

DIPLOMATIC VOICE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE
INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN
RELATIONS, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
MALAYSIA

ISSN 2289-1277

The 8th Heads of Mission Conference



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia organised the 8th Heads of Mission Conference with the theme, *Transforming Malaysia's Diplomacy Towards 2020 and Beyond* from 23 February to 1 March 2014. IDFR hosted the conference from 23 to 26 February 2014.

Throughout the six-day conference, participants were engaged in numerous dialogues between NGOs, economists, academicians, federal and state government officials.

The opening ceremony of the 8th Heads of Mission Conference 2014 commenced with welcoming remarks by Dato' Sri Anifah Hj. Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, followed by a keynote address by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Haji Abdul Razak on 24

of peace, prosperity and stability in the region.

He also mentioned that as policymakers, diplomats and members of the international community, Malaysia must react to the transformation that is trending around the region and the world, with a transformation of our own, a foreign policy which will see Malaysia through to a developed status and beyond by 2020. Dato' Sri Najib then stressed that "as Malaysia's chief representatives abroad, you each have a unique role; in your hands rest the task of ensuring that our Malaysian stands proud in the world. Based on past experience, I know you will rise to the challenge".

On 25 February 2014, the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tan Sri Dato' Hj. Muhyiddin Hj. Mohd. Yassin

February 2014, who also officiated the event. Dato' Sri Najib stated that as the Middle Power, Malaysia must continue its commitment towards ASEAN and devote adequate resources to strengthening our bilateral relations with its neighbours and continue to value ASEAN as the fulcrum

delivered his address titled, *Engaging and Mobilising Malaysian Diaspora to Strengthen the Nation*. Later that day, the Chief Secretary to the Government of Malaysia, Tan Sri Dr. Ali Hamsa spoke about the *Role of Malaysian Diplomats towards Realising the National Transformation Agenda*. A special spouse programme was also conducted, which included talks on *Understanding Emotional Intelligence and Professionalism* and *Moments of Truth at Missions*. Datin Sri Siti Rubiah Datuk Abdul Samad, wife of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, was the guest of honour.

On Wednesday 26 February 2014, Ambassador Aminah Tun Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General of IDFR, moderated a session titled, *Malaysian Diplomats: Today and Tomorrow*, which featured Datuk Dr. Ahmad Faizal, Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Mohd Munir Abdul Majid, Dato' Din Merican Azaddin Merican and Dato' Dr. Muthiah Alagappa as guest speakers.

The second half of the conference was set in Kuching, Sarawak and Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

A closing dinner for the 8th Heads of Mission Conference 2014, hosted by Dato' Hamzah Zainudin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, concluded the six-day conference.

CONTENTS

1	The 8th Heads of Mission Conference
2-3	Profile of Prominent Person
4-13	Forum
14-19	In and Around IDFR
20-23	Forum
24-32	News

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Professor Dr. Farish Ahmad-Noor Distinguished Fellow of IDFR

Q. Malaysia believes that Islamic states should become moderate rather than extremist. In your view, can this approach create better relations with other countries, including the Islamic states?

A. If, by 'moderate' you mean being non-aggressive and non-violent, then there is nothing contentious about such a goal and it should be the goal of all states. However, the term 'moderation' is also a contested one and we have seen how the term has been used by different states with different agendas. If 'moderation' is to signify acquiescence to the agendas of powerful states, where weaker states are meant to blindly accept terms and conditions that are non-negotiable, then it is simply a by-word for hegemony and domination. I see nothing moderate about that. Nelson Mandela was not moderate in his resistance to Apartheid, and he did not compromise in his struggle – for that he was branded a radical. If opposing such blatant cases of injustice leads a country to being labelled 'non-cooperative' or even 'radical', then I think it is a choice that has to be made, on the basis of principles. We need to be clear about this because the international domain is not one where nation-states co-exist on a level playing field, and where power-differentials exist. Not addressing those inequalities is not being 'moderate', it is simply being subservient.

Q. What is your vision for Malaysia in terms of foreign relations and what changes would you propose to enhance Malaysia's foreign policy?

A. Malaysia's foreign policy and presence in the international domain was at its height during the 1980s-1990s, when Malaysia took a stand on issues like Palestine, Apartheid, etc. During that period, Malaysia was seen as a country with a stand of its own, and did not bow down to foreign pressure. Malaysia has never had expansionist territorial ambitions, and has always been a consistent player in the

international circuit, playing by the rules. As such the country was seen as respectable and consistent in its foreign policy. It would be good to resume such a stand today, particularly when we see the rise of new powers that seem inclined to throw their weight and project their power.

Q. How do you see IDFR and the role it plays in contributing to Malaysia's foreign policy?

A. An institution like IDFR would be crucial to the development of a diplomatic corps that is clued up about developments that are overtaking so many countries today. Foreign policy is always a work in progress as there are too many external unpredictable variables that intervene in daily affairs, and it is necessary for a country like Malaysia to have such an institution that can prepare its foreign office and diplomatic corps, to alert them to new variables and contingencies such as the latest advances in communications technology, communicative infrastructure, etc. We live in a world where the very notion of the singular nation-state is being questioned and challenged on a daily basis. Unless and until we fully appreciate the impact of globalisation – how it effectively renders borders irrelevant for instance – we will always be trying to

"Foreign policy is always a work in progress as there are too many external unpredictable variables that intervene in daily affairs, and it is necessary for a country like Malaysia to have such an institution that can prepare its foreign office and diplomatic corps, to alert them to new variables and contingencies such as the latest advances in communications technology, communicative infrastructure, etc."

catch up with changes in the world around us. IDFR needs to take on board all these concerns: coping with new technologies, the latest theories of comprehensive security and defence, etc. to prepare Malaysia for the new age we live in.

Q. Malaysia has incorporated Islamic institutions and is now a prime example. Do you think this notion should be spread across Islamic states in order to stress unity?

A. Institutions alone do not foster unity, and unity only comes about when there is an understanding of our





common purpose and destiny. At present, the trend in most Muslim countries is to 'nationalise' Islam and make it a national political concern. Thus, religion just becomes an appendage to the state, a means of regime-maintenance and regime-perpetuation. But here is where some political elites in the Muslim world do not realise that they are also in danger of undermining themselves: For if Islam can be used by the state as a discourse of legitimisation, then it can also be used by radical anti-state groups as a discourse of delegitimation. Hence, the conflict we see in so many Muslim countries where Muslims kill other Muslims, in the name of religion.

Q. Throughout your career, you would have probably encountered numerous challenges. What was the biggest challenge you have had to overcome and how has that affected your life today?

A. The biggest challenge I face until today is to convince Malaysians of the importance of our neighbouring countries and why we need to know and understand our neighbours better.

Malaysians take for granted that they 'know' Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, etc. just because they happen to be next door to Malaysia. This is utter nonsense. Most Malaysians do not even speak a word of Thai, do not read Indonesian newspapers, etc. My biggest disappointment is that young Malaysians today would rather learn the history of America or Europe, and not be bothered to learn the history of Indonesia. As long as this state of ignorance exists, we will continue to live apart from our neighbours, and ASEAN will remain a distant concept that does not impact on the lives of people. This is a problem that I see in other countries like Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia too. It is the result of an inward-looking education system in all these countries, and the writing of postcolonial history that does not lay enough emphasis on our common historical past as a region.

Q. What advice would you give to current and future Malaysian diplomats in order to strengthen the bond and relations with the country they are assigned to?

A. To develop local, ground-level

organic knowledge of the countries they are posted in. It is essential to learn the local language, to access local media, and to constantly be on the ground to keep abreast of local issues and concerns. Knowing a country is like knowing a person: You can't get to know someone through sms-es or internet, you need to meet the person face-to-face, to invest time, to listen to the other. Only then does real knowledge of the other emerge. Anything less would be cosmetic and superficial. For starters, I think all diplomatic staff should be made to spend several months in homestays in the countries they are posted to, in order to see the human aspect of the society on the ordinary, mundane level.



Dr. Farish Ahmad-Noor is Associate Professor at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies RSIS, NTU University and Visiting Fellow at ISIS-Malaysia. He has researched and

lectured at several other institutions including Sciences-Po and the School of Advanced Social Studies (EHESS) Paris; the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) Leiden, Holland and the Centre for Modern Orient Studies (ZMO), Berlin. He continues to lecture at two Indonesian Universities: Universitas Islam Negara Sunan Kalijaga (UIN) Jogjakarta and Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS).

IDFR would like to express its appreciation to Professor Dr. Farish Ahmad-Noor, Distinguished Fellow of IDFR, for agreeing to be featured in the Diplomatic Voice.

Prosper Thy Neighbours: Malaysia's Economic Diplomacy Role in the AEC

Contributed by Dr. Sufian Jusoh

INTRODUCTION

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is an important region in Asia and the world. It consists of ten nations with different levels of economic development, with a combined market of more than 600 million people. With this vast intra-regional market that attracts both the domestic and foreign direct investors, ASEAN is gearing towards a higher level of integration, with the aim of achieving the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015.

This article intends to explore Malaysia's potential role in assisting the newer ASEAN Member States, namely Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar to achieve and implement domestic targets towards realising the AEC in 2015. Malaysia as a more developed member of ASEAN could use economic diplomacy in the quest to assist such ASEAN Member States such as in the fields of liberalisation of domestic markets for a freer flow of capital, thus enhancing intra-ASEAN investment.

The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)

The AEC, mooted by the ASEAN leaders at the ASEAN Summit in Bali in 2003, is an important element to realise the ASEAN Vision 2020, agreed by the ASEAN leaders at the ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur in 1997. In accelerating ASEAN's transformation into an economically stable region, ASEAN leaders agreed at the 12th ASEAN Summit in 2007 in The Philippines, to the Cebu Declaration on Acceleration of the Establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2015. The Cebu Declaration commits ASEAN Member States "to hasten the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015 and to transform ASEAN into a region with the free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labour, and the freer flow of capital."

ASEAN leaders then agreed to the AEC Blueprint at the 13th ASEAN Summit held in Singapore in 2007. It consists of four key pillars that is, single market and production base; a highly competitive economic region; a region of equitable economic development; and a region fully integrated into the global economy. Therefore, 2015 is an important year for Malaysia, not just because it is the year to realise the AEC, but also the fact that Malaysia is going to chair ASEAN.

Challenges of AEC

One of the key challenges to the realisation of the AEC is the preparedness of some of the ASEAN Member States in the implementation of their national policies, i.e. to be in full compliance with the vision, mission and objectives of the AEC. The other key challenge is the preparedness of the public at large, including the business communities to utilise opportunities arising from the implementation of the AEC.

At the same time, the AEC will mean the opening of more liberal markets in goods and services, and the liberalisation of investment, which leads to certain forms of inexplicable anxiety over whether businesses and ASEAN Member States are prepared to reduce non-tariff barriers to their market.

Economic Diplomacy

Before discussing the options for Malaysia to assist the neighbouring countries in the implementation of their market liberalisation policies, the article will first define the term "economic diplomacy".

For a start, there is no precise definition of what is meant by "economic diplomacy". Nevertheless, the term "economic diplomacy" may simply mean, which may be subject to debate and interpretations, "a plural set of practices all aimed at advancing the

home country's external domestic interests."¹

In other words, the practice of economic diplomacy means "diplomatic official activities that are focused on increasing exports, attracting foreign direct investment and participating in work of the international economic organisations i.e. the activities concentrated on the acknowledgment of economic interests of the country at the international level".² There are at least two flaws in this definition. One is that some countries may use economic diplomacy in the promotion of the countries' investment in a foreign country, either for market seeking, resource seeking or efficiency seeking. Thus, to say that economic diplomacy relates to export or attracting foreign direct investment is not necessarily accurate.

Thus, I would define "economic diplomacy" in the modern world as "diplomatic practices that involve representation, negotiation, communication and other means involving one state over another state or international organisation with the aim of promoting and protecting the former economic interests."

AEC Scorecard

According to the AEC Scorecard 2012, ASEAN has implemented 65.9% of measures relating to single market and production base, 67.9% of measures relating to making ASEAN as a competitive economic region, 66.7% on measures relating to the equitable economic development scorecard and

1 Kishan Rana and Bipul Chatterjee, *The Role of Embassies, Economic Diplomacy, India's Experience*, CUTS International 2011.

2 Pavol Baranay, *Modern Economic Diplomacy*, www.dec.lv; see also Lichia Yiu and Raymond Saner, *International economic diplomacy: Mutations in post-modern times*, Discussion Papers in Diplomacy, No. 84 (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 2003).

85.7% on measure relating to integration into the global economy scorecard. Some newer ASEAN Member States are still lagging behind other ASEAN Member States in the implementation of measures related to the AEC. These Member States continue to work towards full implementation of measures in ensuring free flow in goods; free flow in services; free flow of investment, food, agriculture and forestry; consumer protection; intellectual property rights; transport; energy; SME Development; initiatives for ASEAN Economic Integration; External Economic Relations; and freer flow of capital.

Whilst the newer ASEAN Member States work towards full implementation of measures in the abovementioned areas, many of these Member States lack technical expertise to implement certain ASEAN initiatives, such as in the field of services liberalisation and investment. The Member States requires assistance in preparing domestic regulations to comply with the AEC. This is based on the facts that many of these Member States' laws and regulations require modernisation in order to comply with the international commitments and obligations.

These Member States also require technical expertise to assist in the implementation of the AEC measures at all levels of the government. Like any other countries, policy makers dealing with the AEC are different from those who have to implement the measures either at the national or sub-regional levels. Therefore, these Member States require capacity building at various levels of government to ensure smooth implementation of commitments made under the AEC. In addition, the newer ASEAN Member States seeks to train officials in the field of international negotiation techniques. These Member States require officials who are able to negotiate and speak on their behalf. They require officials who are conversant with international diplomacy and

rule-making procedures in order to present the Member States' interests at the regional and international forums.

Malaysia's Roles in the Newer ASEAN Member States

Malaysia, as one of the leading economies in ASEAN, has implemented more than 80% of the AEC Scorecard. Malaysia could play an important role in ensuring ASEAN meet the objective of realising the AEC in 2015. There are at least two reasons for this. Firstly, Malaysia will chair ASEAN in 2015 and it should be on top of Malaysia's policy agenda that the AEC is realised during its Chairmanship of the regional grouping. Secondly, Malaysia as exporters of goods, services and capital to other ASEAN Member States, has the interest to ensure that the AEC leads to higher level of liberalisation of trade in goods and services and at the same time to ensure a higher level of liberalisation in the investment sectors in the Member States where Malaysia has interests.

There are several areas that Malaysia can contribute to the development of the newer ASEAN Member States. One, Malaysia may offer its expertise in the negotiating techniques. Malaysian diplomats and negotiators are highly experienced in international, regional and bilateral negotiations including in the trade and economic agreements. Officials from the newer ASEAN Member States may be able to learn from Malaysian officials about the intricacies of negotiations and dealing with various provisions of international agreements and treaties. Malaysia may offer capacity building and training in specific areas such as scheduling of certain obligations and the preparation of the list of non-conforming measures in certain types of agreement.

In addition, Malaysia may assist the Member States in the implementation of international commitments at the national and sub-regional levels. For

“Malaysian diplomats and negotiators are highly experienced in international, regional and bilateral negotiations including in the trade and economic agreements. Officials from the newer ASEAN Member States may be able to learn from Malaysian officials about the intricacies of negotiations and dealing with various provisions of international agreements and treaties.”

example, Malaysia may offer its expertise in central banking law on the implementation of the free transfer of funds, which is an important element in the international investment law. Malaysia could also offer its expertise in implementing intellectual property laws and policies including registration process and the enforcement of intellectual property rights.

Thirdly, Malaysia may assist the Member States on how to increase “the ease of doing business” which Malaysia is known to have implemented through the Special Task Force to Facilitate Business (PEMUDAH). The existence of PEMUDAH has contributed to the increase in Malaysia's ranking to 6th place in the “Ease of Doing Business” ranking issued by the World Bank Group.³

Conclusion

In conclusion, Malaysia being an important and a more developed member of ASEAN has a significant role in ensuring the successful implementation of the AEC in the newer ASEAN Member States. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs through IDFR, toge-

³ See www.doingbusiness.org for more information on the ease of doing business ranking.

ther with other ministries and agencies such as the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and universities such as Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, may extend their expertise to build capacity for these Member States. Capacity building programmes and other assistance extended to the newer ASEAN Member States will

ensure that Malaysia will be at the forefront of the economic diplomacy in ASEAN. Malaysia's enhanced and visible role in the economic diplomacy will assist to protecting and promoting Malaysia's interests in international trade and investment in the region.



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A Day in the Life of a Consular Officer

By Amir Hamzah Mohd Nasir

It would not be an exaggeration to say that all diplomats should have a taste of being a consular officer at some point during their diplomatic careers. The front-line nature of the job has recently escalated into a more prolific role in the eyes of the public. And in fact, many consular situations of late had required the consular division and its officials to step outside the normal line of duty and go the extra mile.

Hostage situation involving Malaysians in a foreign land, safe evacuations of Malaysians from crisis-stricken areas and consular situations of all types requiring our assistance are among the few assignments that one would find in the job description. In order to meet the challenging requirements of the job, one would need several key traits which include, but are not limited to; quick thinking, steady composure, mental agility and physical endurance.

During a typical day of a consular officer, early morning would start with the routine checking of inbox and daily news to look out for any "outlier" which warrants special attention. As the ministry's consular counters open, there will be requests coming in by Malaysian public to have a quick discussion pertaining to their cases. And by cases, it really means all sorts of difficult consular situations faced by fellow Malaysians overseas some of which were rather unthinkable.

On an unfortunate day, there would be a rare case that comes in, such as an

angry man who storms into the office and insists on meeting with the Foreign Minister in seeking financial assistance to help a family member stranded overseas. The request is of course beyond the standard operating procedure and normal guidelines, which means that the solution is to resort to the useful techniques of thinking on our feet and negotiation skills. If done correctly, with the right mixture of firmness and compassion, the person would actually walk away feeling heard and satisfied even though the original request was not at all met.

The evenings are sometimes occupied with inquiries and questions by major stakeholders. In the event that some of the on-going cases capture media coverage and public attention, the team should be ready with press release(s) as a means of offering the ministry's lines of response and points of view. It really boils down to quick gathering of necessary information, strategising of position and summarising everything into a concise one-page press statement just in time to make it to the primetime news at 8.00 pm.

As the team liaises directly with all missions overseas, its operating hours are then expected to accommodate all of the global time zones. This only means that night time would then be spent catching up with our missions abroad on pending cases as well as anything new that has recently erupted. The above schedule would

normally complete a typical day in the life of a consular officer. However, it has yet to take into account the "special assignments" which are slightly more complex and tasked to the team from time to time, such as major evacuative efforts, the hostage crisis of In Amenas, Algeria last year, as well as the detained Malaysian couple in Sweden.

After being part of the consular team and involved in all the works on the ground, one would never fail to realise that the job really requires an officer, inter alia, to possess several key traits, such as quick thinking, steady composure, mental agility and physical endurance.

Being part of the team could be physically demanding and emotionally draining. And yet after the hours spent toiling on the consular cases that come in, one would retire at the end of each day feeling fulfilled and satisfied that he or she has contributed towards helping fellow Malaysians abroad during their times of need while at the same time, flying the flag of the ministry, high and pride.



Amir Hamzah Mohd Nasir was the Assistant Secretary of Consular Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia. He is currently undergoing a six-month course of Diploma in Public Management, at INTAN Northern Regional Campus (INTURA) in Sungai Petani, Kedah.

Transforming Malaysia's Diplomacy Towards 2020 and Beyond

Keynote Address by Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, at the 8th Heads of Mission Conference on 24 February 2014

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh dan Salam 1Malaysia.

It is a pleasure to open the 8th Heads of Mission Conference and to share with you some thoughts on the future of Malaysian Diplomacy.

Our nation, still young by world standards, has already exerted considerable international influence; in recent years alone, we have played our part in peacekeeping and peace-making, in healing old divisions and establishing new relationships. Credit, and thanks, belong to you - Malaysia's representatives in the world. So before I begin, allow me to pay tribute to your record, your service, and your dedication to diplomacy.

Over the course of your careers, that diplomacy has been shaped by three main factors. Firstly, Malaysia is a trading nation. This is set to continue: despite a challenging external environment, our trade expanded by 4.6 percent last year, and is projected to grow at 5.2 percent this year. As our economy continues to develop – as we move further up the value chain, and produce more intellectual and human capital, the goods we trade will change; with the coming of regional economic integration, so will the method. But the implications for our foreign policy remain the same. Like any trading nation, we depend on open sea lanes, general peace, and robust institutions that promote international law and support international norms.

Second, we are located at the heart of a strategically significant region, surrounded by current and future major powers. South East Asia's seas – through which so much global commerce pass – are reason enough for continued interest in our region. Buoyant economic growth and natural resources only serve to amplify their interest, as Asia fast becomes a new pole in a multipolar world. The most populous region on earth will soon be the most prosperous; already, it is assuming a much greater share of

global attention. We welcome the spotlight – the investment and development it brings – but we are aware that it illuminates existing stresses, and we do not wish to become a centre for conflict by proxy.

Third, Malaysia is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural country. We are a bridge between races, nations and cultures; standing at the junction between East and West, between the developed and the developing world, between Islam and other faiths. Our history and our geography mean we sit at the intersection of some of the most important questions of the age. Asia's rapid development; the relationship between Islam and modernity; the balance between diversity and stability. Each is being answered, in its own way, here in Malaysia. Our foreign policy and our diplomacy reflect and draw on this strength.

The factors which shaped Malaysia's diplomacy – our dependence on trade, our strategic location, and our demographics – are in turn shaped by external trends. And here the grounds beneath our feet is shifting, as old assumptions are being overturned, and new ones emerging. These global and regional trends ask that we adapt our diplomacy to fit the pressures and opportunities of a new century.

Traditional global hierarchies are being shaken up by economic and demographic change. The lines dividing North from South are blurring. In

challenges such as climate change, we see that the interests and positions of some developing countries converge with those of some in the developed world. In a more multipolar world, even the largest and most powerful countries will seek to form coalitions comprising developed and developing countries to ensure their interests are promoted.

As we saw in the middle of the last century, when ideology and cultural differences are allowed to determine the relationship between major powers, the international order itself is at risk. In this context, the way Sino-US relations play out will have profound implications not only for the region, but for the wider world. While both have been at pains to assure us that their relations are founded on mutual cooperation, this is true only in the broadest sense. In some cases, there will be competition; it is how the inevitable tensions are managed that matter, with commitments to friends and allies will adding a layer of complexity to Sino-US relations.

Elsewhere, it seems likely that parts of West Asia will continue to be unstable, pitting groups of States – as well as different ethnic and religious groups in the region – against others. This state of uncertainty and instability is a challenge for us, as our close cultural, religious and economic ties to the region means that developments there resonate with the Malaysian public.



Running throughout these geopolitical developments are deeper currents of technological and social change: increasing access to information, new forms of citizen activism, higher expectations and greater accountability in an age of information.

It is incumbent on us – as policymakers, diplomats and members of the international community – to respond to these changes, adapt to these trends, and to do our part to deliver a safer, more sustainable future for our people. To do so, we must remain clear-headed in pursuit of our national aims, even-handed in the service of regional ambitions, and resolute in the face of global challenges. We must react to the transformations around us with a transformation of our own: a foreign policy which will see Malaysia through to 2020; to developed nation status and beyond. There are a number of things we must do.

First, we must embrace our position as one of the region's Middle Powers: states which rarely act alone, but which have a significant, systematic impact in a small group or through international institutions. Come 2020, Malaysia will be a developed country with far-flung and expanding interests. The international community, as well as our own public, will expect that we assume our share of the burden of responsibility and leadership. As a Middle Power, that means playing a greater part in Asia, and helping Asia play a greater part in the world – a subject I will say more about in weeks to come.

It also means continuing our commitment to ASEAN. We sink or swim with our region. If we do not have an influential voice here, we will not have an influential voice anywhere. We must therefore devote adequate resources to strengthening our bilateral relations with our neighbours, and continue to value ASEAN as the fulcrum of peace, prosperity and stability in the region.

Even as we undertake to do more, we must concentrate resources on initiatives that will generate the best returns; leading in areas that concern us the most, not aiming to be every-

thing to everyone. We must sharpen the way we conceive and execute the cooperation and assistance programmes we provide at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. And we must assess the impact of such programmes more systematically, to ensure they are effective and efficient.

The most effective coalitions in the future will be those which involve both the developed and developing world. We therefore must be deft and nimble in building and participating in coalitions; seeking out those which share our concerns, and exercising leadership within the shared platforms that are needed to tackle multilateral problems. A stronger foreign policy establishment here in Malaysia, which brings together think-tanks, academic chairs and foundations, will strengthen our hand when it comes to building coalitions for change.

As we prepare for a world beyond the Millennium Development Goals, we must also be ready to share our own experience of development. Since the end of the Second World War, few countries have made the leap from developing to developed status. By and large, those who have, such as South Korea, are homogenous states. When Malaysia joins the ranks of the developed nations, our narrative will be a compelling one indeed – a young federation, originally riven by differences, working, growing and developing together.

As others study our development path, we can use our history and our achievements to promote issues of importance to us – such as moderation, mediation in regional disputes, and the establishment of a rules-based approach to manage inter-state relations in the region. The challenge is to package this into a compelling narrative, while at the same time avoiding hubris.

That seems an ambitious programme for a ministry with a small budget. But I am confident you can and will deliver. Dato' Sri Anifah's KPI has consistently been one of the highest, which means Wisma Putra is one of the most cost-efficient ministries. I wish to commend you for this achievement, and to assure you that the government is open to requests for additional resources.

As Malaysia's chief representatives abroad, you each have a unique role. In your hands rests the task of ensuring that our Malaysia stands proud in the world. On past experience, I know you will rise to this challenge.

Dengan lafaz Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, it is my pleasure to declare open the 8th Heads of Mission Conference.

Thank you.



Engaging and Mobilising the Diaspora to Strengthen the Nation

Speech by Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, at the 8th Heads of Mission Conference on 25 February 2014

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh dan Salam 1Malaysia.

Saya ingin memanjatkan syukur kepada Allah SWT kerana dengan limpah kurnianya kita berpeluang untuk sekali lagi bertemu dalam dialog seumpama ini selepas pertemuan terakhir kita pada Jun 2009.

Persidangan ini adalah amat bertepatan masanya kerana Malaysia telah menjalani proses pilihanraya umum pada bulan Mei 2013 yang lalu di mana rakyat terus memberikan mandat kepada kepimpinan YAB Perdana Menteri Dato' Sri Najib Tun Abdul Razak untuk memimpin Malaysia. Dalam hal ini, kerajaan akan terus melaksanakan dasar-dasar negara yang menjamin kesejahteraan rakyat. kerajaan juga prihatin bahawa ekspektasi rakyat terhadap penyampaian perkhidmatan dan tadbir urus negara semakin meningkat dan sebagai sebahagian daripada jentera kerajaan, perkhidmatan awam perlu sentiasa bersedia memberi mutu perkhidmatan yang tinggi kepada orang awam.

Saya ingin mengucapkan syabas dan tahniah kepada Kementerian Luar Negeri di atas penganjuran persidangan pada tahun ini. Sebagai salah satu agensi kerajaan yang memberi perkhidmatan kepada pelbagai 'stakeholder' dan pelanggan, baik di kalangan warga Malaysia mahu pun warga asing, saya yakin persidangan ini akan dapat memberi hala tuju yang jelas kepada tuan-tuan dan puan-puan dalam melaksanakan dasar transformasi negara untuk mencapai tahap negara maju pada tahun 2020.

This conference aptly themed *Transforming Malaysia's Diplomacy towards 2020 and Beyond* presents an invaluable opportunity for you to be fully apprised on Malaysia's current policy direction, both domestic and foreign, as well as our government's efforts in addressing present and future challenges faced by the nation.

I will not spend too much time in talking about the Government Transformation Policy as I am sure you are well aware of the various transforma-

tion programmes introduced by the government since 2009 in order to ensure that Malaysia remains competitive in the future.

As the government's principal representative abroad, you too are aware that shifts in the global economic and political environment would inevitably have an impact on Malaysia by virtue of it being an open economy and its fortunes being dependent on trade and investments flows, tourist arrivals and so on. By introducing these policies, Malaysia is in a good position to face future challenges and move towards becoming a developed nation by 2020. One important if not the most important aspect of the National Transformation Policy is the people. We need an educated workforce and people with specialised skills and knowledge of the technology of the future in order to realise the transformations that are needed to ensure Malaysia's continued development.

This is why I have chosen to speak on the importance of engaging and mobilising the Malaysian diaspora. During this session, I hope we could have an exchange of views on how best to nurture a sense of belonging amongst the Malaysian diaspora so that together we could work in building this great nation of ours.

In our quest to become a high income developed nation by 2020, one of the core principles of the National Transformation Programme is that of inclusiveness. All Malaysians should have a sense of belonging, feel that they have the opportunity to pursue their ambitions and achieve their full potential. Collectively we all contribute towards building a nation that is strong where the rakyat enjoys a high quality of life. Inclusiveness also means that Malaysia has to look at all sources of talents either at home or abroad to ensure that Malaysians from all walks of life will be part of this transformative journey that we had embarked on since 2009.

In the many visits abroad that I had undertaken, it has always been a source of pride for me to see how



resilient Malaysians are – they thrive whether as students or as professionals, in many areas such as in business, arts, sports and other fields. This shows that Malaysians are outward looking, not afraid to leave the comfort of home to pursue their dreams and ambitions. At the same time, they still retain close ties with Malaysia, which I am sure many still regard as 'home'.

In fact, many Malaysians have achieved success abroad. Some may be famous household names. However, there are also many of those who may not be as renowned but who have established themselves as experts in their chosen fields.

I believe that by developing regular contacts with the Malaysian diaspora, they could assist you in making headway with the local leaders and communities as they could help to foster better understanding of the distinctiveness of local customs and the political, economic and social dynamics of your host country. Through these contacts, you too would be able to carry out your responsibilities in a much more effective way.

During the run-up and after the May General Elections last year, we saw the emergence and the impact of social media in shaping public

opinion among Malaysians, particularly among the youth. Some argued that this is a welcome step towards a more open form of democracy, which guarantees freedom of expression. However, what the experience has taught us was that social media became an avenue that could be easily abused, in which rumours and unverified accusations spread like wildfire including among the Malaysian community living abroad.

We have to explain to Malaysians and foreigners alike that this is not what democracy is all about. Democracy also is about citizens having the freedom to exercise their right to vote and it also guarantees that there is rule of law and accountable governance. The fact that people were able to use the social media freely, albeit within the ambit of our laws, is an indication that a robust form of democracy is in place in Malaysia.

In this regard, as a responsible government, we listen to the people. Citizens who are eligible to vote must be able to participate in the electoral process. In the last general elections, the government took steps to make sure that Malaysians overseas were able to vote. As a result, 2013 marked the first time in our country's election history that Malaysians living abroad who are registered voters could vote and be involved in determining the future of the country. Previously, only full-time students and civil servants and their spouses were eligible to use the postal voting facility. I wish to congratulate Wisma Putra and the agencies involved in making this a reality.

This is an example of a government that constantly seeks to improve its services to the public. In dealing with our clients and stakeholders abroad, there is no organisation with more experience in delivering services to Malaysians abroad than Wisma Putra. And the Heads of Mission stationed at our 105 missions worldwide have always executed their responsibilities in ensuring high quality service delivery overseas. Apart from that, as front-line representatives of the government abroad, they have an

important role in forming and influencing public opinion about Malaysia, among Malaysians and foreigners alike.

Your presence in your host countries enable you to engage directly with our stakeholders and clients, especially our fellow countrymen abroad. This is the reason why the government has focused on the importance of developing close ties with our own diaspora as part of Malaysia's diplomatic deliverables. However, we cannot do this without your inputs and support as you are stationed at your respective countries and have direct and instant access to the Malaysian diaspora living in many different parts of the world.

Allow me to share with you some of my views on engaging and mobilising the Malaysian diaspora as they are an important asset that can help you to promote ties of mutual benefit to Malaysia and your host countries.

First, get to know as many Malaysians as possible in your host countries. Not all Malaysians live close to the capital, therefore the internet provides a multitude of ways to make this possible. Heads of Mission must engage regularly with Malaysians in formal or informal ways as this will be useful in times of crisis, particularly when natural disaster strikes or when social or political unrest takes place. We must ensure that Malaysians overseas are safe in these instances.

Second, engage the Malaysian diaspora to help in promoting various aspects of Malaysia abroad. They can help explain events or incidents that happen in Malaysia. Malaysia has done well to make itself known internationally but there are many who do not know very much about Malaysia. By keeping an open channel of communication in engaging and mobilising the Malaysian diaspora, you would be able to reach a wider group of people in your host countries and would be able to share and explain our views to more people in your host countries. As the government's chief representative abroad, continue to project a positive image of the country

at all times and communicate our position on various issues effectively.

Third, the country needs those with specialised skills that are required for Malaysia to move up the technology value-chain as outlined in our transformation programmes. By tapping into the experiences and expertise of the Malaysian diaspora, we can reverse the brain-drain that has affected many countries where talents leave to look for better opportunities in more developed countries. Talent Corp was set up with the aim to provide incentives to draw Malaysian experts to return home. Our diplomatic missions together with Talent Corp, should harness on each other's strength to reach out to Malaysians abroad and raise awareness about the opportunities back home. Talent Corp would be able to provide information on the type of experts Malaysia needs while our diplomatic missions could assist in disseminating the information among Malaysians present in their host countries as well as in assisting in Talent Corp's activities overseas.

Last but not least, there is the question of having sufficient resources for activities related to mobilising and engaging the Malaysian diaspora. On one level, optimising existing resources such as using social media for keeping the channel of communication open between our diplomatic missions and Malaysians residing in your host countries could be done without much additional cost. On the other hand, brain gain programmes would require more resources. In this regard, Talent Corp could hold joint programmes with our diplomatic missions overseas and provide the necessary funds when required.

With the strength of diaspora of one million people abroad and with the strength of our worldwide network of diplomatic missions in 105 countries, we can look at practical and realistic ways to tap into the talents of the Malaysian diaspora for the good of our nation. In this regard, the establishment of Malaysian Associations overseas provide an effective platform for the Malaysian diaspora to interact with fellow Malaysians while they are living

abroad. In addition to this, they could be the focal points in disseminating information on Malaysia and provide invaluable local knowledge on opportunities that could help advance Malaysia's interests and strengthen social, cultural, economic and political ties between Malaysia and other countries.

Before I conclude, I would like to reiterate the crucial role you have in projecting a positive image of Malay-

sia abroad and to instil confidence of Malaysia's continued stability and sound governance among the international community. Equally important is your role in engaging with the Malaysian diaspora no matter where they are. They are an invaluable asset that could help you make headway in your host countries. You are also in a position to do your part to actively support the government's transformation programmes, including the government's brain gain initiatives.

I wish you all the very best in your deliberations.

Thank you.

The Role of Malaysian Diplomats towards Realising the National Transformation Agenda

Speech by Tan Sri Dr. Ali Hamsa, Chief Secretary to the Government of Malaysia, at the 8th Heads of Mission Conference on 25 February 2014



Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, Salam Sejahtera and Salam 1Malaysia.

First and foremost, allow me to take this opportunity to thank Wisma Putra for inviting me to address our Heads of Mission, at this 8th Heads of Mission Conference. This conference is an excellent platform for the Heads of Mission to be updated on the latest policies of the government, particularly the National Transformation Agenda, towards realising Malaysia's aspiration to become a high-income developed nation by the year 2020. This conference is also opportune as it will enable us to exchange views and

ideas on how we in the public service can fulfil this aspiration, particularly in the context of your role as Malaysia's chief representatives abroad.

Malaysia in Transformation

Transformation is an inevitable part of our journey towards realising Vision 2020. "Inevitable" because as an open economy in a challenging international environment, we must remain a competitive, moderate, and dynamic nation to keep pace with the rest of the world. There is a need for us to escape the middle-income trap and take that quantum leap into the next level. The National Transformation Agenda was introduced as a means for us to drive our nation to the next level. I believe the acronyms of GTP, ETP, STP and PTP are familiar to all of us here, and that there is good understanding of the objectives of these programmes towards nation-building. Hence, I will not delve into it in detail.

However, as the backbone of our nation's transformation agenda, we as civil servants must realise that we have a huge responsibility on our shoulders to implement the plans and initiatives outlined under the various transformation programmes. Fortunately, we have had much success in translating the plans into action by utilising the National Blue Ocean Strategy (NBOS). With "low cost, high impact and rapidly executed" as the

key words, NBOS has fostered closer coordination between government agencies by reducing overlapping or duplication of work, and broken down the "silo mentality" that unfortunately exists. I must reiterate that NBOS is a strategy that we should continue to utilise: that we come together and do things quickly, in a cost effective manner, for the well-being of the rakyat, and I fervently hope that NBOS is also applied in our missions abroad.

While we transform the nation as a whole, our Prime Minister, YAB Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak has also put credence on the importance of transforming the civil service; to strengthen and restructure the organisation to remain relevant in line with current developments.

YAB Prime Minister during his Keynote Address at this conference yesterday, highlighted the need for us to embrace our position as one of the region's Middle Power of states that rarely act alone, but which have a significant, systematic impact in a small group or international institutions. In this regard, I believe that Wisma Putra must be proactive to the transformations around us, and to come up with a transformation of its own: a foreign policy which will see Malaysia realise its Vision 2020, to become a high-income developed nation status and beyond. The Public Service Depart-

ment and the Ministry of Finance (for example) are currently undergoing transformation to improve their service delivery, and all other ministries will follow suit soon, including Wisma Putra. May I remind that the core of this transformation should be centred on the rakyat's need and expectations, and hence, we must change to remain relevant.

Merakyatkan Perkhidmatan Awam

Mindful of the importance to win the hearts and minds of the rakyat, I introduced the concept of *Merakyatkan Perkhidmatan Awam* or "Humanising the Public Service". This concept encapsulates our role as public officials who not only provide services to the people, but also receive services from our colleagues in the civil service. I urge Wisma Putra officials to deliver "people-centric services" to the rakyat, and indirectly to ourselves, based on the six guiding principles, namely:

- i) Openness (*Keterbukaan*);
- ii) Going to the Grassroots (*Turun Padang*);
- iii) Engagement (*Musyawarah*);
- iv) Soft Skills or Striking a Balance between the Spiritual and the Physical Aspect (*Insaniah*);
- v) Camaraderie or Sense of Belonging (*Kekitaan*); and
- vi) Resource Sharing and Collaboration through Public-Private and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) Partnership.

I am glad to note that Wisma Putra has introduced its own version of *turun padang* in the form of *Program Mendampingi Rakyat Malaysia* since 2009. This is an excellent example of how the Heads of Mission can be the government's "touch points" with our citizens abroad, and how it enhances the principle of openness (*keterbukaan*). I believe the *turun padang* sessions will enable us to identify problems faced by our stakeholders and clients, apart from cultivating and establishing networks. As Heads of Mission, I trust that you will be active in engaging those you meet in the

course of your duty, in explaining our policies, as well as coordinating efforts among the different agencies at your respective posts to further Malaysia's interests abroad. Engagement must take place beyond the Foreign Ministry and official channels of host governments. Corporate launches, appearances in academic settings or social gatherings, and interviews with the media are among the many avenues of projecting our interests.

Austerity Measures and Sacrifices

As civil servants, it is incumbent that we show an exemplary attitude to the rakyat and make certain sacrifices when the need arises. Recently, YAB Prime Minister announced 11 cost-cutting measures for the government sector, which are estimated to save RM400 million this year. Indeed, these measures are evident of the sacrifices made by civil servants in order to assist the government curb its spending.

Most of us recall the measures undertaken during the recession that befell us in the 1980s and during the 1997/98 Asian Financial Crisis. This latest austerity measure is nothing new and the comfort we can find in this is: we have weathered many storms before, and we will weather this one too. However, austerity measures may be seen as delimiting opportunities to carry out certain

activities. This should never be cited as a reason to reduce our activities. Trying times require innovative solutions and this is where your leadership and creativity will be tested.

In this regard, I commend Wisma Putra for convening the 8th Heads of Missions Conference here at IDFR instead of in a hotel, in line with the austerity measures introduced. And as highlighted by YAB Prime Minister yesterday, despite having a small budget, Wisma Putra is one of the most cost-efficient ministries. In fact, I have discussed with your top management during my working visit to Wisma Putra in September last year that the government is open to requests for additional resources, and for Wisma Putra to come up with a special fund as part of its transformation.

Malaysia in the Global Arena

Globally, Malaysia is perceived as a dynamic and competitive nation. We are ranked at:

- 6th position in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business 2014 Report, a significant improvement from our previous ranking of 23rd position three years ago;
- 24th position in the Global Competitiveness Report



2013, ahead of countries such as the Republic of Korea and second behind Singapore among Southeast Asian countries; and

- 32nd position, out of 142 countries in the Global Innovation Index 2013.

These accolades are an indication of our international standing that we must continue to improve on. We must continue to promote confidence in Malaysia as a politically stable country, which for decades has offered a conducive environment for business and investment.

Malaysia is aware that in order to develop and prosper, we cannot do it alone. We must seek partnership with other countries and the rest of the world. Malaysia must accelerate its economic diplomacy, not only at the bilateral level, but also at the regional and multilateral level, as an important dimension of its international relations, and for purposes of securing the country's wider foreign policy objectives. Malaysia must continue to foster friendly and beneficial relations with all countries.

As Malaysia is not spared from the volatility of the external economic environment, the government will continue to take measures to strengthen its competitive advantage in wooing foreign direct investments and finding new markets for our products. Malaysia will continue to promote the participation of the private sector in developing the country.

And this is where I see the role of the Heads of Mission as crucial. You are the best contact persons in disseminating information on the opportunities available in Malaysia for investors. Thus, I hope that you will continue to develop and nurture your contacts and access to leading figures in your host country that could generate tangible benefits to Malaysia.

Expectations

This last leg towards 2020 and beyond will be a challenging one, and it is important that we succeed. In line with

the theme of this conference, *Transforming Malaysia's Diplomacy Towards 2020 and Beyond*, Malaysia's diplomacy must continue to spearhead and support the government's initiatives abroad. We must not be complacent with our achievements and the favourable rankings that we have achieved so far.

The civil service is doing well and making positive strides forward, but we certainly have the potential to do better. Therefore it is important for civil servants to operate as a thinking public service that is adaptable, responsive, proactive, accountable and efficient in implementing policies, so as to gain the public's confidence and dispel any negative perception of the service.

At this juncture, I would like to take the opportunity to put forth a few words of advice to all Heads of Mission, and Malaysian diplomats in dispensing your duties overseas:

- i) Acquire new skills, be it in the form of a foreign language, or enhancing your negotiation skills, as these will indeed be useful for a successful diplomatic career;
- ii) Ensure that there is no room for integrity issues to surface in the course of dispensing your duties, that may mar the good image of our King and Country;
- iii) While abroad, have respect and understanding of the rule of law of the host country, so you may disseminate those laws to Malaysians under your care and avoid untoward incidences to happen;
- iv) Take interest in the welfare of Malaysians under your watch, be it your own officers and their families, students or working professionals; and
- v) Treat and assist all visiting government officials equally should they be in your host country attending meetings or on official trips.

With regards to promotion opportuni-

ties for senior officials who are still at Grade 54, the government look favourably at providing a "one-off" promotions based on high standards of performance prior to retirement, namely in the form of KUP JUSA 'C'. And I also look forward to having more women ambassadors in the future, in line with our government's aspirations of at least 30% women decision-making positions in the civil service by the year 2015.

In formulating and implementing Malaysia's foreign policy, the leadership role of Wisma Putra will become more important and crucial in the years ahead as the issues we face will become more complex and multi-faceted. I am also cognisant of the fact that we are chairing ASEAN in 2015. In this regard, I have proposed for Malaysia to host the Inaugural ASEAN Heads of Civil Service and First ASEAN Public Service Games on the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit in 2015. I most certainly look forward to working closely with Wisma Putra in ensuring the success of these events.

Experience has shown that the task ahead of us is indeed challenging and demanding. I am pleased to acknowledge the presence at this conference, a list of prominent and experienced speakers who will share ideas and lessons learnt in addressing a myriad of issues to transform Malaysia's diplomacy towards 2020 and beyond.

I trust your interaction with various stakeholders over the course of this conference will provide you with valuable insights that would be useful in discharging your duties during these challenging times.

I look forward to a fruitful discussion with you after this, and wish you all the best when you return to your host countries.

Thank you.

The 8th Heads of Mission Conference





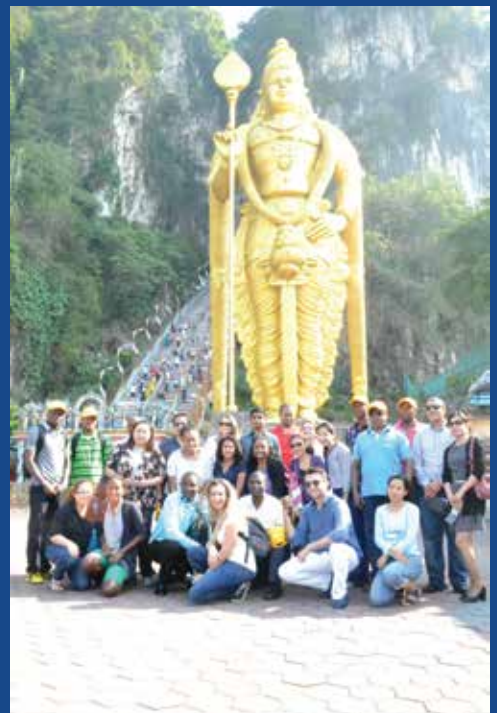
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Rethinking Diplomacy: New Approaches and Domestic Challenges

Dialogue Session with Dato' Sri Anifah Hj. Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, at the 8th Heads of Mission Conference on 24 February 2014



Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, Good morning and Salam 1Malaysia.

It gives me great pleasure to be here this morning at the 8th Heads of Mission Conference. I would like to wish a warm welcome to all Heads of Mission. I am pleased that we have this opportunity to meet and deliberate on issues pertinent to Malaysia and the conduct of foreign relations and diplomacy.

The last conference was held in 2009, shortly after I had assumed my position as Minister in Wisma Putra. Since then, I have had the opportunity to experience for myself the intricacies and complexities of managing foreign relations with other countries on one hand, and working with you in articulating our position on issues at the international fora on another. Indeed Malaysia should be proud of its fine reputation among the international community. Over the years Malaysia has won many friends and is well regarded and respected internationally, and this is in no way possible without the work that you and your predecessors have put into making this possible.

This conference is timely after a hiatus of five years for two reasons:

First: it comes after the 13th General Elections that took place in May 2013, in which the Barisan Nasional was once again given the mandate by the rakyat to govern the country. Thus, this conference offers an excellent opportunity to you to listen to our leaders on the policy direction of the government, particularly on the National Transformation Policy, and the role of Wisma Putra and our diplomatic missions in making sure that these policies are understood and well executed;

Second: it would enable you to gain an insight through discussions with the ministry's stakeholders from former Malaysian Ambassadors, the media, think tanks, civil society, as well as through deliberations on the core business of the ministry, as inputs that could be beneficial in terms of improving or transforming the way diplomacy is conducted by Wisma Putra.

As we know, the next six years are important years for Malaysia. Together with other government agencies, Wisma Putra will be doing its part in assisting Malaysia to achieve high-income developed status in 2020.

The next six years are also significant for Wisma Putra as Malaysia will be chairing and hosting several regional and international meetings. In 2015, Malaysia will assume the chairmanship of ASEAN and look forward to the possibility of joining the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 2015-2016 term. Then, in 2019, Malaysia would host the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

Dealing on a daily basis with matters connected in some way or the other to the outside world, you are well aware of global issues and the changing dynamics in the international environment that impact directly on Malaysia. Given the interconnectedness of the

world today brought upon by rapid changes due to globalisation and technological advancement, Malaysia as a small trading nation, and very much integrated into the global economy, has to continue to implement policies that would ensure that Malaysia continues to grow as a country and continue to provide a high level of development for the country.

Malaysia's strategic location at the centre of one of the world's busiest sea passages, coupled with our stable political, economic and social institutions have given credence to Malaysia as a strategic partner that many Great Powers have continued to be interested in. Malaysia's place in the world is not shaped by sheer accident but by through carefully crafted policies and the political will of its leaders.

Malaysia will always be an open trading nation and has to always take into account its own socio-economic endowments in terms of ethnic, religious and cultural diversity, when considering its domestic and foreign policy priorities.

Malaysia's unique way of accommodating the interests of our diverse population in our own unique way has been rewarded by a stability that is uncommon among developing countries. As we all know, however, in recent years there have been many challenges in the domestic front. Many have demanded for more democratic space and have taken their opinion into the virtual world by criticising each and every policy the government makes. What some of them fail to understand is the complexity of our political, economic and social realities and that some things would never or would probably take generations to change, and that all Malaysians must make constructive contributions to ensure that Malaysia continues to enjoy peace and stability for generations to come.

These realities together with the external regional and global environment in

turn shape our foreign policy. Our foreign policy has been characterised by pragmatism and a principled position on issues. Since independence, there has been continuity in our foreign policy and this is another indicator of the stability of our political, economic and social institutions. Our foreign policy evolution has also been seamlessly tied to the leadership of the country.

We are familiar with the narrative – how as a newly independent state led by Tuanku Abdul Rahman, we retained our friendly ties with Britain and the West.

Then under Tun Abdul Razak, Malaysia began to exert its independence and found common ground with other post-colonial and developing states to be part of the Non-Aligned Movement during the period of Cold War.

With Tun Hussein Onn we began planting the seeds for regional cooperation with the founding of ASEAN.

Under Tun Mahathir, Malaysia broke many new grounds in advocating a greater economic orientation and in forging close ties with other developing countries in the conduct of our foreign relations.

Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's time as Prime Minister saw Malaysia further promoting a progressive form of Islam, consolidating its ties with ASEAN, and the propagation of a rule-based society both at home and in ASEAN.

Previous leaderships had provided the foundation of our current foreign policy under the present leadership of Dato' Sri Najib Tun Abdul Razak. Since Dato' Sri became Prime Minister and introduced the National Transformation programmes, Malaysia has been able to draw on the goodwill and friendly relations developed over the past fifty years.

Looking at the global political and economic environment, Malaysia

needs to keep ahead of the competition or it will flounder as a middle-income country, and not be able to enjoy the continuous development that we know today.

Wisma Putra has been part and parcel of the nation's foreign policy evolution. Your predecessors have laid a strong foundation and tradition of excellence in the pursuit of Malaysia's national interest.

Many refer to the legacy of Tun Muhammad Ghazali Shafie affectionately known as 'King Ghaz' who played a pivotal role in laying the foundations of Malaysia's foreign policy. He was involved in the formation of Malaysia as a state, the founding of ASEAN, OIC and the International Islamic University of Malaysia and is known for the tight ship he commanded as Foreign Minister and Permanent Secretary of External Affairs.

While many keep referring to the "Old Glory Days of Wisma Putra", we must not forget that times have changed since then. The advent of ICT and globalisation has culminated into completely different rules of the game in the conduct of diplomacy and the terrain of international relations. Wisma Putra has grown too - the physical presence, the number of departments in the ministry, and the number of missions abroad have grown, and so have the challenges that come with it.

Our foreign policy considerations however remain the same. We are an open trading nation, therefore robust economic cooperation is important and so is a predictable and rules-based legal and business environment. As we are a diverse country, our positions at the international fora also reflect this reality. The role of consular services has also expanded as more Malaysians travel and live abroad. These are the realities, and as a ministry, Wisma Putra must look at its strengths and weaknesses and transform the way things are done so as to meet these future challenges.

"Wisma Putra has been part and parcel of the nation's foreign policy evolution. Your predecessors have laid a strong foundation and tradition of excellence in the pursuit of Malaysia's national interest."

The Prime Minister had mooted the Global Movement of Moderates (GMM) in 2010. This initiative has not only been accepted by ASEAN but also by NAM, CHOIGM, ASEM, D8 and the OIC. It has also caught the imagination of many countries that recognise that multiculturalism is a common denominator in every corner of the world and that dialogue and a moderate position would help mitigate extremism at home as well as internationally.

We now live in an era where security issues are no longer also the sole concern of individual countries but that of the international community as a whole. The peace agreement between the Philippines Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Southern Philippines facilitated by Malaysia is testament of moderation in practice.

As Malaysia becomes a high-income developed nation, such initiatives must be identified as niche areas that Malaysia could focus on in the pursuit of foreign policy at the regional and global levels.

In line with the first of the transformational policies of the government to focus on the delivery service of the public sector, I had initiated in 2010 the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Heads of Missions. I am very pleased to note that all Heads of Mission now have their own KPIs which are customised to suit the types of mission and the realities on the ground. I believe that this is an endeavour that we can be proud of as a ministry and I am sure we are one of

the pioneering countries to undertake such a project as a means to measure and monitor the performance of heads of diplomatic missions. Indeed, there are many intangible components of our work at the ministry that cannot be measured. However, we can measure specific activities that contribute towards achieving our objectives of protecting and projecting Malaysia's many interests abroad.

Sceptics could be critical about the effectiveness of the KPIs, particularly in accurately measuring the performance of Heads of Mission. Let me explain the rationale behind the KPIs. Over the years Wisma Putra has grown in terms of its physical presence in Putrajaya as well as its vast network of now 107 diplomatic missions. In terms of scale, compare this to a country of the size of India that has about 160 diplomatic missions abroad. Indeed we must be proud that Malaysia, despite its relatively small size geographically and population-wise has such a wide network of diplomatic presence in all corners of the world. However, the physical growth and global reach of the ministry do pose certain challenges in terms of resources especially in terms of financial resources and human resource capacity.

The KPIs therefore is a means to provide in very clear terms a set of guidelines that set out the expectations of the ministry on the Heads of Mission in carrying out their role as the government's chief representative abroad. Given the growth that Wisma Putra has experienced particularly in the 1990's when many diplomatic missions were established in the countries of the South, the KPIs are useful tools for the ministry to set out the objectives for each Head of Mission to achieve.

In this day and age where time is a precious commodity, the minister, the ministry's top management and even the respective desks, do not have the time to go into great detail into the

work that each Head of Mission need to carry at his or her post. As such, the KPIs serve as a manual of activities for Heads of Mission to execute in order to meet the targets, which in actual fact reflects the expectations of the ministry. Through the KPIs, the HQ would be able to gauge the level of work at the mission. However, the KPIs at present primarily provide a measure of the quantity of work and not the quality.

This is where the next challenge lies. A measurement mechanism that could provide an accurate measure on the quality of performance of a mission be it in terms of reports and the impact they have on shaping Malaysia's position on an issue, for example, or level of effectiveness of consular services provided by missions, should



be the next step in improving the delivery system of the ministry.

The setting of standards based on specific measurement criteria are well worth studying and developing and then implemented. This I believe will revolutionise and transform the ministry by coding the high standards that are universally expected of foreign ministries and diplomats anywhere into a performance management mechanism.

After being Foreign Minister for near to five years, I have witnessed first-hand the dedication, the grit and the determination of our officers in executing their work. I fully appreciate the challenges and difficulties that you go through on the front line in flying Malaysia's flag high in your respective host countries or at the international organisations you are accredited to.

Defending Malaysia's interests, providing quality services to the public, and projecting a positive image of Malaysia are akin to the air that you breathe, as these are ingrained in you from the moment you became a diplomat in your formative years at the ministry. I have been told that diplomats are a special breed and I could attest to that, I do see that in you.

It is for this reason that Wisma Putra

must continue to develop its human capacity to be able to meet the challenges of the future and continue to excel in what it was set up to do. Wisma Putra is involved in both high politics and soft diplomacy and thus its officers must be well equipped to handle all aspects of diplomacy.

In this day and age, modern diplomacy does not only require the mastery of words but also the ability to be forward-looking, innovative and take



quick action and decisions. These are traits that would ensure the relevance and survival of the diplomatic service in this age of instantaneous information. Diplomats provide analysis of situations or events that have ramifications on their country or citizens' interests.

The media can only provide instantaneous reports but it is the analysis of the diplomat on the ground that makes a difference to the way a country views a particular situation and the position the country would take vis-à-vis that situation. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, Wisma Putra must be able to do just that and do it well.

I must say throughout my time here, there have been instances that I have been concerned by the time taken for Wisma Putra to respond to some situations as well as the quality of advice that have been given to me. Good advice is important in order for the government to make decisions on issues. In order for officers to provide good advice, they must have a good understanding of issues. As diplomats, Wisma Putra officers must continuously develop their knowledge and understanding of international issues and skills in writing, articulating views and negotiating.

I am impressed by the calibre of many officers at the ministry who have honed their diplomatic, people and communication skills throughout their

careers. This is why I have always given the latitude to Heads of Mission and senior officers of the ministry to make public statements but they must take responsibility for what is published or quoted.

I have also introduced a new practice with regard to Pre-Council briefings to YAB PM, where I ceded that privilege to the KSU, respective TKSUs, DGs and Heads of Mission in order to give them the opportunity to interact directly with the Prime Minister. By doing so, the Prime Minister, who is one of our principle stakeholders, will be better acquainted with our most senior officials, and create that rapport that goes a long way in helping Wisma Putra to produce work that meets the expectations of our stakeholders, including the Prime Minister.

It also provides the opportunity to the Prime Minister to gauge the capabilities of our senior government officials. Many senior government officials are given the honour to continue serving the government upon retirement. This is a reflection of the government's appreciation for their expertise, talents and capabilities. In the case of Wisma Putra, this would relate to the officer's ability to continue providing their insights and policy advice to the government on international issues of strategic importance to Malaysia. However, this does not mean that such appointments are automatic as consideration is based on merit and

not to be taken for granted as a given practice.

To be able to be an effective foreign ministry, Wisma Putra must ensure that it invests in developing the knowledge and skills of its officers and staff so that they would be able to continuously improve themselves and contribute to a solid, performance and results-oriented work culture that would determine Wisma Putra remains at the forefront of international relations as the custodian of Malaysia's Foreign Policy. I have confidence that Wisma Putra has the ability to harness the talents it has and to meet the high expectations of its stakeholders and clients.

Another important aspect of diplomacy is to cultivate and gain an in depth understanding of the political, economic and social dynamics in the host country. As such, I would encourage you to engage with civil society organisations, the academia, media think tanks, the business community, and not forgetting the Malaysian diaspora wherever you are posted to. These diverse groups would be able to provide different perspectives on issues which could assist you to provide a balanced and comprehensive view on issues and shape your policy recommendations to the government. Your interaction with them and to get to know them well is critical. At the same time, you will be able to reach a wider group of people

as part of your public diplomacy efforts.

As I have earlier mentioned, Wisma Putra would be facing challenging times ahead, especially with Malaysia's Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2015, our bid to the non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council for 2015-16, and the hosting of the Commonwealth

Heads of Government Meeting or CHOGM in 2019. I look forward to having a fruitful dialogue with you on rethinking diplomacy and finding new approaches to diplomacy in supporting the National Transformation Programmes to achieve our goals to become a high-income developed country by the year 2020.

Wabillallahu fihi walhidayah, wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.

Thank you.

The 8th Heads of Mission Conference

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia organised the 8th Heads of Mission Conference with the theme, *Transforming Malaysia's Diplomacy Towards 2020 and Beyond* from 23 February to 1 March 2014. IDFR hosted the conference from 23 to 26 February 2014, while the remaining days took place in Kuching, Sarawak and Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Approximately 150 participants, made up of Heads of Mission from around the world and heads of departments and divisions in Wisma Putra, took part.

The purpose of the six-day conference was to provide the opportunity for Heads of Mission to exchange views with stakeholders including academia, NGOs, economists, media and business community. It also provided a setting to discuss and identify challenges and solutions as well as approaches and strategies to achieve and diagram future foreign policy goals.

The opening ceremony was officiated by Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak on 24 February 2014. In his keynote address, he stated that as a Middle Power, Malaysia must continue its commitment towards ASEAN, strengthen bilateral relations with our neighbors and continue to value ASEAN as the fulcrum of peace, prosperity and stability in the region. The Prime Minister then said as policymakers, diplomats and members of the international community, Malaysia must react to the

transformations that is trending around the region and the world, with a transformation of our own, a foreign policy which will see Malaysia through to a developed status and beyond by 2020.

Two dialogue sessions were also held earlier that day. Dato' Sri Anifah Hj. Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, spoke about *Rethinking Diplomacy: New Approaches and Domestic Challenges*, while Senator Dato' Sri Idris Jala, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department and CEO of PEMANDU, explained on the *Government Transformation Agenda*.

On the morning of 25 February 2014, three breakout sessions were conducted: *Pursuing New Frontiers for the Nation's Wealth*, *Providing Effective and Efficient Services to the Ministry's*

Stakeholders and Clients and *Promoting Malaysia and Disseminating Information through Public Diplomacy*. Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, delivered his address titled, *Engaging and Mobilising Malaysian Diaspora to Strengthen the Nation*, stressing the importance of tapping into the experiences, expertise and skills of Malaysian Diaspora in order to reverse brain drain. Later, the Chief Secretary to the Government of Malaysia, Tan Sri Dr. Ali Hamsa spoke about the *Role of Malaysian Diplomats towards Realising the National Transformation Agenda*, addressing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia to aim at delivering people-centric services. A special spouse programme was also conducted which included talks on *Understanding Emotional Intelligence and Professionalism* and *Moments of Truth at Missions*. Datin



Sri Siti Rubiah Datuk Abdul Samad, wife of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, was the guest of honour.

The Deputy Director General (C) of IDFR, Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim moderated a breakout session on *Malaysian Diplomats: Today and Tomorrow* which was held on 26 February 2014. Before the Heads of Mission departed for Kuching, Sarawak, sessions on *Strengthening ASEAN* and *Global Movement of Moderates – Beyond Rhetoric* were presented.

Kuching, Sarawak

On Thursday 27 February 2014, two breakout sessions took place: *Strengthening Multilateral Diplomacy* and *Strengthening Bilateral Diplomacy*. Some of the outcomes of the first session were Malaysia's priorities in the multilateral sphere must reflect its domestic policies, Malaysia should leverage on ASEAN in its participation in international fora, the ministry should develop greater expertise on economic issues as economic diplomacy has become a major component on the country's foreign policy and Malaysia should strive to accede to as many international human rights conventions as possible to elevate its global standing. With regards to strengthening bilateral diplomacy, the summarised outcomes were that Malaysia should participate in the regional or sub-regional organisations within the African region and adequate attention must be given to South and Central Asia given the region's geographical proximity to Malaysia as well as its rapidly growing economy.

Apart from that, a lunch talk titled, *Investment Scenario in Sarawak and How Malaysian Missions Abroad Could Promote Foreign Investment in Sarawak* by Datu' Haji Ismawi Haji Ismuni, Director, State Planning Unit of the Chief Minister's Department Sarawak was conducted. A courtesy call and dinner by Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, former Chief Minister of Sarawak ended the day.

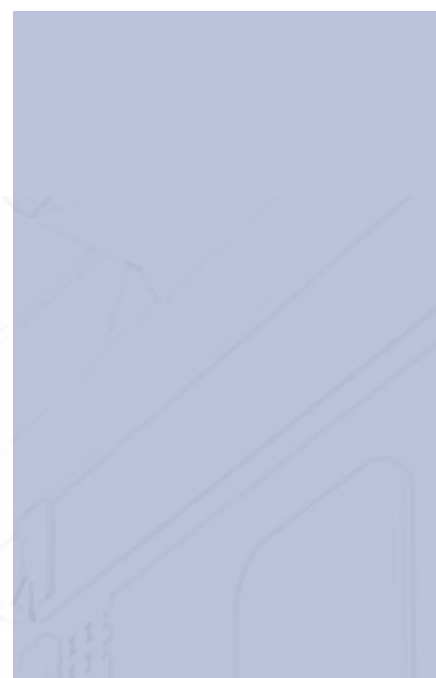


Kota Kinabalu, Sabah

On the first day in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, there was a session on *Improving and Strengthening the Institution and Human Capital*. Dato' Rohana Ramli stated how foreign language programmes should be institutionalised and structured for Heads of Mission and officers and management service should be formed under the Deputy Secretary-General in order to formulate reforms. Heads of Mission then dined with Datuk Seri Panglima Musa Hj. Aman, Chief Minister of Sabah.

On the final day of the conference, the Outcome Document and Plan of Action were adopted and presented. Based on the dialogue and breakout sessions, YM Raja Nushirwan Zainal Abidin aimed to highlight the actionable proposals that can be incorporated into the Ministry's Strategic Plan (2016-2020). Ambassador Zainol also summarised the outcome of discussions under the six Strategic Objectives. On behalf of the Secretary General, Dato' Ramlan Ibrahim emphasised on the importance of follow-up action to the outcome of the

conference and stressed the need for Heads of Mission to continuously upgrade their skills and develop the right expertise within their areas of competencies. The 8th Heads of Mission Conference concluded with a closing dinner hosted by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia at the Le Méridien, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.



The Official Launching of Mahathir Global Peace School

On 17 February 2014, IDFR hosted the Official Launching of Mahathir Global Peace School with the theme, *Global Peace and Conflict Resolution*. The programme was jointly organised by Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta and the Perdana Global Peace Foundation (PGPF).

The objective of the Mahathir Global Peace School is to explore strategies in order to construct a just and peaceful world and aims to investigate the political, ethical, legal and economic implications of global peace and its relationship to cosmopolitanism as an alternative to more traditional notions of nationalism.

The programme commenced with welcoming remarks by the Director General of IDFR, Dato' Hussin Nayan and the Rector of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Prof. Dr. Bambang Cipto.

The Fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia and President of Perdana Global Peace Foundation, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad then delivered his keynote address and officially launched the event. He mentioned that democracy stresses on human rights. However, the rights of civilians are taken away when bombs land on their soil. He also believes that ordering others to kill is the worst crime. With regards to creat-

ing a just and peaceful world, Tun Dr. Mahathir stated that, diplomacy is the best tool to resolve conflicts. He provided examples of regional conflicts that occurred during his time as Prime Minister and conveyed that Malaysia and its neighbours would seek help from the world court rather than to use force.

Public lectures from Former Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr. M Jusuf Kalla and Chairperson of the Central Board of Muhammadiyah, Prof. Dr. M Din Syamsudin concluded the programme.

Economic Diplomacy Series: *International Trade in Agriculture Products - Overcoming Barriers*



The Economic Diplomacy Series started its first series on 16 January 2014 which was held at IDFR. With the title, *International Trade in Agriculture Products: Overcoming Barriers*, the event drew 40 participants from government agencies, private sector, associations and embassy officials.

The one-day event was organised by IDFR in collaboration with World Trade Institute (WTI) and the Faculty of Law, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). Puan Norani Ibrahim, Deputy

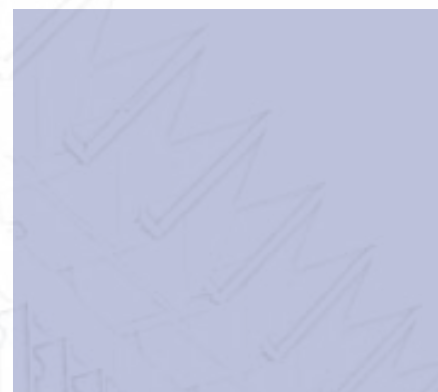
Director General (T), delivered the welcoming remarks.

Dr. Sufian Jusoh from WTI delivered two topics namely, *The International Rules and Regulations on Agriculture Trade and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade and Agriculture Exports*. He talked on the outcome of the Ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Bali, Indonesia that was held on December 2013. He also touched on Non Tariff Measures

(NTM), Agriculture Political Economy, Price Volatility and Food Safety, among others.

The session continued with lecture by Tuan Abdul Hamid Murad, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) on *International Trade in Genetically Modified 21 Agriculture Products: The Biosafety Issues* and Tuan Haji Abdul Rahman Abdul Rahim (Arar Venture) on *Meeting the International Standards and Technical Regulations: Overcoming the Barrier*.

The closing remarks were delivered by Associate Professor Dr. Hasani Mohd Ali, Deputy Dean, Faculty of Law, UKM.



Lecture Series: *Beyond the Horizon - Potential Political Breakthrough in the South China Sea*

IDFR Lecture Series for 2014 took off with a lecture held in collaboration with the Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA) on 23 January 2014 at the IDFR's Treaty Room. The lecture on *Beyond the Horizon – Potential Political Breakthrough in the South China Sea*, was delivered by the distinguished Professor Dr. Vivian L. Forbes, Adjunct Associate Professor at the School of Earth and Environment, University of Western Australia and also Senior Visiting Research Fellow of MIMA.



Professor Forbes is also a professional and practicing cartographer; a marine political geographer; a lecturer in spatial sciences and marine affairs and a former Merchant Naval Officer. He is also a Guest Professor of China Institute for Boundary and Ocean Studies, Wuhan University and Guest Professor of South China Sea Institute, Xiamen University, China.

During his lecture, he shared his vast knowledge and expertise on matters related to the South China Sea (SCS) which saw the overlapping territorial claims. He also emphasised on a number of diplomatic initiatives and cooperative activities that have been undertaken as part of the efforts to

ensure the peace and stability in the SCS amidst the overlapping claims by the claimant countries namely China, Vietnam, The Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei.

Based on his experiences through the studies conducted while being attached to the China Institute of Boundary and Ocean Studies (CIBOS) at Wuhan University and SCS Institute at Xiamen University, Professor Forbes also shared perspectives on the ASEAN's Declaration on the Code of Conduct on the SCS, the validity of China's claim, possible cooperation and joint submission between clai-

mant states and the United States position on the SCS issue.

The lecture also saw the presence of high level officials from various government agencies and academic institutes that were dealing with the SCS issues such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Security Council, Attorney General's Chambers, National Hydrographic Centre, Naval Cartography Department, Royal Malaysian Navy and Department of Survey and Mapping.

Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP): Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants 1/2014

The Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) : Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants 1/2014 was organised by IDFR from 3 until 21 March 2014. This three-week programme attended by 29 diplomats, namely from Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bosnia Herzegovina, Brunei, Cambodia, Congo, Egypt, Fiji, Guinea, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Maldives, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe. The objectives of the programme were to enhance the participants' know-

ledge and skills on diplomacy and international relations, to give exposure for the participants on Malaysia's experience in managing its foreign policy and international relations and to provide hands-on experience and networking for the participants.

An integrated teaching and learning methodologies which included briefing, discussions, lectures, simulation and exercises were conducted during the programme. In general, modules



that were conducted included Malaysia's Foreign Policy, Current International Relations and Global Issues, Regional Security, Diplomatic Skills and Language. The participants were

also taken to several study visits for on site briefings, such as to Putrajaya, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) and Bank Negara Malaysia. In addition, the participants were privileged to experienced state level governance, when they visited the historical city of Melaka and Johor.

Overall, the participants had gained a lot of new knowledge and experience throughout the three-week programme. Among the positive comments received was, "expectation of the programme were met, improved knowledge and better understanding of diplomacy and international relations from the Malaysian experience,

gained networking with Malaysian officials and among participants and excellent programme".



Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses under the *Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara* (SPKM) 1/2014



Consular Matters at Mission, Legal Matters at Missions, Language and Diplomacy, Grooming and Social Etiquette, Fine Dining Etiquette, Royalty and Palace Protocol, Role of Spouses at Mission, Promoting Malaysia as a Preferred Investment Destination and Promoting Malaysia's Export of Manufactured Products, Standard Operating Procedure in Humanitarian Crisis, Cross Cultural Awareness and Communication, Art of Conversation and Cooking Demonstration.

The Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses under the *Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara* (SPKM) 1/2014 was successfully conducted from 10 until 21 February 2014 for officers grade 41 and above. Twenty seven participants from Ministry of Education, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Human Resource, Public Service Department, Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, Immigration Department, Malaysia Nuclear Agency and Yayasan Islam Kedah, attended the course.

The objectives of the course were to increase the participants' knowledge

and skills in diplomacy and international relations, to expose them to matters related the workings at mission and to instill esprit de corps among the participants for effective performance in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities as representatives of the country. In addition, the course also exposed and prepared the participants' spouses of their varied functions and responsibilities.

The ten-day course included interactive lectures, group discussions and practical sessions on aspects related to working at a mission. Among the topics discussed were *Financial Management at Mission, Protocol and*

The course received favourable responses from the participants. Not only that they found the course to be very beneficial in exposing them to the overall working at a mission abroad, the course also created a platform for them to build a network of acquaintances as they are from different ministries and government agencies/departments.

The second series of the course will be conducted from 7 until 11 April 2014, which will be conducted for home-based staff grade 38 and below.

Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills

The first training programme of 2014, Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills was held from 20 until 23 January 2014. The workshop was attended by 13 officers, namely from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prime

Minister's Department, Ministry of Defence, Malaysian Timber Industry Board and IDFR.

The objectives of the workshop were to provide the participants with an

overview and scope of public diplomacy, to enhance awareness of the importance of public diplomacy in promoting Malaysia's national interests at the international arena and to enhance the knowledge and skills in

handling the media in the context of public diplomacy and advocacy.

Among the modules conducted include topics such as *Public Diplomacy*, delivered by Dato' Misran Karmain, Director General of Department of Information and Public Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia; *Cross-Cultural Understanding* by Mr. A. Ramachandran; *The Role of Media in Public Diplomacy* by Datuk Azman

Ujang, Former Editor-in-Chief of National News Agency of Malaysia (BERNAMA) and *Effective Media Relations* by Mr. Jason Leong, Chief Executive Officer of SIP Consulting Sdn. Bhd. Apart from that, practical sessions such as press conference and media interview simulations, were also conducted by Mr. SW Chan, Media Trainer and Consultant from Meridian Communication.

Overall, IDFR received positive feedback from the participants, where they said, "we have gained valuable knowledge, various skills and established new network. It was beneficial in giving the participants some ideas on how to deal with the media".

Workshop on Fine Dining and Social Etiquette

By Khaeriah Zaehera Abd Kayyum



The act of formal dinners has long been associated with political aristocracy and power. It is proposed that food is not only crucial to the survival of individual consumers, but also to the survival and proliferation of the modern nation state. The powerful symbolism of diplomatic meals, created the term "diplomatic gastronomy" to describe the prestige based power interactions that use food as a medium for interaction. Intrinsically, understanding and mastering the correct protocol becoming more and more central to prevent faux pas that are disconcerting and embarrassing to the country's representative.

Recognising the importance of understanding correct formal social etiquette, including the fine points of dining etiquette, a Workshop on Fine Dining and Social Etiquette was

organised by IDFR for the Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) 1/2014 participants. The workshop was held on 3 March 2014 at PARKROYAL Kuala Lumpur Hotel and were attended by 16 DiD participants, including senior officers of IDFR, Ambassador Aminatun Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General (C) of IDFR, Madam Rahimah Yeop, Director of Academic Studies, Research and Publication Division and Mr. Haris Syarwani, the Course Coordinator. The session conducted by the esteemed YAM Tunku Dara Tunku Tan Sri Naquiah Binti Almarhum Tuanku Ja'afar, who is a subject matter expert in fine dining and social etiquette, with vast experience in hosting social functions.

Throughout the workshop, participants were exposed to appropriate and standard international protocol

and social etiquette, as well as the guide on the correct formal and informal dress, including evening attire, table etiquette and making a proper toast. YAM Tunku Dara also provided relevant examples, as well as identifying various useful tips for the participants.

As part of the practicum, participants were required to prepare and deliver toasts in various diplomatic function settings, either as the host of the function or the recipient of the toast. This was definitely the highlight of the workshop as the participants were guided by the YAM Tunku Dara and the senior officers on preparing fitting speeches as part of their toasts with correct deportment and more importantly, the key message to be imparted in each corresponding toasts.

All in all, it was a successful workshop as the participants not only gained first-hand knowledge in various facets of protocol, proper table etiquette, social graces and the fine art of entertaining in diplomatic settings but as well as understanding and appreciating the importance of these skills in becoming a good diplomat. After all, knowledge of protocol is crucial, especially in performing one's ability to work in international environment and also in comprehending key elements of cross-cultural communication.

Attachment Programme at the Embassy of Malaysia in Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia

By Mohd Firdaus Azman



Sixteen participants of the Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) course series 1/2014 had the opportunity to attend an attachment programme at the Embassy of Malaysia in Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia from 22 to 29 March 2014. The eight-day programme was headed by Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General (C) of IDFR. The programme is aimed to train Malaysian junior diplomats in the fields

of diplomacy and international relations. It is also designed to equip the participants with the knowledge and skills necessary for their diplomatic career.

During the programme, the participants had not only managed to learn more about the Republic of Indonesia in the context of politics, economy, social and culture, but they also

managed to experience the ups and lows of life as Malaysian diplomats abroad. Participants also had the opportunity to interact with counterparts from agencies pertinent to their diplomatic roles, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (KEMLU), School of Foreign Service of the Republic of Indonesia (SEKDILU) and ASEAN Secretariat. Discussion sessions were also held between the participants and the committee members of Malaysia Chambers Jakarta (MCJ) and representative of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences to further understand the local political, economical and social scenes. Apart from the substantive schedule, the participants also visited National Museum of the Republic of Indonesia and Taman Mini Indonesia Indah.

al-Jemaah al-Islamiyah Book Review by Jasmine Jawhar

Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) is a capacity building and research Centre under the purview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia. In October 2013, SEARCCT through its Research and Publications Division published a monograph entitled, *al-Jemaah al-Islamiyah* written by Kennimrod Sari-buraja.

The monograph is based on an in-depth study with the aim of examining and understanding the history, ideology, organisational structure, recruitment process, financial resources and operational methods of one of Southeast Asia's terrorist group known as the al-Jemaah al-Islamiyah or Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). In this monograph, the author managed to gain first-hand information from former terrorists, academicians, experts and security personnel in the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism.

The work not only looks at how JI came into existence but also how it evolved and became one of the

region's most feared terrorist organisation. In the effort to demonstrate this, the author began by outlining four different theories on how JI was established. The first and the most popular theory of the four is the argument that JI was an offshoot group of Indonesia's Darul Islam (DI) movement. The second theory explores the idea that JI was formed as a result of a "Black Operation" orchestrated by *Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara* (BAKIN), while the third theory suggests that the formation of JI was inspired by the Soviet-Afghan War in the 1980s. The last theory claims that JI was formed following the establishment of *Pesantren al-Mukmin (Pondok Ngruki)* by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'Ansyr, also known as the founding fathers of JI.

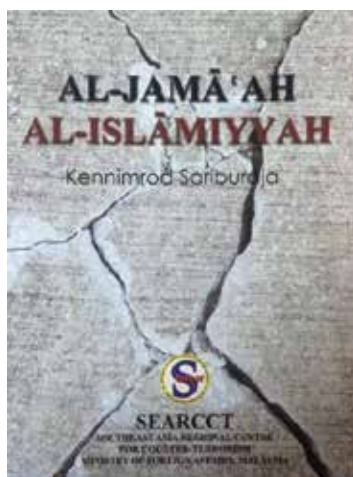
In order to fully understand JI, it is essential to study JI's own manual known as the *Pedoman Umum Perjuangan al-Jemaah al-Islamiyah* (PUPJI) in which the author explored in the monograph. The manual essentially serve as a guide with regards to the

direction and operations of the organisation. The manual contains the philosophy, objectives, principles, organisational structure, modus operandi of JI and the ideological construct of JI i.e. the influence of *salafi-jihadiyyah* ideology, the misinterpretation of jihad and the misconception of *al Wala wa al Bara*.

Looking at the organisational structure of JI, it is clear that the organisation has developed a systematic structure with a top-to-bottom hierarchy that can be divided into upper hierarchy and lower hierarchy. In the upper hierarchy setup, the *amir* (leader), is assisted by four councils comprising of senior members of JI known as *Majlis Qiyadah Mazkaziyyah* (leadership council), *Majlis Syura* (advisory council), *Majlis Fatwa* (fatwa council) and *Majlis Hisbah* (disciplinary council). Under the four councils, there are four additional regional command areas including *Mantiqi Ula* that covers Malaysia and Singapore, *Mantiqi Thani* that covers Indonesia (excluding East Kalimantan, Sulawesi and

Ambon), *Mantiqê Thalith* which includes Sabah (Malaysia), East Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Ambon (Indonesia) and Mindanao (The Philippines) and *Mantiqi Ukhra* which comprises areas other than the first three *Mantiqi*. Meanwhile the lower hierarchy consists of *wakalah* (division), *sarayah* (battalion), *katibah* (company), *kirdas* (platoon), *fi'ah* (squad) and *laifah* (team).

The monograph also discusses the recruitment methods of JI which is achieved through friendship, kinship, education institutions and religious activities in mosques. In that regard, JI's recruitment process is similar to that of other militant groups where it begins with 'talent-spotting' to identify individuals possessing certain characteristics and skill sets. The relationship between the newly recruited cadres and existing members will be further



strengthened through familial ties (arranged marriages).

The monograph also map out JI's comprehensive plan of action that includes operating under the guise of religious works and activities such as *da'wah*, economic activities, educa-

tion, training, cooperation with other militant groups as well as their attempted attacks in order to achieve their goal of establishing a *dawlah Islamiyyah* in the region. Finally, the monograph provides a brief profile of prominent JI members and individuals linked to the organisation.

At present, the threat of JI, albeit disrupted due to counter-terrorism operations in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore, remains dangerous. The emergence of new networks, splinter groups, sleeper cells, recidivism and links with other militant entities continues to be a threat. Therefore, with the publication of this monograph, it is hope that the readers will have a better understanding of the dynamics of JI thus adding into the existing body of knowledge in the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism.

What They Say...



Tandin Dorji

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bhutan
(Participant of Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants 1/2014)

"In my personal view, I feel the course is effective and well organised. It is a perfect course for any diplomat, especially for those who are relatively young in their careers. The course has given me new insights on diplomacy and it has also provided me with an excellent opportunity to build networks with friends/diplomats from 28 different countries. It has also enabled me to learn new and interesting topics such as Blue Ocean Strategy and also to learn from the experiences of seasoned diplomats as well as from experienced trainers from both public and private sectors. However, it would be good if the duration of the course is increased to four weeks so that we will have enough time to learn the topics in greater detail."

"It has provided me with the foundation to Public International Law which is practical and relevant especially when involving negotiations of trade treaties. I had brief knowledge on Public International Law before; however, little by little I gained a good overview and learned bits and pieces I didn't know before. I really love the flexible approach of which whenever participants asked questions during the presentations, the presenters/lecturers were willing to entertain and answer them by giving examples of cases for a better picture. As a suggestion, the course will be more impactful if it can be expanded to more than four days so that each topic can be discussed more thoroughly."



Shifrah Nadzry

Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)
(Participant of Workshop on Public International Law)

Upcoming Courses/Events at IDFR *

Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home Base Staff and Spouses under <i>Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara</i> (SPKM) 2/2014 (Grade 38 and Below)	7-11 April 2014
Effective Presentation Skills 1/2014	8-11 April 2014
Speech Writing Course for DiD Participants	14-15 April 2014
Speech Writing Course for Intermediate Level	16-18 April 2014
Speech Writing Course for Advanced Level	28-30 April 2014
French Level V	5 May-3 September 2014
French Level VII	6 May-4 September 2014
Spanish Level V	6 May-26 August 2014
Spanish Level II	7 May-27 August 2014
Orientation Course for Secretaries and Executive Officers	19-30 May 2014
Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home Base Staff and Spouses under <i>Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara</i> (SPKM) 3/2014 (Grade 41 and Above)	19-30 May 2014
MTCP: English Language Course for Diplomacy 1/2014	19-30 May 2014
ASEAN China Young Diplomats Training Course	19-30 May 2014
Crisis Management Course for International Participants 2014	2-20 June 2014
Diploma in Diplomacy 2/2014	2 June-5 September 2014
Spanish Level VII	16 June-15 December 2014
Effective Writing Skills 1/2014	17-20 June 2014

* Subject to changes

Best Wishes

To our new colleagues, who recently joined the IDFR family

Siti Nooraznie Abdul Rahim
 Saiful Ezane Mozlan @ Mazlan
 Asmat Zainal Abidin
 Afidah A. Manaf
 Norazizah Azis
 Muhamad Syahfie Md Saleh
 Hanriyani Sahmawi
 Mohd Hawari Hashim
 Mohd Nazidrul Ahmad Yazid

To our colleague who recently had a 'visit from the stork'

Nina Sharida Mohd Arshad

To our colleagues, who left us with pleasant memories

Dato' Zulkifli Yaacob
 – transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia
 Nizam Limun
 – transferred to the Institute for Medical Research, Malaysia
 Dev Kumar A/L Balakrishnan
 – transferred to the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), Prime Minister's Department Malaysia
 Sarimah Bonot
 – transferred to the National Library of Malaysia
 Mohd Noor Ahmad Jusoh
 – transferred to the Parliament of Malaysia

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