

SPEECH FOR
BRIG. GEN. DATO' PROF DR. KAMARUDIN HUSSIN
UniMAP VICE CHANCELLOR
For
IEC OCTOBER INTAKE COURSE COMPLETION DINNER
21st MARCH 2013* PUTRA PALACE HOTEL

Salutation

**Prof. Dr. Zul Azhar Zahid Jamal,
Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic & Internationalization**

**Puan Saodah Hassan
Bursar of UniMAP**

**Mr. Zuber Hj Mohammad,
Acting Registrar of UniMAP**

**Y.Bhg. Datin Noridah Yangman
President of PISKANITA**

**Prof. Dr. Harshita Aini Haroon
Director, Centre for International Languages**

Professors, Deans & Head of Departments

Staff and students,

Ladies & Gentlemen

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and a very good evening to all my distinguished guests and students. Alhamdulillah, all praise to Allah the Almighty, that it is with His Blessings and Will that we are able to gather here this evening for the International English Course Completion Dinner for the October Intake students.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. The International English Course (IEC) serves as a feeder for UniMAP degree programmes and we have been offering it since 2009. For its first intake, we only had 30 students from China, in particular from the Xinjiang district. From then on, however, we have been seeing steady growth. The second intake witnessed an increase in the number of students; which included 30 students from Yemen, who became the pioneer for students from the Middle East.
2. With time, the number of students increased to a range of 40 to 60 students per intake. With the increase in student numbers, we also saw an increase in the number of countries from which the students originate. I am happy to note that tonight we will witness 107 students from 14 countries receiving their certificate of completion and 107, ladies and gentlemen, is the largest number of students we have had in IEC history.
3. However, the best is yet to come. It has come to my attention that for the next intake, which will commence this April, we expect to receive 136 students for the IEC programme. This is indeed notable growth and I am very pleased with this progress.

Ladies and Gentleman

4. The importance of effective communication is there for all to see. We all accept it. And in this day and age, the importance of effective communication in English, too, does not lend itself to much debate. While I am happy that this group of students are completing their programme of study, I would also like to remind the students, and all of us here, that learning is a lifelong endeavour, and in learning, there is no such thing as completion. There will always be new things to learn, new adventures, new discoveries. And the same applies with language learning. Any six-month language course will not make you (or anyone for that matter) a perfect speaker in the language that is learnt. So, while you have completed the duration of the course, I ask of all the students, please promise me that you will not accept that your learning of English is complete. I hope the IEC programme has made you want to learn more, know more of the language, and use it more.

5. I am also happy to note that the presence of the international students in UniMAP, and in tonight's case, the IEC students, has added spice and value to the state of Perlis generally, and to UniMAP specifically. If someone were to tell me ten years ago, that apart from the Thai nationals from across the border, Perlis would one day have, in its midst, warm, friendly people, for example, from Yemen, Uzbekistan, Somalia and Sudan, I would never have believed them in a million years! But this is what we have now. Our international students have enriched an already multicultural, multilingual Perlis, adding that international flavour that can only help mobilise Perlis towards becoming an active global community member. And for that, I sincerely thank our international students. Since all of Perlis cannot go international, to have the international world come to us is indeed exciting and very much welcome.

My dear students,

6. I hope that you will strive to do your best in your future undergraduate studies, as you have done in IEC. On the part of UniMAP, we have given you the best we can. However, I am a true believer in continuous improvement, and as rapidly as the world evolves everyday, the same is expected of the services that we provide to our students.
7. Continuous improvement has always been the main agenda for UniMAP in all aspects. And while we have come very far, the road ahead is still full of exciting challenges. Although relatively young, UniMAP has managed to become the best Technical University as evident in the D-Setara rating recently announced. And to quote the Prime Minister: "There is no 5 star hotel in Perlis, however, there is a 5 star university...and that university is UniMAP."
8. In terms of facilities, we are aggressively developing, as evident through the rapid development in Pauh Putra and the UniCity campus. In addition, we are continuously working to ensure that our programmes are of the highest standards, using international practices as our benchmarks. We believe that the student learning experience should help make them active global citizens. Therefore, we provided platforms for our international students for such purposes, such as Educational Trips to Gua Kelam and Padang Besar, and also to Penang. Some of you were also involved in the International Soft Skills and Leadership Camp (ISOL), co-organised by UniMAP and NPRU (Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University). As ambassadors for your country, it is my hope that your presence here will signify the beginnings of a strong international network with Malaysia, and to further strengthen existing ties.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. This evening I was informed that we are going to launch two books published by the staff of Centre for International Languages. It is certainly a good effort and certainly goes in tandem with the objective of forming the centre. Our vision is to see the centre grows into a reference entity for languages and help enhance language mastery for our community. When I met the Prime Minister during his visit earlier this month, he was very excited to see that we have many language versions for our corporate video. I wish that more research and publications especially in English and other languages like Korean, German, Japanese, Mandarin, Thai, Arabic and many more. I was also told that a new staff from Uzbekistan will arrive tomorrow and hopefully she will be able to help us in offering Russian language next semester.

10. The Centre of International Languages has come a long way since its establishment, in the beginning with PKKK and recently PTKPI. Over the year we have seen the team of language staff grew in terms of number and their capability. We feel that it is high time that the language team are grouped in one entity and hopefully we can streamline the expertise and become more focused in terms of academic, research as well as community service. We acknowledge the all round contribution of the language staff especially in our internationalization efforts. My hope is that the Centre for International Languages to groom and continue its excellent contribution. This evening we will have a pre launching ceremony of CIL and we will look for a better avenue to officially launch this centre soon.

11. Last but not least, to all students who have completed the IEC programme, please accept my heartfelt congratulations, on behalf of UniMAP, and all my best wishes to you in your studies and future undertakings.

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