

**DRAFT SPEECH FOR Y.BHG.DATO' MADINAH MOHAMAD
SECRETARY GENERAL
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
"INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON FORENSIC SCIENCE AND
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH 2009 (ISFE 2009)"
10 NOVEMBER 2009
3.20 PETANG - 5.15 PETANG
DEWAN TUN DR.ISMAIL, PWTC, KUALA LUMPUR.**

**MR. N. HITHAYA JEEVAN
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**HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES
DATUK-DATUK, DATIN-DATIN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

- 1. ASSALAMUALAIKUM, A VERY GOOD AFTERNOON AND SALAM SATU MALAYSIA TO ALL OF YOU AND A SPECIAL WELCOME TO ALL DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS AND PARTICIPANTS, BOTH FROM ABROAD AND MALAYSIA TO THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON FORENSIC SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH 2009 (IFSE 2009). THIS SYMPOSIUM MARKS ANOTHER MILESTONE IN THE PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY MALAYSIA, WHICH CELEBRATES ITS 100 YEARS OF PROVIDING SCIENTIFIC SERVICES IN MALAYSIA.**
- 2. FROM A SINGLE LABORATORY BASED IN PENANG IN 1909, THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY HAS EXPANDED TO 10**

BRANCHES SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF MALAYSIA. THROUGH NEW INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN SCIENCE, THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY HAS KEPT PACE TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE, INTEGRATED AND SYNERGISTIC SERVICES TO VARIOUS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AS WELL AS PRIVATE ENTITIES SO AS TO ENSURE THE NATION'S WELFARE, PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH.

3. FOR EXAMPLE, OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES, THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE HAS RESULTED IN BREAKTHROUGH OF THE KEY WEAPONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME: - DNA EVIDENCE AS A POWERFUL CRIMINAL JUSTICE TOOL. MAXIMIZING THE USE OF DNA EVIDENCE PROMOTES FAIRNESS AND CONFIDENCE IN THE INTEGRITY OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM TO WHICH THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY HAS SINCE IMPLEMENTED AND CAN BE PROUD OF.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

4. IN FOOD SCIENCE, WE HAVE SEEN THE EMERGENCE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS WHICH HAS RESULTED IN GREATER YIELDS. AS THE ANALYSIS AND DETECTION OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS CAN ONLY BE CARRIED OUT AT THE MOLECULAR LEVEL, THE DEPARTMENT POSSESSES STATE OF THE ART EQUIPMENT FOR SUCH ANALYSIS. IN ADDITION TO THAT, CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL CONTAMINATION OF FOOD AND DRINKING WATER HAS SEEN THE NEED FOR LABORATORIES

TO BE EQUIPPED WITH ADVANCE EQUIPMENT THAT ARE ABLE TO DETECT THESE CONTAMINANTS AT EXTREMELY LOW LEVELS. IN CARING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT, THE NEED TO CURB POLLUTION – BE IT AIR OR WATER HAS RESULTED IN ENVIRONMENTAL FORENSICS ASSUMING A GREATER ROLE TO AID ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.

5. WITH INFORMATION MADE AVAILABLE AT THE CLICK OF A MOUSE, THERE IS A GREATER AWARENESS AMONG THE PUBLIC ON SUCH ISSUES AND HENCE THE LABORATORIES FACE EVER INCREASING WORKLOAD. THERE IS A NEED TO GREATLY INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF LABORATORIES AND TO REDUCE TURNAROUND TIME SO AS TO PRODUCE ANALYTICAL REPORTS OF THE HIGHEST STANDARD. EMPLOYING TECHNOLOGY SUCH AS ROBOTICS AND ADVANCED COMPUTER SUPPORT WILL ASSIST THE LABORATORIES TO IMPROVE THEIR DELIVERY SYSTEM. I AM SURE THAT SOME NEW EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES THAT WILL BE SHARED AT THE SESSIONS HELD DURING THIS SYMPOSIUM WILL BE ABLE TO HELP RESOLVE THESE ISSUES.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

6. INNOVATION HAS GARNERED MORE HEADLINES RECENTLY AS ONE OF THE CORE PROCESSES THAT EVERY ORGANIZATION MUST NURTURE IN ORDER TO RETAIN ITS VIABILITY. TODAY MORE THAN EVER, ECONOMIC AND SOCIETAL WELL-BEING DEPENDS ON INNOVATION.

7. INNOVATION IS CRITICAL FOR ORGANIZATIONS THAT WANT TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE IN THE LONG TERM. CREATING AN INNOVATION CULTURE IS EASIER SAID THAN DONE. THERE IS NO MAGIC BULLET FOR CREATING INNOVATION, OR ANY GUARANTEE OF A SUSTAINING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AS A RESULT. CONCEIVING INNOVATION REQUIRES BREAKTHROUGH CREATIVITY, IMAGINATION AND INSTINCT. DEVELOPING THEM REQUIRES PERCEPTIVENESS, INGENUITY AND AGILITY. IMPLEMENTING THEM REQUIRES CO-OPERATION AND COLLABORATION ACROSS THE ENTERPRISE. TO THIS END, THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IS EMBARKING ON CREATING A CULTURE OF INNOVATION CREATIVITY AND AMONGST THE PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY THROUGH VARIOUS ACTIVITIES INCLUDING THE LAUNCHING OF THE MYIDEAS PORTAL AND THE DECLARATION OF 2010 AS THE YEAR OF INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY.

8. TO FULFILL MALAYSIA'S VISION OF BECOMING A FULLY DEVELOPED NATION BY THE YEAR 2020, WE HAVE TO INCREASE OUR COMMITMENT IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND IN PARTICULAR INNOVATION. WITHOUT INNOVATION, WE WILL BE UNABLE TO MAINTAIN, LET ALONE IMPROVE THE NATION'S COMPETITIVENESS GLOBALLY.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

9. THOMAS FRIEDMAN WROTE THE BOOK "THE WORLD IS FLAT", VIEWING THE WORLD AS A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD IN TERMS OF COMMERCE. APPLYING THIS TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SECTORS, IT MEANS THAT DISCOVERIES AND INNOVATIONS CAN EMERGE FROM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD. DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ALIKE RECOGNIZE THAT ECONOMIC GROWTH IN A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY IS DRIVEN BY INVESTMENTS IN RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE.

10. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOCUSING ON INNOVATION TO PRODUCE ANALYTICAL RESULTS FASTER, MORE ACCURATELY AND LESS COSTLY ARE CONSTANTLY BEING CONDUCTED IN MANY LABORATORIES ALL OVER THE WORLD. THIS WILL LEAD TO NEW INNOVATIONS THAT WILL ENHANCE THE PROGRESS AND STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMY. THEREFORE, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT SCIENTISTS, RESEARCHERS AND EDUCATORS IN THE DIFFERENT FIELDS FOSTER COLLABORATION WITH ONE ANOTHER TO TAP ON TO EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES THAT ARE AT OUR FRONTIERS.

11. APPLYING INNOVATION IN ALL ASPECTS OF ACTIVITIES IS NOW VITAL IN GAINING AND MAINTAINING A BUSINESS ADVANTAGE. HOWEVER, AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, INNOVATION IS EASY TO SAY, BUT HARD TO DO RIGHT. IT REQUIRES A

SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT OF TIME, MONEY AND RESOURCES AS WELL AS ACCESS TO WORLD-CLASS RESEARCH PARTNERS. ACHIEVING THIS REQUIRES A DIVERSE SPONSORSHIP BASE AND OUTSTANDING STAFF. BUT WITH COMMITMENT, DEDICATION AND PERSEVERANCE, THE REWARD IT BRINGS WILL BE GREAT WHICH WILL PLACE THE LABORATORY AT A HIGHER PROFILE AND AT THE SAME TIME ENHANCE THE ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION.

12. RAPID ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE HAS DEFINED THE 20TH CENTURY. GLOBAL PROGRESS HAS LED TO SOME SOCIAL UPHEAVALS BUT, ON THE WHOLE, HAS IMPROVED THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR MOST CITIZENS. MANY PEOPLE EXPECT THAT THE 21ST CENTURY WILL WITNESS AN EVEN FASTER PACE OF CHANGE. FURTHER, GLOBALISATION HAS BROUGHT ABOUT MASSIVE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND PRODUCTS ACROSS BORDERS. AS SUCH WHAT HAPPENS IN ONE NATION IS BOUND TO AFFECT OTHER NATIONS. THE CASE OF THE PRESENCE OF MELAMINE IN MILK POWDER IS A VERY GOOD EXAMPLE. SO, THERE IS A NEED FOR LABORATORIES PROVIDING SCIENTIFIC SERVICES IN THIS REGION TO NETWORK AND SHARE INFORMATION. IT IS HOPED THAT MANY OF YOU WILL TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY NOT ONLY TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BUT ALSO TO NETWORK WITH EACH OTHER SO THAT WHEN SUCH INFORMATION IS REQUIRED, IT CAN BE QUICKLY SHARED.

13. CLEARLY, THEREFORE, THE IMPORTANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND ANALYTICAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE LABORATORIES ESPECIALLY IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF VARIOUS REGULATIONS AND LAWS CANNOT BE DENIED. HOWEVER, TO MOVE INTO NEW FRONTIERS IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND SERVICES, NEW STRATEGIES MUST BE DRAWN UP. LABORATORY SCIENTISTS MUST GEAR THEMSELVES TO FACE CHALLENGES LIKE KEEPING PACE WITH NEW TECHNOLOGIES WHICH WOULD BURST UPON THE SCENE, FOR EXAMPLE MORE BIOMARKERS IN HUMAN IDENTIFICATION, AUTOMATION OF MOST LABORATORY TESTS AND ADOPTION OF MINIATURIZED OR MICRO ANALYTICAL DEVICES. IN ADDITION TO THIS, LABORATORIES SHOULD ALSO FULLY EXPLOIT IT TO INCREASE THEIR EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND TO BETTER MANAGE INFORMATION/DATA.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

14. THE “BUSINESS AS USUAL” WAY OF DOING THINGS WOULD NO LONGER BE SUFFICIENT AND I AM SURE, THIS SYMPOSIUM WILL PROVIDE THE AVENUE FOR IN-DEPTH DISCUSSION TO FURTHER ENHANCE LABORATORY SERVICES. HAVING SAID THAT, THE LABORATORIES AND THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY SHOULD CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE DESIRED GOALS GUIDED BY THE PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY, SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE AND OBJECTIVITY, COMMITMENT TO QUALITY AND

CONCERN FOR CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WHILE GIVING DUE EMPHASIS TO INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY.

15. A NOTE TO OUR FOREIGN DELEGATES, DO TAKE SOME TIME OFF TO VISIT THE CITY AND MAYBE EVEN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. THERE ARE GREAT TREASURES OF BEAUTY AND CULTURE FOR YOU TO BEHOLD AND ADMIRE. I WISH THAT ALL YOU WILL HAVE A SUCCESSFUL, FRUITFUL AND ENJOYABLE TIME TOGETHER.

16. ONCE AGAIN, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION TO ALL THE INVITED SPEAKERS AND EXPERTS, PARTICIPANT AND ALL THOSE WHO HAVE WORKED SO HARD, INCLUDING THE SCIENTIFIC COMPANIES, IN MAKING THIS SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESSFUL ONE.

17. IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO OFFICIATE THE OPENING CEREMONY OF YET ANOTHER FORUM AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE KNOWLEDGE AND CAPABILITIES AMONG SCIENTISTS, AND THIS TIME ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN THE FORENSIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES. WITH THESE REMARKS, I AM HONORED TO OFFICIALLY DECLARE OPEN THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON FORENSIC SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH 2009.

THANK YOU.