SPEECH BY
KOL. PROF. DATO' DR. KAMARUDIN HUSSIN,
UniMAP's VICE CANSELOR
CERTIFICATE CEREMONY FOR UniMAP-INDUSTRY DINNER
ON 18 APRIL 2008,
AT DEWAN TABUNG HAJI, PENANG.

Bismillahir-rahmanir-rahim

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh and salam sejahtera.

My respected colleague Prof. Dr. Ali Yeon Md. Shakaff, UniMAP's Deputy Vice Canselor (Academic and International),

My respected colleague Prof. Madya Dr. Zul Azhar Zahid Jamal, UniMAP's Deputy Vice Canselor (Research and Inovation),

UniMAP's Senior Management Officials,

UniMAP's deans of engineering schools, heads of departments,

Vice President / Managing Director Agilent Technologies (M) Sdn. Bhd., Madam Shidah Ahmad.

Our distinguished CEO'S and representatives from the Malaysian industry,

Most respected members of the media, and

UniMAP staff and students

I am most grateful to Allah, the most gracious and most merciful, for His blessings in giving us this opportunity gather this evening on the occasion of UniMAP-Industry Night 2008. This dinner is a show of appreciation and to pay

due recognition and acknowledgement to UniMAP's partners -- the Malaysian industry -- for their endless and continual support to the University. It is my great pleasure to welcome all of you, the Malaysian industry community to this humble yet pleasant dinner. Let us give a round of applause to our distinguished guests.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I feel highly delighted and honored to be amongst you. I am very pleased that after six years since our establishment, UniMAP has successfully conducted various programs, and has received similar co-operation from members of the industry, be it giant multinational companies, or small and medium business entities.

Walking down memory lane, we have started with only 2 courses during year of establishment in 2002. Today, we could stand tall with 16 degree and 6 diploma programs. Another three more degree programs will be introduced in the coming academic year of 2008/09 – Biosystems Engineering, Photonics Engineering and Building Engineering; and a Polymer Engineering Mixed-Mode Master Program. Moving forward, another 4 more degree programs – Network System Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Plant Operation Engineering, and Power Engineering; together with 5 masters by mixed mode program will be introduced simultaneously in the following year. These programs are not done out of haste. Prior to approval, proper surveys on the demand of these courses are thoroughly analyzed with the input from members of the industry like yourselves, ladies and gentlemen, before the proposal is tabled out and hotly debated within our committees and stakeholders.

In the arena of Research and Development, UniMAP has been granted almost 100 new research grants worth about 9.5 million ringgit in 2007. This has

boosted enrollment of postgraduate students and research publications. The standard of UniMAP's research projects has also not been unnoticed locally and internationally, with successful bagging of Gold Medals in International Research Exhibitions such as IWIS, IENA, EUREKA, ITEX and PeCIPTA. UniMAP has also successfully organized various Technical Conferences, both at the national and international levels. The Institute of Engineering Mathematics have been established to further spur research and development activities within this year. In addition, the Ministry has just approved the Institute of Nanotechnology yesterday. This institute will no doubt spearhead research in this area in the coming years.

Being one of the four Focused Universities in Malaysia, UniMAP emphasizes very much on the practical-oriented aspect of engineering, which have been very much a success story to us. Our first batch of students was almost 100% employed by their time of graduation, and our programs have also received full five years accreditation from the Engineering Accreditation Council, EAC. Even though the accreditation process has been much delayed, today, the second batch of courses too, has also received similar recognition. We are happy to announce that within a month after graduation, 85% of over 600 graduates from 10 Engineering majors have already been employed in various sectors. Out of this number, more than 80% is working in the private sector; another 11% in the government sector and the rest are either furthering their study or building up on their business as entrepreneurs. Believe me, ladies and gentlemen, that we would not have been where we are now, not without you, members of the industry, and owe it to your tremendous support and advice. This is not UniMAP's success alone, but it is our achievement as part of a dynamic team.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Considering the industry as the receiving end, it is our objective to produce graduates who are of "readily-employable quality". To avoid our curriculum from being hollow and outdated, UniMAP has always arranged periodic curriculum reviews, which is conducted to ensure relevancy of our course materials and scope are aligned to the current needs of the industry. We are also proud that subject matter experts from the industry are willing to participate in these exercises. For instance, in the recent curriculum review exercise by the School of Computer and Communication, we have had technical advice from senior engineers and managers from various members of the industry such as Agilent Technologies, Significant Technologies, Celcom, Sapura, and Motorola Technology Penang.

The other effective mechanism which has generated much industry involvement in UniMAP is our Guest Industrial Lecturer scheme. Industrial Lecturer Scheme has been successful with technical staffs from various organizations traveling to our campus to deliver lectures, which emphasize on the application of important theories in the industry of today. I am grateful that our students' International Study Abroad Program has also been very much supported and recognized by the industry. Agilent Technologies, perhaps our closest industry partner, for example, has contributed about USD 15 000 over two years to UniMAP's Center for International Affairs in support of the cost incurred for this initiative. In addition, they also contributed much for a programme entitled 'UniMAP CaSTLE' which is run by the School of Microelectronic Engineering.

I extend my highest and sincere gratitude to Agilent and to all who are able to join us in enriching our students' industrial and academic experiences.

In addition to that, with at least 50% of UniMAP's teaching staff having industrial experience prior to them working here, I am sure the students stand a very good chance of learning all there is to learn about work in the industry. This is not to mention that UniMAP has the best equipment in its teaching labs – especially for the use of students everyday. Our investment in this area is acknowledged by many parties, including the Malaysian Engineering Accreditation Council, and various local and overseas visitors. Indeed, UniMAP has devoted much time and money to build up its teaching infrastructure that parallels those in use in the industry itself. However, ladies and gentlemen, I believe there is always room for improvement. I urge you, member of the industry, to pay our labs visits, and perhaps contribute in terms of improvement ideas and physical facilities so that we may bring the standard and facilities of our labs closely correlated to those which you have in yours, all for the best of our students and Malaysia's human capital development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since the introduction of the Industrial Training Program (InTra) in the last four years, we have received a lot of positive comments from you. Among them are the outstanding skills and confidence demonstrated by our student during their stay in the industry. This has no doubt been made possible through our rigorous academic curricular that pay much attention to the development of skills that suit the needs of today's industry.

Spearheading the industrial-related initiatives, the Centre for Industrial Collaboration (CIC), headed by Assoc Prof Mohd Shuid Salleh, has to this end aggressively organized various activities, which have been proven effective and beneficial. For students, we have Industrial Training program (InTra), Industrial Technical Lecturer (InTeLect), which I have mentioned earlier, while the Industrial Exposure program (IndEx), and Engineering Entrepreneurial Program

(IndEnt), are also organized for students in their earlier years of tertiary education to boost an early head-start into their engineering learning curve. We have also recently concluded our Career and Entrepreneurship Carnival 2008, which was the highlight of our on-campus, industry-related activity. More than 10 on-campus interviews has been conducted by different companies thus far this year, and the Carnival provided the platform for another 8 more companies in their hunt for our graduates. In addition to the programs that I mentioned, I welcome further suggestions to collaborate with UniMAP in different research or industrial programs.

Come this June, UniMAP will produce its third batch of engineers consisting of another 700 graduates from 10 different Engineering Majors. With that, it is my hope members of the industry, represented by our distinguished guests in this hall today, will employ them upon their graduation. We firmly believe that they have much to offer. They have gone through rigorous training and education, and hence they should be able to make a lot of difference and contribution. I ask that they be given the opportunity to do so.

Lastly, may I ask that we work hand-in-hand in our effort to develop the appropriate human capital with first class mentality that this country and the world needs. With your continued support and interest in us, I am sure that the quest of making UniMAP a world class university is not going to be impossible to achieve.

Before I end, I would like to thank the organizing committee of this event for their superb drive in making this dinner a success. With that, ladies and gentlemen, let us enjoy our dinner. Thank you.

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi taala wabarakatuh and blessings to all of you.