUIRY BASED SCIENCE EDUCATION AND SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) EDUCATION;
- c) MAINTENANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE; AND

d) TECHNOPRENEURSHIP AND WOMEN IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION.

6. TO DATE, A TOTAL OF 1,585 PERSONNEL FROM 82 DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FROM ACROSS THE GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS HAVE DIRECTLY BENEFITTED FROM THE 33 CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES THAT ISTIC HAS CONDUCTED OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS. I WOULD SAY THAT THIS IS INDEED A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT.

EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

7. ONE OF THE MORE EXCITING INITIATIVES TAKEN BY ISTIC TO TRANSLATE MATERIALS ON INQUIRY BASED SCIENCE EDUCATION (IBSE) FROM THE *LA MAIN A LA PATE* FOUNDATION FROM FRENCH INTO ENGLISH. SCIENCE MUST TICKLE THE EXCITEMENT AND THE INQUISITIVENESS OF

THE PLAYERS, IN THIS CASE THE STUDENTS, RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING. IT MUST PROVIDE A SENSE OF JUST NOT AN AWE OF THE ENVIRONS, BUT A MEANS TO UNDERSTAND AND PERHAPS BENEFIT FROM IT ALL. IT MUST PROVIDE A WHERE-WITH-ALL, A MEANS TO INTERACT WITH NATURE AND THE ENVIRONS. I BELIEVE THIS EDUCATIONAL FORMAT FROM *LA MAIN A LA PATE* PROVIDES JUST THAT DIMENSION FOR THE STUDENTS IN THEIR FORMATIVE YEARS.

8. UNDER THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS OR STEM EDUCATION PROGRAMME, ISTIC WORKS VERY CLOSELY WITH THE *LA MAIN A LA PATE* FOUNDATION IN PARIS, THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF SOUTH COUNTRIES, THE INTER-ACADEMY PANEL FOR EDUCATION IN SCIENCE PROGRAMME AND THE REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS (RECSAM) ON THE TEACHING OF SCIENCE USING THE INQUIRY METHOD.

9. THUS FAR, ISTIC HAS TRANSLATED TWO BOOKS FROM FRENCH TO ENGLISH TO BE USED BY TEACHERS IN THE ANGLOPHONE COUNTRIES. IN ADDITION TO THIS, ISTIC HAS ALSO TAKEN THE INITIATIVE TO CREATE A *LA MAIN A LA PATE* MIRROR WEBSITE IN ENGLISH WHICH CAN BE ACCESSED BY ANYONE IN THE WORLD FOR FREE. I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE ISTIC FOR THE INITIATIVES TAKEN.

10. AND NOW FIVE YEARS ON, WE ARE HERE TO ASSESS FOR OURSELVES THE EXTENT IN WHICH ISTIC HAS BEEN ABLE TO MEET AND CARRY OUT THE TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES THAT IT HAS BEEN SET UP FOR. AS PART OF THE EXERCISE IN ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ISTIC AS A UNESCO CATEGORY II CENTRE, I WAS INFORMED THAT AN EVALUATION WAS CONDUCTED IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR BY A TEAM COORDINATED BY UNESCO.

11. THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THIS EXERCISE WILL POINT THE WAY FOR THE FUTURE OF ISTIC. I UNDERSTAND THAT A REPORT ON THIS HAS BEEN RELEASED AND WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE UNESCO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL. I AM OPTIMISTIC THAT THE REPORT IS FAVOURABLE TO ISTIC AND THAT A FRESH AGREEMENT WILL BE SIGNED BY BOTH PARTIES. I AM ALSO CONFIDENT THAT UNESCO WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT BOTH IN TERMS OF EXPERTISE AND FINANCE UNDER THE MALAYSIA – UNESCO COOPERATION PROGRAMME (MUCP) BECAUSE THERE IS STILL A LOT MORE TO BE DONE FOR THE INTEREST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE G77 COUNTRIES.

EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

12. ISTIC HAS MANAGED TO CARRY OUT VARIOUS PROGRAMMES OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS WITH ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER PROMINENT ORGANISATIONS AS STRATEGIC PARTNERS. AS FAR AS THE

GOVERNMENT OF MALAYSIA IS CONCERNED, WE WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE FINANCIAL COST OF RUNNING THE CENTRE. MALAYSIA, AS HOST COUNTRY OF ISTIC FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, IS MOST FORTUNATE TO BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF THIS SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AND WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN TERMS OF FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION AS WELL AS EXPERTISE. I LOOK FORWARD TO MANY MORE YEARS OF COLLABORATION WITH UNESCO VIA THE HOSTING OF ISTIC IN KUALA LUMPUR. I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT THESE INITIATIVES LED BY ISTIC HAVE MATERIALLY AND SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCED THE SCIENCE AGENDA OF MANY COUNTRIES WHICH ARE CLIENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS OF ISTIC.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,

13. MALAYSIA'S TRANSFORMATION SINCE INDEPENDENCE HAS BEEN REMARKABLE, TRANSFORMING FROM A POOR COUNTRY TO AN UPPER MIDDLE-INCOME ONE IN JUST 50 OVER YEARS. HOWEVER, IN THE FINAL LEG OF THE RACE TO BECOME A HIGH-INCOME ECONOMY BY THE YEAR 2020, THE STRATEGIES WHICH WERE SUCCESSFUL IN THE PAST REQUIRE FURTHER ADJUSTMENT AND REFINEMENT TO TAKE MALAYSIA AS A NATION PASS THE FINISHING LINE TO JOIN THE RANKS OF DEVELOPED NATIONS.

14. THE SCIENCE AGENDA WILL CONTINUE TO BE A TOP PRIORITY WITHIN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THERE IS NEED TO HAVE IN PLACE A SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIVE SYSTEM TO ACCELERATE DEVELOPMENT. BASIC TO THIS IS THE INVESTMENT IN STI AND THE STI INTEGRATION INTO EDUCATION, ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL POLICIES. IN THIS REGARD, I AM PLEASED TO SHARE WITH ALL OF YOU ON SOME PROGRESS OF THE STI AGENDA IN MALAYSIA.

15 LIKE MANY ECONOMIES TRYING TO ESCAPE THE MIDDLE INCOME TRAP, MALAYSIA HAS SOUGHT TO INCREASE ITS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY AND SPUR INNOVATION AS A MEANS TO REACH THE NEXT LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT. IN THE PAST, MALAYSIA HAS FOCUSED ITS RESOURCES ON ITS TRADITIONAL CASH CROPS AND ON ELECTRONICS, AND IN RECENT TIMES, ALSO MADE HEADWAY INTO BIOTECHNOLOGY, MEDICAL RESEARCH AND GREEN ENERGY.

16. TOTAL R&D EXPENDITURE IN 2011 IS RM 9,422 MILLION, GIVING AN R&D INTENSITY OF 1.07% AS PERCENTAGE OF GDP. THERE IS OF COURSE, STILL ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT IF MALAYSIA IS TO BE A GLOBAL COMPETITOR IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION.

17. THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM'S "GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS REPORT 2012-13" RANKED MALAYSIA 23RD OUT OF 144 NATIONS. THE REPORT ALSO RANKED THE COUNTRY 28TH FOR THE QUALITY OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS AND 34TH FOR ITS PATENTS PER POPULATION RATIO.

18. ACCORDING TO AN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT (IMD) SURVEY ON THE COMPETITIVENESS OF 59 ECONOMIES RELEASED IN 2011, MALAYSIA RANKED 35TH IN PRIVATE R&D FUNDING AS PERCENTAGE OF GDP; 38TH IN TOTAL GDP EXPENDITURES ON R&D; 42ND IN TERMS OF TOTAL R&D RELATED WORKFORCE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR; AND 45TH IN THE NUMBER OF SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES PUBLISHED. CERTAIN SECTORS ARE BECOMING LEADERS IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION BASED ON THE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES THEY CREATE. THE

BIOTECHNOLOGY SECTOR IS EXPECTED TO GENERATE RM248 BILLION BY 2020 AND THE SECTOR HAD CONTRIBUTED 2.2% OF THE COUNTRY'S GDP IN 2011.

EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

19. IN ATTAINING MALAYSIA'S VISION OF BECOMING A HIGH INCOME NATION BY THE YEAR 2020, THE GOVERNMENT HAS PUT IN PLACE NEW POLICIES GEARED TOWARDS STI. AMONG THESE POLICIES IS THE NATIONAL INNOVATION MODEL, WHICH HAS BEEN DEVELOPED TO ENSURE THE PROGRESS OF MALAYSIA AS A TRULY INNOVATIVE NATION. THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (MOSTI) IS THE LEADER IN MALAYSIA IN SUPPORTING INNOVATION-LED GROWTH BY SHAPING A SUPPORTIVE ECOSYSTEM FOR INNOVATION, CREATING INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES, PUTTING IN PLACE INNOVATION ENABLERS AND FUNDING INNOVATION.

20. AS MOSTI CELEBRATES 2012/2013 AS THE YEAR OF SCIENCE AND INNOVATION MOVEMENT, I WISH TO STRESS THAT THE GOVERNMENT AIMS TO INCREASE THE AWARENESS OF SCIENCE AND INNOVATION AS WELL AS TO INCULCATE A SCIENCE CULTURE IN OUR SOCIETY. A RELATIVELY SMALL PORTION OF OUR SOCIETY IS INVOLVED IN THE CREATION OF TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION AS THE NOTION THAT SCIENCE AND INNOVATION CAN BRING ECONOMIC SUCCESS HAS STILL NOT CAUGHT ON TO THE MASSES. STI IS STILL VERY MUCH THOUGHT OF AS BELONGING TO AN EXCLUSIVE CLIQUE, SUCH AS HIGH LEVEL ACADEMICIANS AND SCIENTISTS.

21. IN REALITY, STI IS STILL RELEVANT, ALIVE AND UTILISED BY ALL SEGMENTS OF THE SOCIETY, FROM THE GRASSROOTS RIGHT UP TO TOP ACADEMICIANS. AS FOR MALAYSIA, STI IS CONSIDERED AS THE ALL IMPORTANT TOOL WHICH WILL HASTEN OUR LEAP TO BECOME A HIGH-INCOME ECONOMY BY THE YEAR 2020.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

22. BEFORE I CONCLUDE, I WOULD LIKE TO ONCE AGAIN THANK HER EXCELLENCY DR. IRINA BOKOVA, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UNESCO FOR HER PRESENCE AT THIS HISTORIC OCCASION, MARKING 5 SUCCESSFUL YEARS OF ISTIC. I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE ISTIC ON THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE PAST 5 YEARS AND HOPE THEY CONTINUE TO SERVE THEIR OBJECTIVES WITH ENTHUSIASM AND VIGOUR, UNDER THE ABLE AND DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP OF DATO' DR. LEE YEE CHEONG. TO ALL OUR INTERNATIONAL GUESTS, I DO HOPE YOU FIND SOME TIME TO EXPLORE OUR VIBRANT AND COLOURFUL CITY AND LASTLY, I WISH YOU ALL A VERY SUCCESSFUL AND PRODUCTIVE CONFERENCE.

THANK YOU.

INTRODUCTION OF H.E. DR. IRINA BOKOVA

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I HAVE ALSO BEEN GIVEN THE HONOUR OF INTRODUCING OUR DISTINGUISHED GUEST, HER EXCELLENCY DR. IRINA BOKOVA. FOR MANY OF US IN THIS HALL, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET IN PERSON THE 10TH DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UNESCO AND THE FIRST WOMAN EVER TO HOLD THE POST SINCE UNESCO'S INCEPTION IN 1946.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION, DR. BOKOVA GRADUATED FROM THE MOSCOW STATE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AND STUDIED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, WASHINGTON AND THE JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

SHE SERVED AS A MEMBER OF THE BULGARIAN PARLIAMENT FROM 1990 TO 1991 AND AGAIN FROM 2001 TO 2005, WHERE SHE PARTICIPATED IN THE DRAFTING OF BULGARIA'S NEW CONSTITUTION, WHICH CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE COUNTRY'S ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION.

DR. IRINA BOKOVA WAS THE BULGARIAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COORDINATOR OF BULGARIA-EUROPEAN UNION RELATIONS FROM 1995 TO 1997 AND SUBSEQUENTLY THE AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA TO FRANCE AND TO MONACO, BEFORE BEING ELECTED A PERMANENT DELEGATE OF BULGARIA TO UNESCO. AS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF MANY INTERNATIONAL EXPERT NETWORKS AND CIVIL SOCIETY AND, IN PARTICULAR, AS CHAIRPERSON AND FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN POLICY FORUM, SHE HAS WORKED TO OVERCOME EUROPEAN DIVISIONS AND HELPED TO FOSTER THE VALUES OF DIALOGUE, DIVERSITY, HUMAN DIGNITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, PLEASE JOIN ME IN WELCOMING THIS ILLUSTRIOUS AND REMARKABLE WOMAN BY PUTTING YOUR HANDS TOGETHER FOR DR. IRINA BOKOVA.