

**CULTURAL APPRECIATION DAY 2019  
23 JULY 2019  
MULTIPURPOSE HALL, PUSPANITA**

**WELCOMING REMARKS  
BY  
ENCIK ZAKARIA NASIR  
ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS (IDFR)  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MALAYSIA**

---

YB Senator Dato' Marzuki Yahya  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia

YBhg. Datin Sri Jamaliah Othman,  
Yang Di Pertua PUSPANITA, Malaysia

YBhg. Datin Sri Izdina Izaidin  
Chairman of PERWAKILAN, Malaysia

YBhg. Dato Nor'Aini Abdul Hamid  
Deputy Secretary General  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia

Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners and Members of Diplomatic  
Corps

Datuk-Datuk, dan Tuan Puan

Participants of IDFR Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) and  
Diploma in Diplomacy 2019,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

*Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*, Salam Sejahtera and a very good afternoon to everyone here.

1. On behalf of The Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR), I am pleased to extend a warm welcome to all of you, in Malaysian language, "*Selamat Datang*" to the fourth IDFR Cultural Appreciation Day (CAD) 2019. It is indeed a great privilege for IDFR to be welcome everybody to this CAD this year.

2. I wish to express our appreciation to the Honourable YB Senator Dato' Marzuki Yahya, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia who has agreed to grace once again this IDFR's Annual Event despite his busy schedule

3. It is going to be more memorable this year with the presence of YBhg. Datin Sri Jamaliah Othman, Yang Di Pertua of PUSPANITA.

4. I also wish to highlight the presence of YBhg. Datin Sri Izdina Izaidin, Chairman of PERWAKILAN

5. Also the presence of YBhg. Dato' NorAini Abd Hamid, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and senior officers from Wisma Putra.

Ladies and Gentleman,

6. We are not able to host you at our institute this year due to major renovation work taking place from April until November this year.

3. This year marks the fourth year that IDFR is hosting the Cultural Appreciation Day, since it first took place in 2016. It celebrates not only the richness of several distinct world cultures, but also act as an essential platform for us to showcase cultural diversity. A way towards in bridging the gap among nations and in achieving lasting peace and sustainable development.

4. By placing culture at the heart of development policies, is one of the ways to ensure a human-centred, inclusive and equitable development. This is in line with Malaysia's commitment to the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs) and Agenda 2030 where safeguarding and promoting of culture will contribute directly to the 17 indicators in the SDGs — in ensuring safe and sustainable cities, decent work and economic growth, promoting gender equality and peaceful and inclusive societies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. Since its establishment in 1991, IDFR has been the training arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Not only it equips officers with the skills and knowledge to meet the challenges they may face in the conduct of their professional duties, but it also emphasizes on the importance of cultural diplomacy.

6. IDFR aspires to contribute substantively in the area of cultural diplomacy in deliberating, exposing, and exploring the intertwining elements in culture and diplomacy. For this purpose a special centre has been established in IDFR i.e. Centre for Languages and Cultural Diplomacy (CLCD) to reflect our commitment to become a premier reference point for cultural diplomacy in the country.

7. Our endeavour has been also been receiving good support from the Public Service Department. A few weeks ago, we sent two of our senior officers to Berlin to join other peoples of the same mind in convulsing ideas in making cultural diplomacy as the mainstream of diplomacy and at the same time building our own in house experts in this matter. This training was sponsored fully by the PSD.

8. This training also will help IDFR transformation plan that started in 2015 to move us from the training arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs into being a premier learning institute in diplomacy and foreign relations in the world.

9. In line with this aspiration, we proudly gather here today to celebrate the diversity of culture from different countries. The colourful booths set up in this hall today are by the current foreign participants from 27 countries of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) who are attending the *Intercultural Awareness and Diplomacy* and *Economic Diplomacy* Courses as well as our junior diplomats who are attending the Diploma in Diplomacy course.

11. On the same note, we bring to you a dancing troupe from the National Department for Culture and Arts and also the self defence association from Melaka with its Silat Pukul speciality to showcase a glimpse of Malaysia's culture and arts.

10. Before I end my welcoming remarks, would also like to express my joy and gratitude to see our friends from the diplomatic corps who took their time away to support their countries MTCP participants to also provide us an introduction to their equally rich culture and arts. Thank you to our friends.

11. As mentioned by our sweet MC who also happened to be the participant of the DiD 2019, culture do promote unity and diversity among peoples and nations and it is not complete without its appreciation. So once again welcome to IDFR Cultural Appreciation Day 2019 and enjoy the day.

Salam Hormat and

Thank you.