

OPENING SPEECH

GLOBAL WARMING : CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

BY

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DISTINGUISHED PARTICIPANTS,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

GOOD MORNING.

IT IS MY GREAT PLEASURE TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WELCOME YOU ALL TO THIS EXECUTIVE TALK; **GLOBAL WARMING : CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION.**

LET ME FIRST EXPRESS MY SINCERE THANKS TO THE SOUTH EAST ASIA DISASTER PREVENTION RESEARCH INSTITUTE (SEADPRI), UKM FOR THE COOPERATION RENDERED IN ORGANISING THIS EXECUTIVE TALK. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK DR. PHILIPP SCHMIDT-THOME FROM THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF FINLAND FOR HIS WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE INVITATION AS THE SPEAKER IN THE EXECUTIVE TALK.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

THE 4TH ASSESSMENT REPORT BY THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC) PUBLISHED IN 2007 HAS WARNED THAT THE WARMING OF THE EARTH'S CLIMATE SYSTEM IS UNEQUIVOCAL. THE WARMING HAS RESULTED NOT ONLY IN INCREASED GLOBAL AVERAGE SURFACE AIR AND OCEAN TEMPERATURES BUT ALSO INCREASED WEATHER

EXTREMES, MELTING OF ICE IN THE POLAR REGION AND SEA LEVEL RISE.

MANY SCIENTISTS BELIEVED THAT GLOBAL WARMING WILL ALSO LEAD TO INCREASE IN CLIMATE VARIABILITY AND THIS WILL FURTHER ENHANCE THE WEATHER EXTREMES. OF GREAT CONCERN TO US IS THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF SEVERE STORMS, TYPHOONS AND TORRENTIAL RAINS THAT RESULTED IN FLOODS. THESE EVENTS HAVE BECOME MORE FREQUENT AND INTENSE IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD, AND ASIA IS PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO THESE HAZARDS. OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, WE HAVE WITNESSED AN INCREASE IN DAMAGE DUE TO THE EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA ITSELF.

WE IN MALAYSIA HAD EXPERIENCED MORE EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. FOR EXAMPLE, IN DECEMBER 2005, WE EXPERIENCED WIDESPREAD MONSOON FLOODS AFFECTING THE STATES OF PERLIS AND KEDAH. AGAIN IN DECEMBER 2006 AND JANUARY 2007, MONSOONAL RAIN RESULTED IN UNPRECEDENTED FLOODS IN JOHORE, MALACCA AND SOUTHERN PAHANG.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

THE NEGOTIATIONS AT THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN PARTICULAR AT COPENHAGEN IS CRUCIAL TO OUR EFFORTS IN TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE. WE ARE AWARE THAT WHAT EVER

LIMITATIONS IN GHG EMISSION IS TAKEN TODAY, SOME LEVEL OF WARMING OF THE EARTH WILL TAKE PLACE. HENCE, ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE IS A NECESSITY. MANY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HAVE ALREADY PUT IN PLACE THEIR ADAPTATION BLUEPRINT SINCE THE 1990S. THE SHARING OF EXPERIENCES AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON THESE AND ON OTHER AREAS SUCH AS CLIMATE-RELATED RISK MANAGEMENT WILL CERTAINLY CONTRIBUTE TO OUR UNDERSTANDING ON HOW TO DEAL WITH CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENABLE US TO MAINSTREAM ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION INTO DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION. FROM THE POLICYMAKERS' PERSPECTIVE, WITH REGARDS TO GLOBAL WARMING, IT IS NECESSARY TO KNOW THE BROADER SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF OUR FUTURE WEATHER AND CLIMATE EXTREMES. IT IS CLEAR THAT IF THE PRIMARY RESOURCES ARE AFFECTED, THERE WOULD BE AN ADVERSE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATION THAT FOLLOWS.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT (NRE) IS ENTRUSTED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY IN THE PREPARATION OF THE SECOND NATIONAL COMMUNICATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC). THIS DOCUMENT WILL FURTHER INTEGRATE CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES AND IMPACTS INTO THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGIC AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS. I HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT THE ECONOMIC PLANNING UNIT (EPU) IS ALSO

UNDERTAKING A STUDY ON “THE ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN MALAYSIA”. MOSTI TOO IS ALSO TAKING INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE INNOVATION AND RESEARCH INCLUDING ON GREEN TECHNOLOGY, GREEN GROWTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE. THE EXECUTIVE TALK THAT WE ARE HAVING TODAY IS AN EXAMPLE OF ONE OF THE INITIATIVES TAKEN.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I HOPE THIS EXECUTIVE TALK WILL HELP US BETTER UNDERSTAND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND ALSO ENABLE US TO MAKE BETTER USE OF CLIMATE AS A RESOURCE AS PART OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

BEFORE I END MY SPEECH, I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONVEY MY APPRECIATION TO THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE OF THIS EXECUTIVE TALK FOR MAKING THIS EVENT A SUCCESS. ONCE AGAIN I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY DEEPEST GRATITUDE AND SINCERE APPRECIATION TO DR. PHILIPP SCHMIDT-THOME FOR HIS PRESENCE TODAY.

ON THIS NOTE, I AM PLEASED TO DECLARE THE EXECUTIVE TALK **GLOBAL WARMING: CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION** OFFICIALLY OPEN.

THANK YOU.