



**WELCOMING ADDRESS BY THE HON TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA AND CHAIRMAN OF KL SUMMIT
AT THE WELCOMING DINNER KUALA LUMPUR SUMMIT 2019
ON 18 DECEMBER 2019 (WEDNESDAY), AT 8.20 PM AT GRAND BALLROOM,
MANDARIN ORIENTAL HOTEL**

1. First of all, thank you for being present here this evening. It is indeed a pleasure for us to be given the opportunity to host all of you to this dinner which is held in conjunction with the Kuala Lumpur Summit 2019 which will officially start tomorrow.
2. While we will dive into all the serious subjects and discussions for the next three days, tonight's dinner is nonetheless very pertinent.
3. To all our Malaysian delegates, being here this evening provides us the opportunity to be the perfect host. It is also an opportunity for us to get closer to our Muslim brothers and sisters as enjoined in the Quran that all Muslims are brothers.
4. There is a Malay saying – *tak kenal maka tak cinta* – literally translated to mean that you will not love if you do not know each other.
5. That, for our foreign guests, is a very warm welcome and an invitation to all of you to explore Malaysia and to get to know our people.
6. I am sure, at the end of your stay, you will find Malaysia a beautiful place albeit its quirkiness and peculiarities.
7. While the majority of Malaysians are Muslims, we have a substantial minority who are from different faiths, cultures, customs and ways of life.
8. We will never claim to be the perfect Muslim or the model of a good Muslim nation, but we can attest that we have been able to live with our non-Muslim citizens in peace and harmony for decades and this tradition had existed since our independence.
9. Admittedly, there have been minor racial and religious conflicts but they are rare and few, insignificant if we are to compare with the period of peace, goodwill and prosperity. To our mind, that is what Islam enjoins us to do – to live peacefully with our non-Muslim citizens and work together to build a nation that is prosperous, peaceful and harmonious.
10. We share the bounty and *Alhamdulillah* it had been bountiful.
11. Tomorrow we will undertake to address the state of affairs of the Muslim *Ummah*. We have endeavoured to hold this Summit because we feel that we have to do something to improve the lives of Muslims the world over. We feel that we need to overcome Islamophobia. We need to find a way to address our shortcomings, our dependency on non-Muslims to protect ourselves against the enemies of Islam.

12. We hope at the end of the Summit we will be able to affirm a few specific initiatives that can be the catalyst to bigger things.
13. For now, please enjoy the dinner while putting some thoughts to the agenda we have outlined for the Summit.

Thank you and welcome to Malaysia.