

WELCOMING REMARKS
BY
YBHG. DATO' RAMLAN IBRAHIM, SECRETARY GENERAL
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MALAYSIA
AT
THE ROYAL ADDRESS, IDFR, 12 JULY 2017

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarokatuh dan Salam Sejahtera.

Mengadap Duli Yang Maha Mulia Paduka Seri Sultan Perak Darul Ridzuan Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah Ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfur-lah

Ampun Tuanku Beribu Ampun Sembah Patik Mohon diampun.

Patik bagi pihak Kementerian Luar Negeri dengan penuh hormat dan takzimnya merafak sembah menjunjung setinggi kasih di atas limpah perkenan Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku sudi mencemar duli berangkat ke Majlis Titah Diraja 2017 pada pagi yang sungguh permai ini.

Sesungguhnya Patik dan para diplomat merasa terharu di atas keberangkatan Duli Tuanku ke majlis ini. Tentunya ini akan menjadi kenangan kepada patik sekalian.

Ampun Tuanku,

Patik pohon limpah perkenan Duli Tuanku untuk patik turut mengalu-alukan para hadirin sekalian.

Duli-Duli Yang Teramat Mulia kerabat di Raja Perak,

Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Seri Diraja Dr. Zambry Abdul Kadir
Menteri Besar Perak Darul Ridzuan,

Yang Berbahagia Orang Besar – Orang Besar Jajahan Perak,

Yang Berbahagia Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany
Ketua Pengarah Institut Diplomasi dan Hubungan Luar Negeri,

Pesuruhjaya Tinggi dan Duta Besar

Dif-Dif Kehormat, Tuan-Tuan dan Puan-Puan yang dihormati sekalian.

Ampun Tuanku,

Izinkan patik berucap dalam Bahasa Inggeris.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is delighted to welcome His Royal Highness the Sultan of Perak Darul Ridzuan and all distinguished guests to the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations today. We are indeed honoured and privileged to have His Royal Highness grace our occasion as the Royal Patron of IDFR at this second *Royal Address*.
2. It goes without saying that the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations or IDFR is a pivotal part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. IDFR serves as the Ministry's training arm to provide our diplomats with skills and training in broad areas of diplomacy, foreign relations and foreign languages.
3. In today's world of shifting polarities, globalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the state of global affairs is evolving rapidly. Diplomacy in the 21st century is interwoven with relentless advances in technology and innovation. The evolution of traditional and non-traditional threats and opportunities will continue to gather pace.
4. These compel us to be better prepared to surmount the daunting path ahead. To do this, we need to focus on our most valuable asset - our diplomats, they must be equipped with the right skills and knowledge to prevail.

5. In scanning the horizon and reorient us toward the future, IDFR's role needs to transform from its present conventional training centre into a Centre of Excellence. Although this endeavour is currently being pursued under IDFR's Transformation Programme, initiated in 2015, it must remain adaptable to changing needs. The programme is aimed at enhancing the institute's focus, depth and breadth of key areas in diplomacy and international relations. The programme also seeks to foster excellence in IDFR's research development, collaboration and output. The Institute will reinforce the role of and relationships between research, researchers and practitioners. The Institute welcomes innovative ideas particularly as the nation sets to redefine its agenda under TN50.

6. Towards this end, we have also grown our pool of researchers. We have 17 now in various disciplines such as Political Studies; Economic Diplomacy; Leadership; Negotiation; Public Diplomacy; Languages; Cultural Diplomacy; and Competency Enhancement. These disciplines must be in sync with our future roles to execute our national aspirations.

7. Given the increasingly complex global affairs today, change is a constant factor in our strive to remain effective in meeting the expectation of our stakeholders. The institute encourages the birth of ideas; act as a catalyst for debates and enrich discourses. We have established linkages with both local universities and foreign institutions. We have also worked with our foreign training counterparts. These efforts are designed to create the best practitioner-academic curriculum for our diplomats to learn, emulate, adapt and apply.

8. Malaysia has much to celebrate in our foreign policy successes over the years. The more recent achievements include our successes as ASEAN Chair in 2015; our term as a Non-Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council in 2015-16, our increasingly substantive relations with our international partners and our ability to project a voice of moderation in all our diplomatic engagements. We will continue to look at the world in a clear eyed manner and examine it through a wider aperture.

9. Hence, our diplomatic service must invite, nurture and retain talents that are highly skilled and self driven for Malaysia to successfully deal with the threats,

opportunities and challenges of today. There is no place for complacency. Today is an age of information-overload and 24/7 real time news. We require Foreign Service officers who can digest and effectively analyse information – to separate the wheat from the chaff. They must possess a high level of intelligence and operating know-how to discern facts and produce recommendations in a timely manner.

10. The steep demands placed on the Ministry require us to equip our diplomats with the right knowledge and tools to successfully protect and promote Malaysia's interests abroad. A mission, we must keenly look forward to accomplish it.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. Let me once again express my sincerest appreciation to His Royal Highness and other distinguished guests for being here today.

Thank You.

Menjunjung Kasih Tuanku.