

OPENING REMARKS

BY Y.B. DATO' SERI AZMI KHALID
CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE PREPAREDNESS
TOWARDS POLICY CHANGES, 11 SEP 2007, NIKKO HOTEL

Y. Bhg. Datuk Dr. Richard Leete,
Resident Representative
United Nations Development Programme for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei

Y. Bhg Ms. Loo Took Gee
Deputy Secretary General
Ministry of Energy, Water and Communications

Y. Bhg. Dato' Syed Hamzah Syed Othman,
Chairman
Energy Center of Malaysia
Mr. Marcel Alers,
Climate Change Manager,
UNDP GEF New York,

Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen

Salam Sejahtera dan Selamat Pagi,

First of all I would like to thank the organizers and UNDP Malaysia, for inviting me to open this highly significant event. I have also been informed that a knowledge product on Malaysia's effort in implementing renewable energy projects, titled "Malaysia's Generating Power from Palm Oil Wastes", an initiative by UNDP with our partners in Ministry of Energy, Water and Communications (MEWC) and Energy Centre of Malaysia will be also launched today.

2. I was told that more than 200 participants are here representing various sectors and will discuss issues on Climate Change especially related to policy changes needed. I am very pleased to note from the overwhelming participation today. The conduct of this event comes amidst the recent concern over crucial climatic changes and global warming issues. In Malaysia, the impact of the global warming is somewhat felt in the recent drastic weather changes that brought about heavy rainfalls and floods.

3. Although the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is the UNFCCC focal point, concerted efforts by all stakeholders are important and necessary to assess and address the issue of climate change in Malaysia. The ministry is also undertaking a Second National Communication (NC2) with a purpose not only to inform to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) but also to assist the process of mainstreaming environmental component into our policy making process. From the onset, we should be very clear that the nature of climate change cross-cut all sectors and therefore, requires inter Ministerial and inter-agencies approach.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. Recent drastic weather changes and incidents warrant certain measures to be taken in order to mitigate and adapt to the global warming. Human activities such as land clearing, fossil fuel combustion for example burning of coal, oil and natural gas in meeting our energy requirements, release carbon dioxide gas into the atmosphere. Rising global temperatures are expected to raise sea level, increase evaporation, changes precipitation pattern and other local climate.

5. It could also affect human health, animals, and many types of ecosystems. To protect the health and economic well-being of our current and future generations, we must look for ways on how to mitigate our emissions through conscientious activities that will take cognizance of the impact of our activities on the environment.

6. Climate change mitigation involves taking actions aimed at reducing the sources of the Green House Gases (GHG). In Malaysia, the fossil fuel combustion mainly comes from power generation and from the transport sectors. Efforts have been ongoing by public and private sectors and thanks also to our colleagues in Ministry of Energy Water and Communication and its agency Energy Centre of Malaysia for taking the lead. Renewable energy (RE) development offers the country a long-term solution in terms of both security and sustainability of our energy needs. Efforts will continue to be undertaken by Malaysian government to manage both depleting and renewable energy sources to cater for the demands of a rapidly growing economy.

7. In our aspiration to become a developed nation by the year 2020, economic growth, competitiveness and dynamism will be pursued with equal opportunity, social equity, inclusion including better quality of life. The quality of human capital will be upgraded as it is a key determinant in the achievement of the plan's goal and objectives. The quest to attain developed nation status can only be achieved through commitment and contribution of everyone.

8. Under 9th Malaysia Plan, new sources of energy such as solar and wind will be developed with an emphasis on utilising cost-effective technology as well as strengthening capacity building. In this regard, efforts will be undertaken to coordinate R&D activities of the various energy related research centre. In addition, activities under the road map on solar, hydrogen and fuel cells such as technology development and knowledge sharing will be implemented while financing mechanism will be explored. Initiatives to enhance local capabilities in the development of indigenous RE-based technologies as new sources of growth will also be supported.

9. Efforts to promote the development of biofuel using palm oil as a renewable source of energy have been undertaken by the Malaysian government in line with the initiative to make Malaysia a world leader and hub for palm oil. Designated pump stations, to supply diesel blended with 5% palm oil olein has already commence operation in 2006. For the initial phase, the blended diesel will be utilized by vehicle of selected government agencies.

10. Malaysia has also benefited from the Kyoto Protocol. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol, which is one of three innovative flexibility mechanisms to lower the overall costs of achieving emissions targets. So far the ministry has given 31 host country approval and 16 projects have been registered to the CDM executive board. I strongly believe, the pioneers of CDM in Malaysia shall be commended for willing to take the risk and provide innovative pathways for others to replicate.

11. Adaptation on the other hand, is a necessary strategy to complement climate change mitigation efforts because we cannot be sure that all climate change can be mitigated.

Adaptation strategies for Malaysia are required to prepare the nation for this phenomenon and to a large extent; these will have to be implemented on a sectoral basis. However, a more integrated approach will be taken in planning and development programmes to reduce the impact of disasters and strengthen coordination between ministries and its agencies, non-government organizations and other stakeholders including the community. Thus, it is imperative that the existing land use system and its mechanism be understood by the relevant agencies and the public to ensure its effectiveness, especially in producing risk maps for vulnerable areas. I sincerely hope the NC2 project will address the issue on the data collection and suitable adaptation strategies in Malaysia.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

13. To UNDP/GEF and other donor countries, please accept our warm appreciation for your unstinted generosity. Malaysia is indeed grateful for your financial and technical assistance and support. I understand that there are a number of projects under climate change areas that are being implemented by UNDP and the Ministry of Energy Water and Communication and Energy Centre of Malaysia with the funding from the government, Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the private sectors.

14. Further more, the government is working currently working with UNDP and other government agencies to design new programme of projects for 2006-2010 under the new GEF Resources Allocation Framework. Among the new projects proposed includes the enhancement of the National Physical Plan (NPP), governing of protected areas and energy efficiency in building.

15. In international negotiations, recommendations provided by this conference, will greatly assist us in preparing the country especially for the coming 13th Conference of Parties (COP) to be held in Bali this December and the next year United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development Review Session meeting to be held next May 2008.

16. On that note, I like to conclude by thanking all of you for your participation and the contribution you have made and will make towards a speedier development of the national policies on climate change. I also like to thank all relevant Government agencies, Non-Government organizations and the private sector for their support and cooperation. Special

thanks to UNDP and its supporting partners Global Environment Facility (GEF), MEWC and Energy Centre of Malaysia for organizing this event.

Without further ado, I officially open this conference.

Thank you.