



OPENING ADDRESS

BY

**THE HONOURABLE DATUK SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA**

FOR

**OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 19TH ASEAN MINISTERIAL
MEETING ON TRANSNATIONAL CRIME (19TH AMMTC) AND
ITS RELATED MEETINGS**

**9th SEPTEMBER 2025 (TUESDAY) | 4.30 PM
HOTEL DOUBLE TREE BY HILTON, MELAKA**

Assalamualaikum Warahmatuhallahi Wabarakatuh dan Salam Sejahtera,

Saudara Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution;

Rakan-rakan Menteri;

Setiausaha Agung ASEAN Dr. Kao Kim Hourn;

Ketua Menteri Melaka Saudara Datuk Seri Utama Abdul Raof;

Ahli-ahli Kerajaan Negeri dan rakan-rakan yang dimuliakan.

1. Sekali lagi saya nyatakan penghargaan atas kesudian rakan-rakan menjayakan acara ini dengan kerjasama Kerajaan Negeri Melaka, dan tentunya Saudara Ketua Menteri Abdul Raof di antara tuan rumah yang terbaik dalam negara ini.
2. Dan apa yang dibicarakan tadi sebagai penghantar itu sangat bermakna kerana kekuatan ASEAN ini adalah menjamin rantau yang aman itu sebagai prasyarat bagi pertumbuhan ekonomi dan menjamin rantau yang aman itu berarti kerjasama dan muafakat yang kukuh di antara negara-negara, sebab itu sepanjang tahun ini di kala kita

mempengerusikan ASEAN ratusan acara yang melibatkan pelbagai jabatan, kementerian, kerajaan, swasta dan badan-badan bukan kerajaan untuk memperkuat hubungan antara kita dan juga mengukuhkan komitmen untuk mengangkat memartabatkan negara dan rantau kita.

3. So excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, may I take again this opportunity to thank you and welcome you to Malacca as Saifuddin Nasution has referred to is unique state cosmopolitan from early beginnings under the Malacca Sultanate have experienced the imperialism colonialism of the Dutch, the Portuguese, the British and name you but it has somehow or other established as a great cosmopolitan center, a major port in history and I think I know Saifuddin Nasution will burden you with many serious security issues, but you are safe to run around the city and see for yourself the beauty and the uniqueness of Malacca.
4. Now, ASEAN has for six decades consistently demonstrated that our strength lies not only in our diversity but also in our unwavering commitment to dialogue, cooperation and consensus it is this ethos that has enabled us to uphold peace and stability. Even as the world around us has grown ever more complex, I want to take this

opportunity to digress a little and to look again at the commitment of ASEAN leaders just by share coincidence, in this week alone I either met, contacted and telephoned almost all ASEAN leaders.

5. Just a sheer coincidence, I mean a small issue we want to clarify immediately I call my dear friend Bongbong Marcos who happens to be in Cambodia and therefore had discussions relate also to Cambodia, Thailand issue. Then my old friend Anutin Charnvirakul, who's known to Saifuddin also who is now the new Prime Minister called and of course we discussed among other things, the issue of collaboration between countries ASEAN and he's been extremely kind to give that endorsement and support to our endeavors and again assured me that he remains committed to ensure that the peace between Cambodia and Thailand will be totally respected and honored.
6. And this afternoon while chairing a meeting, President Prabowo called to discuss a few issues which means, you know the relations is unique and I am not aware of any other region that has established that sort of mutual trust respect between us.

7. As you have seen with Singapore, this unique experience of Johor-Singapore Economic Zone is now considered to be one spectacular economic program between two countries with a common vision, common commitment to enhance and to ensure prosperity of both countries and Prime Minister Lawrence Wong has been always dear to us because he remains committed to ensure that the bilateral relations are further enhanced other than within the ASEAN framework.
8. Now I'm referring to you these points because as Ministers of Internal Security, the Police and those entrusted with that issue of to secure orders responsibility, trust is very important. And the moment we find issues that could create distrust, mistrust and animosity or suspicion, immediately we should be on board to be cautious because, without that trust, without sharing information, then we will probably not strengthen that bond that we have already had.
9. I've always said I remain committed despite the unfortunate border issues between Thailand and Cambodia which

thank God is now being sustained in terms of the peace process is being respected by both.

10. ASEAN is unique. One of the most peaceful regions in the world. Economically most dynamic, with huge enormous potential. Attracting investments from all over the world, maintaining geopolitical stance that respects centrality, very difficult to navigate. But, we are able to do so because we work as a team and the trust amongst leaders and I believe with the initiative of Saifuddin and your team, would rebuild that. Because what you as intelligence and security officers whisper to your leaders would have an influence on the direction of our countries. Therefore, we take a very serious note why we must stand together firm as a community of shared responsibility.

11. Now, collective security requires us to build resilience together through strong intelligence sharing, coordinated enforcement, harmonized legal frameworks and above all a people centered and future oriented approach. This is the role of AMMTC, which I will not deliberate further because you have, you are the experts here, the expertise is there. I don't want to claim more than this because in all my experience in government I've never been made a security,

police or defense minister. So, I don't claim to have the expertise.

12. But, this dialogue is important. You know, the Juvenal, The Roman Satirist made this remark which remains relevant till now. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes* in Latin. Get the translation from Chief Minister Ralph. I mean, we are the guardians, you are the guards, we are all guardians. We hold eternal responsibility but always consider the issue of integrity and accountability as paramount. Because this *quis custodiet* in Latin refers to the guards, those who hold responsibility at all levels. But remember, who is guarding the guards.

13. That is, I mean, a necessary provocation on my part to remember and to remind us in Malaysia, in ASEAN that we have to remain accountable for what we say and our action so that the issue of trust and responsibility and accountability have to be addressed but that will regain the trust not only of the institutions and the agencies and leaders, but the trust of our people. That is also a precondition to ensure there is peace, prosperity and

progress in our region and a shared commitment to act collectively.

14. Now, peace, as we have seen and learned the hard way is not necessarily the absence of conflict. Peace is also the presence or to ensure the presence of justice, stability and mutual respect. It is an aspiration that we must nurture together and ASEAN where people live free from fear, where the rule of law prevails over lawlessness. And where no member state is left behind in the pursuit of security and stability.
15. That's why I make this reference to the importance of security agencies, border agencies, to deal with all the issues, the old traditional issues and the more pressing issues of the present. Sophisticated, well organized and we would require the entire force of ASEAN to work together, of course, in tandem with international organizations and friends beyond. Because this is the only way to ensure that the most vulnerable in our society is protected.
16. Now, again, in an increasingly complex and contested world, ASEAN centrality is more than just a diplomatic

phrase. It is our region's strategic compass. It entrusts us with the role of convener, agenda setter and bridge builder. Sounds well, but as Secretary-General Kao Kim Hourn would know, is tough to navigate. How to ensure that the centrality of ASEAN works only by ensuring and guarantee peace and security and building that sort of cooperation and trust, and this has been well espoused in the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

17. And we look forward again to this meeting next month of ASEAN leaders and Timor-Leste being part of ASEAN and being joined by all most of the ASEAN countries. From China, Korea, Japan to India, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Brazil, South Africa and United States of America and Canada.
18. We have a major responsibility. People feel comfortable and safe to come to ASEAN and thank you those responsible and ensuring security of our countries. Because that, as I've said, is paramount certainty to ensure that people feel comfortable and safe.

19. We have seen Melaka, for example, a major destination for tourism. That's why you have too many displays. I've been here from time to time. I think in the next month or so, I'm forced, compelled and persuaded, whatever, to come to Melaka at least three, four times, which is not right because we have to cover other states too. But it is always, I mean, great to be here. It is, you know, economically very vibrant and culturally too, very exciting. I've been here many times. It's always something to see that reflects the strength and vibrancy of Melaka and Malaysia and ASEAN.

Sekali lagi, terima kasih. Wassalamu Alaikum Warahmatullah.