

**LAUNCHING ADDRESS
BY
YBHG TAN SRI MOHD SIDEK HASSAN
CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF MALAYSIA**

**AT THE
MALAYSIA CUSTOM EXECUTIVE
EDUCATION PROGRAMME ON
BRANDING AND MARKETING
STRATEGY**

**22 NOVEMBER 2009 (SUNDAY)
9.00 AM
HOTEL NIKKO, KUALA LUMPUR**

Bismillahir rahmanir rahim

***Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi
wabarakatuh***

**Salam 1 Malaysia and a very Good
Morning**

**Y.Bhg. Datuk Dr. Zulkefli bin A. Hassan
Secretary-General
Ministry of Higher Education**

**Y.Bhg. Professor Dr. Hamzah Abdul
Rahman, Deputy Vice Chancellor,
University Malaya**

**Dr Paul Temporal
Oxford Said Business School**

Y. Bhg. Tan Sri-Tan Sri, Datuk-Datuk, Datin-Datin,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, please allow me to record my thanks to the organisers of this workshop for inviting me to share my thoughts with you this morning. Co-organised by the Ministry Of Higher Education Malaysia and the University Of Malaya, this workshop reflects the kind of collaboration that is required in today's learning

environment. Collaboration enriches all parties involved as each builds on the strengths of the other. In this case the collaboration is further strengthened by the support from an international body, the Said Business School, Oxford University. Allow me to welcome the representatives from Oxford University. I do hope you will have a pleasant stay in Kuala Lumpur.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. This programme is being organised at a time when we are going through a period of economic

reform even as we chart the course for the 10th Malaysia Plan. The national conscience is being geared towards the radical change that must be put in place if Malaysia is to meet the goals of Vision 2020 and transform the country into a high-income economy.

3. If we are looking to be in step with the new economic model that will drive us towards this national goal, we have to change. We cannot achieve those goals if we continue doing things the same way. To make the change in our growth

trajectory we must make bold and radical improvements to our way of working, of delivering service, and in so doing mould public perception about Malaysia. We must be willing to learn, to share experiences and expertise and to see things in a different light.

4. Being a very open economy, our economic survival depends on our ability to compete. The competition we face today is not from what used to be called the 'low wage, low skill' economies. Increasingly we are confronted with

'low wage, high skill' economies – particularly from China and India, each of which are now producing two million graduates a year and rising.

5. Our competitiveness depends on our ability to match up to and exceed what is delivered by these economies. The challenge remains: how do we provide a distinct value proposition to draw tourists and businesses alike, and to remain the preferred investment destination? How do we stand out from the crowd? Perhaps part of the answer

to these questions can come from this workshop. This is the context in which your programme this week can add value to your work, and enhance your contribution to shaping the Malaysia brand.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. Your learning experience this week will see you exploring various aspects of branding and marketing.

As someone whose acquaintance with the subject lies in the periphery, this much I do know: branding and marketing are two sides of the same coin.

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7. Through branding you strive to differentiate yourself from the others, and through marketing you get the word out about what it is that sets you apart from the competition. That I suppose is how the non-expert defines the two concepts of branding and marketing.

8. I am made to understand that the course contents and cases chosen for this workshop focus on how best we can leverage on our strengths as an Islamic country, as well as on areas where Malaysia has

competitive advantage, namely in Halal products and services.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. No workshop or training programme should be driven by academic goals alone. A meaningful learning experience must have concrete outcomes. If nothing else, I want to leave you with reminders about what you should expect from this programme:

ONE: This workshop must not focus on the rhetoric or academic. It must be outcome-based. I see from

the programme that you will be discussing the creation of brand strategies for both the private and public sectors. Let this session be one for extracting ideas and views that will be followed up and built upon and subsequently shared with relevant stakeholders. Let it not be that the deliberations these five days end up on an academic bookshelf.

TWO: The case studies which will be used in this programme must result in your defining how core industries such as the Halal

industry, can help to construct and be aligned with the initiative to brand Malaysia. Let us ensure that your discussion on the case study, “Islamic Branding And Marketing Of Halal Food” will focus on practical applications of the findings. AND

THREE: This initiative should not be just confined to branding products and services from Malaysia. A more significant outcome would be to continue to collaborate and focus our collective energies towards a common goal of building the Malaysian brand. The

public sector must join forces and engage the private sector, taking on board ideas generated from this workshop. We all have a stake in ensuring a consistent and strong positive image of Malaysia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. Allow me to address the participants specifically: This programme has been designed to be interactive. However, it will only be as successful as you want it to be. Engage the speakers and experts. It is only with your active

participation that the objectives of the workshop and the outcomes I outlined will be achieved.

11. In conclusion, allow me to take this opportunity to once again thank the co-organisers, the Ministry Of Higher Education Malaysia and University Malaya, for inviting me to be with you this morning and giving me the honour to officiate today's event.

12. To all participants, I wish you a very successful and fruitful workshop.

13. To our distinguished speakers, please do take some time off to visit some of our interesting places in Kuala Lumpur and beyond before you leave. I hope you will have a pleasant and memorable stay in our beautiful country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. On that note, and the lafaz, *Bismillahir rahamanir rahim*, it is my pleasure now to declare open the Malaysia Custom Executive Education Programme on Branding and Marketing Strategy.

Thank you.

Wabillahittaufik walhidayah

***Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi
wabarakatuh.***