

**UCAPAN ALU-ALUAN  
YB DATO' SERI UTAMA DR RAIS YATIM  
MENTERI LUAR NEGERI  
DI MAJLIS PELANCARAN INSTITUT DIPLOMASI DAN HUBUNGAN  
ANTARABANGSA  
KUALA LUMPUR (IDFR)  
8 JANUARY 2009 JAM 10.30 PAGI  
YAB Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Perdana Menteri Malaysia**

**Yang Berhormat Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Menteri Hal-Ehwal  
Dalam Negeri**

**YBhg KSU Tan Sri Rastam Md Isa**

**Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen**

*Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh dan Salam Sejahtera!*

2. BAGI PIHAK warga Wisma Putra saya mengambil kesempatan ini mengalu-alukan kehadiran para jemputan serta dhief-dhef kehormat ke **MAJLIS Perasmian dan PELANCARAN INSTITUT DIPLOMASI DAN HUBUNGAN ANTARABANGSA** serta majlis Pelancaran semula Tabung Bantuan Kemanusiaan Palestin pada pagi ini. Terima kasih dan penghargaan khas kita tujukan kepada YAB Datuk Seri Perdana Menteri yang sudi bersama-sama kita di pagi yang penuh makna ini untuk melancarkan kedua-dua majlis tersebut. Begitu juga penghargaan disampaikan kepada rakan saya Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, bekas Menteri Luar, bekas-bekas ketua misi dan duta, para pegawai dan rakan-rakan Wisma Putra.

3. Kehadiran YAB Datuk Seri Perdana Menteri di majlis ini amat besar ertinya - bukan setakat beliau selaku ketua satu kerajaan kita, tetapi juga lantaran jasa baik dan pandangan jauh beliau maka terhasil **INSTITUT DIPLOMASI DAN HUBUNGAN ANTARABANGSA** ini. Agak tepat jika saya ibaratkan berada dan bersamanya beliau di IDFR pada pagi ini adalah ibarat *belut pulang ke lumpur, pinang pulang ke tampuk dan sirih pulang ke gagang*. Kita dapat bayangkan pelbagai laluan peristiwa yang beliau alami di Institut ini semasa ia sebagai Kementerian Luar Negeri Malaysia atau dengan nama popularnya Wisma Putra. Seseorang yang pernah berkhidmat di sesebuah institusi barang sudah tentu sedia mengenang liku-liku

pengalaman pahit-manis dan suka-duka yang dilalui. Bak kata pepatah - *tempat jatuh lagi di kenang, Inikan pula tempat bermain*. Bagi Pak Lah sebenarnya IDFR sebagai Wisma Putra lama adalah tempat naik dan meningkatkan karier. Saya katakan begitu kerana inilah kementerian yang menjadi batu loncatan bagi beliau untuk naik ke alam cakrawala kejayaan politik dan pentadbiran negara - khususnya dari Menteri Luar terus menjadi Timbalan Perdana Menteri dan sekarang Perdana Menteri Malaysia.

Sir, I do not know about Datuk Seri Syed Hamid, but speaking for myself - your stairway to the heavens and success is by no means an easy act to follow. By this sheer token alone this Ministry which we have come call Wisma Putra is very special indeed. And to have you here with us again this morning, short though the duration vaifable to us all, shall always remain a happy nostalgic episode -

The Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations, or IDFR in short, was established in July 1991 for the purpose of training and producing professional Malaysian diplomatic officers with specialised knowledge and skills so that they would be better able to chart, spearhead and conduct Malaysia's foreign policy. Originally placed under the Prime Minister's Department, and located in Petaling Jaya, IDFR officially became part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March 2004 and subsequently moved to its present campus and occupied the buildings that once housed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

4. I am pleased to say that over the years, IDFR had trained at least about 7,000 diplomats and other government officials dealing with international affairs. In keeping with Institute's aim of becoming a center of academic excellence both in the region and globally, more than half of those trained came from developing countries. IDFR conducts various courses on international relations and diplomacy, ranging from diplomatic practice, strategic and security analysis, crisis management, negotiation, public diplomacy, international law, and foreign languages. Since 1999 it also offers a Masters programme in Strategy and Diplomacy in collaboration with

the National University of Malaysia (UKM) which has thus far produced 103 Masters Graduates. Besides conducting courses, the Institute also undertakes research and publication activities as well as organising a series of Public Lectures by visiting foreign leaders and round-table discussions on regional and international issues involving leading experts.

5. The Institute is expanding the scope of its training courses as well as upgrading existing ones, a move I have myself given particular encouragement and push. This is important given the many demands and challenges on the diplomatic front in the future and the importance of equipping our diplomats with expertise and skills, particularly in negotiations, public diplomacy and languages. I have also encouraged IDFR that in addition to conducting its current training courses, it should build up its strength and reputation in a few "niche" areas for which it will be better known such as training of foreign languages.

6. We are pleased that IDFR has established strategic linkages with other diplomatic academies of a number of countries as well as universities and research institutions, both locally and abroad. The Institute participates actively in the Vienna-based annual International Meetings of the Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Training Academies, as well as the annual meetings of ASEAN+3 diplomatic academies at the regional level. These linkages have widened its network of contacts and collaboration and enhanced its image and reputation internationally.

***Excellencies and Distinguished Guests,***

7. I should like to mention here that the Hon'ble Prime Minister himself has been closely associated with the establishment of IDFR. It was soon after he assumed the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1991 that the Institute was set up in July of that year. Obviously, the Prime Minister believed then, as he does now, in the importance of the establishment of a diplomatic academy for the training of our diplomatic officers who could serve the country more effectively. He went on to serve in that post for about

nine years, a service period that has been upped only by Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar who served a slight tinge surpassing that of his boss; and during that period the PM handled a number of critical issues on the foreign policy front, such as those relating to the East Asia Economic Grouping, or Caucus, the dispute over the Spratly Islands, the First Gulf War, the expansion of ASEAN, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina in which Malaysia played a peace-keeping role, and the end of the Cold War, among others.

Indeed, after assuming the premiership the Prime Minister became more actively involved in international affairs in his capacity as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and Chairman of the Summit of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), among others. The challenges he had to deal with as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister in the international arena only strengthened his conviction in the importance of skilful diplomacy in advancing the national interests, and hence, the imperative of providing training of the highest quality to our diplomats. It therefore came as no surprise that upon assuming the premiership he expressed his desire to see the further development of IDFR as a centre of excellence and a leading diplomatic training institute in the region, a goal that is now being actively pursued by the Institute with his keen encouragement and support. Therefore, in more ways than one the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations is one of the lasting legacies of the YAB Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, for which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IDFR are forever grateful to him.

*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
YAB Datuk Seri*

10. Although I preceded you in becoming FM briefly in 1986-1987, and although I managed to put up that Wisma Putra marble slab at the spot where you entered the main entrance, it has been you who have left a lasting mark and legacy in these premises of diplomacy training. The roundtable Treaty Room is still there as intact as when you left it many seasons ago. On the internal walls of this historic premises are hung

photographs of our leaders in action with respect to diplomatic duties and activities. From the Tunku to Tun Abdul Razak; from Tun Dr. Ismail and Tun Hussein Onn to Tun Dr. Mahathir and you Sir the depictions of our collective struggle are there for every one to see and evaluate. As we graduated from South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) to ASEAN; from Malaya to Malaysia and beyond - this Ministry has over the decades recorded and maintained the struggle to champion our various foreign policies. Allow me to say Datuk Seri, you yourself have played a premier role in shaping our foreign policies. In your role as as a former FM and now as as premier you have planned the work and indeed worked the plan in a way that it now avails to us a path well laid out and a vision well thought of.

In parting, a word of thanks to Tan Sri Hasmy Agam and his staff, Tan Sri Rastam and his usual gang of doers. With above words of introduction, it now gives me great pleasure to invite YAB Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, our beloved Prime Minister, to deliver his Keynote Address and to declare open the new campus of Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations and concomitantly relaunch the **Tabung Bantuan Kemanusiaan Palestin.**

Di persilakan dengan segala hormatnya YAB Datuk Seri.