



**KEMENTERIAN PERTANIAN
DAN INDUSTRI MAKANAN**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

H.E. DATUK SERI DR. RONALD KIANDEE

**MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRIES,
MALAYSIA (MAFI)**

DELIVERED BY

MALAYSIA AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

H.E. DATO' MOHD TARID BIN SUFIAN

**OPENING CEREMONY OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE WEEK
AMPHITHEATRE, MALAYSIA PAVILION, EXPO 2020 DUBAI**

21 FEBRUARY 2022 (MONDAY), 11:00AM

SALUTATIONS

1. HIS EXCELLENCY SENATOR DATUK ISKANDAR DZULKARNAIN ABDUL KHALID, CHAIRMAN OF MALAYSIAN BIOECONOMY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION SDN BHD

2. MS MICHELLE LAU SOOK YEE, MALAYSIA PAVILION DIRECTOR

3. MR KHALID BIN IBRAHIM, UNDER SECRETARY, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT DIVISION OF MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY MALAYSIA (MAFI)

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA.

1. IT IS AN HONOUR FOR ME TO BE HERE THIS MORNING IN DUBAI TO LAUNCH THE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE WEEK AT MALAYSIA PAVILION, EXPO 2020 DUBAI ON BEHALF OF THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRIES MALAYSIA, H.E. DATUK SERI DR. RONALD KIANDEE. I AM ALSO DELIGHTED TO SEE SUCH A GLOBAL AND DIVERSE GATHERING OF COMPANIES AND ORGANISATIONS WHO ARE PARTICIPATING THIS WEEK.

2. THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRIES (MAFI) ARE PROUD TO REPRESENT MALAYSIA IN SUCH A PRESTIGIOUS PLATFORM LIKE EXPO 2020 DUBAI. WE ARE HONOURED TO SHOWCASE AND PROMOTE MALAYSIA'S SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, WHICH IS A VERY IMPORTANT TOPIC IN OUR WORLD TODAY. ALLOW ME TO DELIVER THE MINISTER'S KEYNOTE ADDRESS, AS HE COULD NOT BE HERE DUE TO UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

INTRODUCTION

3. PICTURE THIS – ROWS OF EMPTY SHELVES IN GROCERY STORES; FARMERS WITHOUT JOBS; ACRES OF LANDS WITHOUT PRODUCE; FAMILIES WITH EMPTY PLATES. THIS IS WHAT THE FUTURE MIGHT LOOK LIKE WITHOUT SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE. IT IS NOT A TRENDY BUZZWORD AND IT IS NOT OPTIONAL – SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IS A REAL SOLUTION THAT SHAPES OUR PRESENT AND FUTURE WORLD.

4. ACCORDING TO “THE STATE OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN THE WORLD 2021” REPORT BY THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO), 3 BILLION PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE POOR, HAD NO ACCESS TO HEALTHY DIETS IN 2019. IN

2020, NEARLY ONE IN THREE PEOPLE HAD NO ACCESS TO ADEQUATE FOOD - AROUND 660 MILLION PEOPLE MAY STILL FACE HUNGER IN 2030.

5. THESE FIGURES SHOULD PUSH US TO ACCELERATE OUR EFFORTS IN IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS IN AGRICULTURE TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY, FOOD SAFETY, AND PEOPLE'S LIVELIHOODS.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

STATUS OF GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE INCLUDING MALAYSIA

6. WE HAVE ALREADY SEEN THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AROUND THE GLOBE. ACCORDING TO THE FOOD SUSTAINABILITY INDEX 2021 (FSI), SWEDEN, JAPAN, CANADA, FINLAND AND AUSTRIA ARE SOME OF THE COUNTRIES THAT RANKED THE HIGHEST FOR THE MOST SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS IN THE WORLD. IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT MOST OF THESE COUNTRIES ARE ALSO IN THE TOP 10 RANKING OF THE 2021 GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY INDEX (GFSI).

7. FOR THE SAME GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY INDEX, MALAYSIA IS RANKED SECOND AFTER SINGAPORE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND WE ARE PLACED IN THE TOP EIGHT AMONG ASIA PACIFIC COUNTRIES IN 2021. OVERALL, WE ARE RANKED 39 OUT OF 113 COUNTRIES – NOT FAR AHEAD OF US IS UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, RANKED 35. THIS SHOWS THAT BOTH MALAYSIA AND UAE ARE ALREADY IN THE RIGHT PATH TOWARDS IMPROVING EACH NATION'S FOOD SECURITY – DEVELOPING SUSTAINABILITY IN AGRICULTURE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS FROM BOTH COUNTRIES IN EXPO 2020 DUBAI WILL NO DOUBT STRENGTHEN OUR EFFORTS IN SECURING FOOD, NUTRITION, AND LIVELIHOODS.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

PARTNERING WITH MALAYSIA IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

8. RANKINGS ASIDE, WHAT MAKES MALAYSIA AN IDEAL PARTNER IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE? AS MOST OF YOU MAY ALREADY KNOW, OUR COUNTRY IS A PRIME INVESTMENT DESTINATION. MALAYSIA IS RICH WITH INVALUABLE RESERVES, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND RAW MATERIALS. BACKED BY A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT, RAPIDLY EMERGING ECONOMY, WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE, AND HIGHLY-SKILLED WORKFORCE, MALAYSIA HAS ALL THE ELEMENTS AND

OPPORTUNITIES REQUIRED FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE TO GROW AND PROSPER.

9. THIS IS CEMENTED BY OUR GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT THROUGH MALAYSIA'S SHARED PROSPERITY VISION 2030, AS WELL AS THE NATIONAL AGROFOOD POLICY 2.0 (NAP 2.0) 2021-2030 UNDER MAFI THAT HAS BEEN FORMULATED TO BE IN LINE WITH THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) AND OTHER NATIONAL POLICIES ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY. BOTH EMPHASISE ON THE ADOPTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND DIGITALISATION IN THE ERA OF FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (IR4.0) – INCLUDING MECHANISATION AND AUTOMATION - TO BOOST PRODUCTIVITY, SYSTEM SUPPORT, SERVICES, AND TO STRENGTHEN FOOD VALUE CHAINS THAT DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABILITY OF THE FOOD SYSTEM.

MODERNISATION & TECHNOLOGY DRIVE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA

10. MODERNISATION AND SMART AGRICULTURE ARE GAME CHANGERS OF THIS COMPREHENSIVE VISION AND POLICY AND THEY HAVE INDEED CATALYSED THE GROWTH OF SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN MALAYSIA.

THE EFFECTIVE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES SUCH AS LAND AND WATER IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER IN FOOD PRODUCTION ARE CRITICAL TO ENSURE OPTIMUM AND CONTINUOUS OUTPUT. IN THIS REGARD, GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AREAS, THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY APPROACHES IN FOOD PRODUCTION BY OPTIMIZING LAND AND WATER USAGE, USING SMART FERTILIZERS, AND EFFICIENT WASTE MANAGEMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, A NUMBER OF FARMS IN THE COUNTRY ARE ALREADY IMPLEMENTING SMART FARMING TECHNOLOGY SUCH AS INTERNET OF THINGS (IOT) SOLUTIONS, SENSORS, AND DRONES THAT CREATE CONDUCIVE OPERATIONAL CONDITIONS FOR FARMS, PROVIDE SAVINGS, AND INCREASE CONVENIENCE.

11. THESE SMART FARMING SOLUTIONS HAVE ALSO SEEPED INTO URBAN FARMING - MANY RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN THE COUNTRY HAVE EMBRACED SMART URBAN FARMING, WHEREBY RESIDENTS ARE INTEGRATING CONVENTIONAL FARMING METHODS WITH TECHNOLOGY IN URBAN SPACES WITH VEGETABLE AND FRUIT GARDENS FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND TO LOWER CARBON EMISSIONS.

12. SUSTAINABLE CULINARY IS ALSO ON THE RISE THANKS TO MORE ENVIRONMENTAL-CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS AND TRENDS. OUR EFFORTS IN PRESERVING OUR RICH BIODIVERSITY COUPLED WITH CREATIVE FOOD INNOVATIONS HAVE PAVED THE WAY TO PRODUCING HEALTHY, HALAL FOOD ALTERNATIVES IN SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE WAYS. SOME HIGHLIGHTS WHICH YOU MIGHT WITNESS DURING OUR FOOD DEMOS INCLUDE EDIBLE BIRD'S NEST TO REPLACE SHARK'S FIN DELICACY, MALAYSIAN JACKFRUIT AS VEGAN MEAT SUBSTITUTE, AS WELL AS HEALTHY SALAD WITH SEA GRAPES (LATOK SEAWEED).

13. SPEAKING OF BIODIVERSITY, MALAYSIA IS COMMITTED TOWARDS PRESERVING ITS NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENSURING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY. OUR INNOVATIVE RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND COMMERCIALIZATION ALLOW US TO HARNESS THE POWER OF THE COUNTRY'S BIODIVERSITY, TRANSFORMING TREASURED MALAYSIAN HERBS AND PLANTS TO HIGH-VALUE WELLNESS PRODUCTS. THIS INCLUDES THE SUSTAINABLE CULTIVATION OF TIGER MILK MUSHROOM – WELL-KNOWN FOR ITS RESPIRATORY BENEFITS - AND BENTONG GINGER –WHICH IS KNOWN TO IMPROVE THE DIGESTIVE

SYSTEM - WHICH ARE PRODUCED AS HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS AND FOOD INGREDIENTS.

14. MEANWHILE, TECHNOLOGIES ARE ALSO BEING CONTINUOUSLY DEVELOP TO CONVERT WASTE INTO SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES THAT GENERATE WEALTH, SUCH AS USING UNIQUE PATENTED ENZYMATIC BIOTECHNOLOGY TO TRANSFORM RICE STRAW WASTE INTO SINGLE-USE BIODEGRADABLE PACKAGING FOR BIOINDUSTRIAL AND BIOMEDICAL MARKETS – THESE ARE ESPECIALLY IN DEMAND DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

MALAYSIA WORKING TOGETHER WITH UAE IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

15. AS YOU MAY OBSERVE, THESE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES ARE FUELED BY SMART TECHNOLOGY TO PRESERVE BIODIVERSITY, GENERATE SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION, ENSURE FOOD SECURITY AND SAFETY, AND CREATE INNOVATIVE FOOD AND NON-FOOD PRODUCTS. AT THE SAME TIME, THESE PRACTICES ALSO EMPOWER THE FARMERS AND WORKERS IN AGRICULTURE BY PROVIDING THEM WITH

TOOLS THAT INCREASE THEIR YIELD, IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS, WHILE INCREASING THEIR INCOMES TO SUSTAIN THEIR LIVELIHOODS.

16. WE BELIEVE THAT BY PARTNERING WITH UAE, WE CAN ELEVATE THESE PRACTICES AND IMPROVE SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES TO THE NEXT LEVEL. DESPITE THE ARID CLIMATE IN UAE, WE ARE IMPRESSED WITH DUBAI'S INNOVATIVE EFFORTS AND SERIOUS INVESTMENTS TO PRODUCE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ALL YEAR ROUND USING HYDROPONIC TECHNOLOGY AND VERTICAL FARMING, AS WELL AS THE EFFORTS DEDICATED TO PROMOTE LOCALLY GROWN PRODUCE.

17. THIS COMMITMENT TO INNOVATIVE THINKING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMPLEMENTS MALAYSIA'S DIRECTION IN TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION AND MODERNISATION IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE. UAE'S STATUS AS A GLOBAL INVESTMENT HUB ALSO OPENS UP A WIDE MARKET ACCESS FOR MALAYSIA'S COMPANIES LOOKING TO MARKET THEIR UNIQUE, HALAL, AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS. MEANWHILE, MALAYSIA'S THRIVING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, TALENTED YOUTHFUL WORKFORCE, AND EMPOWERMENT OPPORTUNITIES GIVEN TO AGRICULTURE WORKERS ARE SOME OF THE ASPECTS THAT THE UAE CAN BUILD ON TO ADD TO ITS STRENGTHS.

18. I BELIEVE THERE ARE MANY WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN COLLABORATE IN THESE MATTERS TO ADVANCE AND IMPROVE OUR EFFORTS IN MAKING AGRICULTURE A SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT SYSTEM TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY, SAFETY, AND SUSTENANCE FOR BOTH MALAYSIA AND UAE. THE EXCHANGE OF MOUS BETWEEN COMPANIES FROM MALAYSIA AND THE UAE THAT WE WILL WITNESS SOON ARE A TESTAMENT TO THIS. THESE MOUS ARE EXPECTED TO GENERATE TOTAL POTENTIAL INVESTMENTS WORTH **USD47 MILLION (AED173 MILLION, RM197 MILLION)**.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

CONCLUSION

19. THE ONGOING COVID-19 PANDEMIC, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND POVERTY ARE COMPLEX CHALLENGES THAT WE HAVE TO WEAVE THROUGH IN OUR EFFORTS TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND ENSURE THAT IT IS IMPLEMENTED EFFECTIVELY AND WIDELY IN OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT THESE CHALLENGES CAN BE OVERCOME AND ADDRESSED BY FORGING PARTNERSHIPS AND ENDEAVOURS THROUGH STRATEGIC PLATFORMS SUCH AS EXPO 2020 DUBAI.

20. WE LOOK FORWARD TO CREATING PRODUCTIVE COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENTS AND EFFORTS THROUGHOUT MALAYSIA'S SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE WEEK. LET US INTENSIFY OUR EFFORTS AND EXECUTE OUR ACTION PLANS TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY, CREATE EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES, AND FRESH SOLUTIONS TO SHAPE A BETTER WORLD THROUGH SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE.

21. WITH THAT, IT IS MY PLEASURE TO DECLARE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE WEEK AT MALAYSIA PAVILION, EXPO 2020 DUBAI OPEN.

THANK YOU.

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