

**OPENING SPEECH
BY
Y. BHG. DATO' MADINAH MOHAMAD
SECRETARY GENERAL
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

**MTCP TRAINING PROGRAMME ON HALAL STANDARDS AND
CONFORMANCE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR OIC COUNTRIES 2010**

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**MINES WELLNESS HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR
SERI KEMBANGAN, SELANGOR**

**Y. BERUSAHA PUAN FADILAH BAHARIN
DIRECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF STANDARDS MALAYSIA**

**REPRESENTATIVES FROM SIRIM BERHAD AND MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**HONOURED GUESTS, DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS, PARTICIPANTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.**

**ASSALAMUALAIKUM WARAHMATULLAHI WABARAKATUH, SALAM
SATU MALAYSIA AND A VERY GOOD MORNING TO ALL OF YOU.**

1. FIRST AND FOREMOST, I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A WARM WELCOME AND TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE TO ALL OF YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ATTEND THE TRAINING PROGRAMME ON HALAL STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR OIC COUNTRIES 2010, UNDER THE MALAYSIAN TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME OR MTCP. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE DEPARTMENT OF STANDARDS MALAYSIA FOR INVITING ME TO OFFICIATE THIS TRAINING PROGRAMME.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

2. HALAL IS OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH SAFE, CLEAN AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD, PREPARED ACCORDING TO ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES. BUT IN FACT, THE CONCEPT OF HALAL ALSO APPLIES TO PERSONAL CARE AND COSMETIC PRODUCTS, PHARMACEUTICALS, AS WELL AS FINANCE AND OTHER SERVICES.

3. THE GLOBAL MUSLIM POPULATION IS EXPECTED TO GROW TO 3 BILLION AND COUPLED WITH THE FACT THAT NON-MUSLIMS ARE INCREASINGLY ACCEPTING HALAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, THE GLOBAL TRADE VALUE FOR HALAL PRODUCTS IS ESTIMATED AT USD1.2 TRILLION ANNUALLY.

4. TODAY, HALAL INDUSTRIES ARE HIGHLY SOUGHT AFTER. THE HALAL SECTOR CONTRIBUTES TO THE MALAYSIAN EXPORT

REVENUE. TAKING MALAYSIA'S EXPORT OF PROCESSED FOOD TO THE OIC COUNTRIES AS AN INDICATOR OF THE POTENTIAL, THE TREND IS CERTAINLY PROMISING. MALAYSIA'S EXPORTS OF PROCESSED FOOD TO OIC COUNTRIES INCREASED FROM RM1.62 BILLION IN 2004 TO RM3.94 BILLION IN 2008. ALTHOUGH, THERE WAS A DECLINE IN 2009 DUE TO THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL RECESSION, WE ARE CERTAIN THE GROWTH TREND WILL RESUME

5. A SIMILAR POSITIVE TREND IS ALSO SEEN IN THE EXPORT OF OTHER HALAL PRODUCTS, SUCH AS PHARMACEUTICAL, COSMETICS, TOILETRIES AND ESSENTIAL OILS TO OIC COUNTRIES, INCREASING FROM RM409.7 MILLION IN 2005 TO RM 839.4 MILLION IN 2009. EVEN DURING THE GLOBAL RECESSION LAST YEAR, EXPORTS OF THESE PRODUCTS ROSE BY 8.1%. BEYOND THAT, THE ECO-SYSTEM SUPPORTING TRADE IN HALAL ALSO OFFERS OTHER BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THAT HAVE YET TO BE FULLY EXPLORED. THIS WOULD INCLUDE A BROAD SPECTRUM OF ACTIVITIES INCLUDING, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCT DESIGN, LOGISTICS, TRAINING, CERTIFICATION, STANDARDS AND E- COMMERCE. THESE ARE BUSINESSES IN THEIR OWN RIGHT AND OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR REVENUE GENERATION.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

6. WHILE WE RECOGNISE THAT THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE HALAL MARKET, THERE ARE STILL MANY HURDLES TO OVERCOME TO REALISE THE FULL POTENTIAL OF THIS SECTOR. ONE OF THE OBSTACLES RELATES TO THE LACK OF COMMON HALAL STANDARDS THAT ARE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL MUSLIM COMMUNITY AND IT IS VERY MUCH STILL A 'WORK IN PROGRESS'. I WOULD LIKE TO URGE THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY TO STRIVE TOWARDS COMMON STANDARDS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE UMMAH GLOBALLY.

7. I AM PLEASED TO INFORM YOU THAT MALAYSIA HAS BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT IN DEVELOPING STANDARDS FOR THE HALAL INDUSTRY THAT MEET INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES. THIS INITIATIVE WILL ENSURE THAT THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY, NO MATTER WHERE THEY ARE, WOULD FEEL SAFE AND CONVINCED THAT THE FOOD AND PRODUCTS THEY CONSUME ARE HALAL.

8. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT HALAL STANDARDS AND CONFORMITY INFRASTRUCTURE IS A KEY ENABLER FOR THE SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBAL HALAL INDUSTRY. DIFFERING CERTIFICATION STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR HALAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES TO FULLY PROSPER.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

9. TOWARDS FURTHERING AND HARMONISING THE GROWTH OF THE GLOBAL HALAL INDUSTRY, TODAY'S TRAINING IS FORMULATED UNDER THE MALAYSIAN TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME (MTCP), AS ONE OF THE MALAYSIAN INITIATIVES IN DEVELOPING THE HUMAN CAPITAL.

10. IN LINE WITH THE SPIRIT OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION, THE MTCP, WHICH IS A MULTILATERAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME, SHARES DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES WITH OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THIS "PROSPER-THY-NEIGHBOUR" PHILOSOPHY IS THE UNDERLYING BASIS FOR THE MTCP.

11. THE PROGRAMME PROVIDES VARIOUS FORMS OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN AREAS WHERE MALAYSIA HAS THE EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE. THE MTCP EMPHASISES THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES THROUGH THE PROVISION OF TRAINING IN VARIOUS AREAS WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL FOR A COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT SUCH AS PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, AGRICULTURE, POVERTY ALLEVIATION, INVESTMENT PROMOTION, ICT, BANKING AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

12. SINCE JANUARY 2010, THE ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION OF MTCP ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN TAKEN OVER FROM THE ECONOMIC PLANNING UNIT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT BY THE MTCP UNIT UNDER THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THE UNIT AS THE NATIONAL FOCAL POINT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION OF MTCP ACTIVITIES. SINCE ITS INCEPTION, THE MTCP HAS EXPANDED IN TERMS OF ITS SCOPE AND COVERAGE WITH EMPHASIS ON THE EXCHANGE OF DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE. MORE THAN 2,000 PARTICIPANTS FROM 138 MEMBER COUNTRIES HAVE COME TO MALAYSIA ANNUALLY UNDER THE MTCP.

13. CURRENTLY THE MTCP HAS A MEMBERSHIP ALUMNI OF ABOUT 19,700 WORLDWIDE. ABOUT 150 SHORT-TERM SPECIALISED COURSES ARE OFFERED BY THE 53 MTCP TRAINING INSTITUTIONS, MANY OF WHICH ARE CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR TRAINING, WITH THE AIM OF BUILDING HUMAN CAPITAL IN OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

14. FINALLY, I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE DEPARTMENT OF STANDARDS MALAYSIA FOR ONCE AGAIN SUCCESSFULLY ORGANISING THE TRAINING PROGRAMME ON HALAL STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE OIC COUNTRIES. I URGE ALL PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE TRAVELLED FROM FAR TO FULLY

PARTICIPATE AND CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THIS TRAINING WHICH WILL BE CONDUCTED OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS. IT IS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE UMMAH AND THE WORLD AS A WHOLE.

15. I PRAY FOR ALLAH'S GRACE AND BLESSINGS TOWARDS A MOST PRODUCTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL TRAINING PROGRAMME. ON THAT NOTE, AND WITH THE RECITATION OF "BISMILLAHIRRAHMANIRRAHIM", IT IS MY PLEASURE TO OFFICIALLY DECLARE OPENS THE TRAINING PROGRAMME ON HALAL STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR OIC COUNTRIES 2010, UNDER THE MTCP.

THANK YOU.