

**WELCOMING SPEECH BY D.Y.T.M. TUANKU RAJA MUDA PERLIS
CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA PERLIS (UniMAP)
AT THE OFFICIAL DINNER HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH
THE VISIT BY UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
INTERNATIONAL PANEL MEMBERS
AT THE ISTANA ARAU,
27th AUGUST 2007**

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Dengan nama Allah Yang Maha Pemurah Lagi
Maha Mengasihani.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and a very good evening.

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, Raja Puan Muda Perlis and I would like to wish Selamat Datang
or Welcome and Welcome to Perlis! Especially to the Chairman and all the
representatives and guests from the United Nations Environment
Programme or in short UNEP. As you know, we are gathered here tonight,
essentially to commemorate the close cooperation between UNEP and the
Universiti Malaysia Perlis or UniMAP. This cooperation marks another
milestone of friendly relationship between us. We are indeed very pleased
to undertake collaborative research and development activities with your
organisation with such an excellent reputation and international
recognition in those areas. Hopefully, through such collaboration in the
field of environmental research and development, we would be able to
contribute as much as we could to the welfare and well-being of the world.

2. I must thank and congratulate all those involved for their efforts and
commitments in organising this significant meeting especially for those

who are involved in choosing Perlis as part of your program. We are indeed very fortunate to have so many great minds from around the globe, here in Arau tonight and in Penang, to deliberate on substantial environmental issues that concern all mankind worldwide. Considering the fact that your visit to this region is to open up new perception as well as promoting efforts between UNEP and UniMAP on the subject, it is my sincere hope as the Chancellor of UniMAP that some new promising resolutions could be initiated jointly so that it would bring about benefits to both our organisations. In addition, I must say that there are many potential areas that UNEP and UniMAP could work together in our attempt to address the immediate environmental issues facing the world, particularly issues related to global warming and climatic change.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. In this brief welcoming speech, I sense that it is rather incomplete if some short account on Malaysia is not made known to you officially. Malaysia gained our Independence on the 31st of August in 1957. Since then our country has experienced a wonderful, astonishing and impressive development I must say. Today, Malaysia is known as a place of culture, tolerance, stability, and growing wealth as you may have already witnessed personally by now. In 1957 (yes its in 4 days tide), Our leaders then knew that Independence meant, all the more, being able to earn a living on its own . This called for an economy capable of providing jobs and a decent livelihood for its population.

4. In only 50 years, Malaysia has proven itself to the world with amazing achievements, where the people are able to live in harmony despite differences in our language, culture and religion. And with common

goals, Malaysia has developed to be one of the strongly emerging nations of the world. Not only the architectural world knows the Petronas Twin Towers and KLIA, not only world of sports recognises the Malaysian government's and agencies' perfect organisations of annual Formula 1 racing and other top end sporting events. And right now tonight we try our best in hosting our guests from U.N.E.P. Hence, Malaysia is on the global radar as a success story.

5. And what about Perlis, Ladies and Gentlemen? Perlis is the smallest state in Malaysia with a size of 764 square kilometers located in northernmost state of Peninsular Malaysia, It shares a common border with The Kingdom of Thailand in the north, and its neighbouring state Kedah, in the south. Of course, it is separated from Northern Sumatra (if you remember Tsunami) by the Straits of Malacca on the west coast. Agriculture is the main economic activity. However, as a long term development strategy, the state government had put in several efforts to diversify the economy by focusing into secondary and tertiary sector as the future engine of economic growth. Islam is the official religion but other religions are also practiced. It has a total population of about 220,000 people consisting mainly Malay, Chinese, Indian and other races including Thai descendents. Although we are living in a multi-racial society, strong solidarity and unity among the races and the people have made us more cohesive and committed towards fulfilling our country's objective of becoming a developed nation by the year 2020.

6. Ladies and gentlemen,

I understand that due to the limited time you have in Perlis, we do not have the opportunity to show you around some of our attractive tourist spots.

Hopefully, your short trip here tonight will provide you with a little insight of what Perlis has to offer. We would be very grateful if all of you could bring back home your sweet experiences and memories and share them with your relatives and friends.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. Well, I don't mean to prolong my welcoming speech and keeping you all waiting for dinner. Therefore, in conclusion, I would like to once again, thank all of you for extending your travel to visit Perlis tonight although you may have other important business plans to attend to. I hope all of you will have a short, pleasant and memorable stay in Malaysia in general, and Perlis in particular. I wish all of you, all the best and have a safe and pleasant journey back to Penang and later back to your home respectively. Last but not least, I would like to thank all the officials from UNEP and UniMAP especially the Vice Chancellor of UniMAP for making this trip possible and meaningful. Presumably, the platform have been established and I hope that the friendship that has been fostered during the last couple of days will continue to flourish through intellectual discourses and exchange of ideas done virtually or otherwise long after this dinner is over.

Thank you very much for all the support. Please enjoy your dinner and enjoy the rest of the evening.

Thank you.

Sekian. Wabillahi taufik walhidayah wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.