

SPEECH BY LT. KOL. PROF. DATO' DR. KAMARUDIN HUSSIN, KUKUM'S RECTOR AT THE OPENING OF THE 'FIRST INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ARTIFICIAL LIFE AND ROBOTICS' ON 14 MAY 2005 AT PUTRA PALACE HOTEL.

BISMILLAH HIRRAHMAN NIRRAHIM - IN THE NAME OF GOD, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL.

ASSALAMUALAIKUM WARAHMATULLAHI TAALA WABARAKATUH AND A VERY GOOD MORNING.

YANG BERBAHAGIA PROF. DR. ALI YEON MD. SHAKAFF, KUKUM'S DEPUTY RECTOR OF ACADEMIC,

OUR DISTINGUISHED GUEST, PROF. DR. MASANORI SUGISAKA, FROM OITA UNIVERSITY, JAPAN,

OUR DISTINGUISHED GUEST, PROF. DR. CHUSAK LIMSAKUL, DEAN OF FACULTY OF ENGINEERING FROM PRINCE OF SONGKLA UNIVERSITY, THAILAND,

YANG BERUSAHA, PROF. DR. SAZALI YAACOB, KUKUM'S DEAN OF SCHOOL MECHATRONIC ENGINEERING,

KUKUM'S DEANS OF SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING,

MOST RESPECTED PROFESSORS, RESEARCHERS, PARTICIPANTS AND PRESENTERS,

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, GRATEFUL TO ALLAH, PRAISE TO HIM, THE MOST GRACIOUS AND MERCIFUL FOR HIS BLESSINGS IN GIVING US THIS OPPORTUNITY AND MOMENTS TO GATHER THIS MORNING AT THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ARTIFICIAL LIFE AND ROBOTICS WHICH IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY NORTHERN MALAYSIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND PRINCE OF SONGKLA UNIVERSITY, THAILAND.

ON BEHALF OF NORTHERN MALAYSIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING OR KUKUM, WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND OUR WARM WELCOME, 'SELAMAT DATANG' AND 'YIN DEE TON RUB' TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ARTIFICIAL LIFE AND ROBOTICS TO THIS BEAUTIFUL AND LOVELY STATE OF PERLIS, SMALL YET ALLURING.

I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND MY SINCERE CONGRATULATION TO THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE LED BY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. MOHD RIZON JUHARI, KUKUM'S DEAN OF POSTGRADUATE AND HIS COUNTERPART FROM PRINCE OF SONGKLA UNIVERSITY OF THAILAND FOR THEIR SUPERB ORGANISATION IN MAKING THIS CONFERENCE A SUCCESSFUL ONE.

WITHOUT A GOOD CO-OPERATION, SYNERGY AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG YOU LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, BE IT FROM KUKUM OR PSU, THIS FIRST INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ARTIFICIAL LIFE AND ROBOTICS WILL PROBABLY STILL REMAIN AS PAPERWORK AND PERHAPS STORED IN THE ARCHIVES.

I MUST SAY HOW PROUD I AM FOR THE SUCCESS IN ORGANISING THIS CONFERENCE. IN ADDITION, THIS IS SURELY A MOMENTOUS AND HISTORIC EVENT IN MALAYSIA'S EDUCATION HALL OF FAME, AS IT IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN THIS COUNTRY SINCE INDEPENDENCE. KUDOS TO ALL ONCE AGAIN.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

ALLOW ME TO ADDRESS YOU A FEW WORDS ABOUT KUKUM; THE YOUNGEST PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN MALAYSIA. KUKUM IS ESTABLISHED AS A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING ON 25TH JULY, 2001. THE RECTOR AND DEPUTY RECTOR WERE OFFICIALLY APPOINTED IN FEBRUARY, 2002. KUKUM NOW HAS A WORKFORCE OF APPROXIMATELY 600 PEOPLE COMPRISING ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC STAFF AND 1,300 STUDENTS. KUKUM'S AIMS IS TO PRODUCE ENGINEERS WITH SOUND TECHNICAL SKILLS TO SUPPORT THE MALAYSIAN NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL PLAN.

KUKUM ADOPTS A PRACTICAL-ORIENTED APPROACH WHEREBY 60% OF OUR TIME STUDENTS ARE GUIDED IN LABORATORY SETTINGS, INCLUDING INDUSTRIAL EXPOSURE; WHILST THE REMAINING 40% IS SPENT ON FORMAL LECTURES. THIS FACILITATES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCY IN DESIGN AND ASSEMBLY OF PARTS, AS WELL AS THE ABILITY TO TEST, MAINTAIN, AND APPLY WHATEVER THEORETICAL CONCEPTS IMPARTED DURING LECTURE SESSIONS.

IN ADDITION, KUKUM STUDENTS ARE ALSO GROOMED TO BE COMPETENT AND CONFIDENT IN EXPLORING ENTREPRENEURIAL POSSIBILITIES UPON GRADUATION. OUR STUDENTS ALSO PARTICIPATE IN VARIOUS CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES WHICH HELP TO BUILD THEIR STRENGTH AND CHARACTER OUTSIDE OF THE ACADEMIC DOMAIN.

KUKUM GRADUATES ARE EXPECTED TO NOT ONLY EXHIBIT EXCELLENCE IN KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THEIR RESPECTIVE ACADEMIC FIELDS, BUT ARE ALSO PROFICIENT IN COMMUNICATION AND

ICT SKILLS, AS WELL AS POSSESSING UNSURPASSED TRAITS OF PROFESSIONALISM AND PATRIOTISM.

TO-DATE, THERE ARE TEN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS IN KUKUM AND TWO NEW COURSES WILL START SOON FOR THIS COMING INTAKE IN JULY, NAMELY MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AND PRODUCT DESIGN ENGINEERING. HOWEVER WE ARE STILL WAITING THE APPROVAL FROM THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO APPROVE OUR BIOPROCESS ENGINEERING PROGRAM. GOD'S WILLING.

LADIES AND GENTELMEN,

CZECHOSLOVAKIAN PLAYWRIGHT KAREL CAPEK WAS THE FIRST INDIVIDUAL TO INTRODUCE THE WORD ROBOT. IT COMES FROM THE CZECH LANGUAGE 'ROBOTA', WHICH MEANS TEDIOUS LABOUR. THERE IS NO PRECISE DEFINITION, BUT BY GENERAL AGREEMENT A ROBOT IS A PROGRAMMABLE MACHINE THAT IMITATES THE ACTIONS OR APPEARANCE OF AN INTELLIGENT CREATURE-USUALLY A HUMAN.

TO QUALIFY AS A ROBOT, A MACHINE HAS TO BE ABLE TO DO TWO THINGS. FIRST IS TO GET INFORMATION FROM ITS SURROUNDINGS AND SECONDLY IS TO DO SOMETHING PHYSICAL SUCH AS MOVE OR MANIPULATE OBJECTS.

PUBLIC FASCINATION WITH ROBOTICS PEAKED IN THE EARLY 80s, SPURRED IN PART BY MOVIES LIKE STAR WARS, WHICH FEATURED ROBOTS C3-PO AND R2-D2 AS HELPFUL SIDEKICKS TO THEIR HUMAN MASTERS. BUT INTERESTS SAGGED IN A NEW SHORT YEARS AS PEOPLE DISCOVERED THAT GETTING ROBOTS TO DO THINGS THAT WE THINK OF

AS EASY – LIKE MOVING ACROSS A CLUTTERED ROOM IS SURPRISINGLY DIFFICULT.

BUT WITH THE ADVANCEMENT OF TECHNOLOGIES, ROBOTS ARE PAINTING THE CARS AT FORD PLANTS, ASSEMBLING MILANO COOKIES FOR PEPPERIDGE FARMS, WALKING INTO LIVE VOLCANOES, DRIVING TRAINS IN PARIS AND DEFUSING BOMBS IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

AS TIME FLY AND THE TECHNOLOGIES BECAME MORE SOPHISTICATED, ROBOTS ARE GROW TOUGHER, NIMBLER AND SMARTER. TODAY'S ROBOTS ARE DOING MORE AND MORE THINGS WE CAN'T OR DON'T WANT TO DO.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

ALTHOUGH KUKUM IS ONLY THREE YEARS OLD AND BEING THE YOUNGEST PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN MALAYSIA, TO BE ABLE TO ORGANISE AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE LIKE THIS, IS A GREAT RECOGNITION. WE ARE PROUD TO BE PART OF THIS CONFERENCE AS IT IS PARALLEL TO OUR VISION TO BECOME A WORLD-CLASS ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTION IN ORDER TO PRODUCE PROMINENT LEADERS OF THE COUNTRY.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS WORKSHOP IS TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT FOR ARTIFICIAL LIFE AND ROBOTICS, WHICH ARE RELATIVELY NEW AND ARE EXPECTED TO BE APPLIED IN VARIOUS DISCIPLINES AND INDUSTRY ACTIVITIES. SOONER OR LATER WE HAVE TO ACCEPT ROBOTS ARE PART AND PARCELS OF OUR LIFE.

AFFIRMATIVELY, ROBOTS ARE DRAMATICALLY INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY FROM THE-STATE-OF-THE-ART HIGH TECH INDUSTRIES SUCH AS AUTOMATIVES TO MEDICAL AND MILITARY OPERATIONS AND THEREBY, SAVING COSTS AND TIME, AND THE RESULT IS OFTEN TREMENDOUS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES BEGINS WITH A SINGLE STEP. THEREFORE, WE SHOULDN'T REGRET IF OUR RESEARCH FAILS BECAUSE A LITTLE IMPATIENCE WILL SPOIL GREAT PLANS. FAILURE TEACHES YOU MORE THAN SUCCESS. THEREFORE I WOULD HOPE THIS WORKSHOP COULD SOMEHOW BRING ALL ACADEMICIANS TOGETHER TO THINK ALL THE POSSIBILITIES AND QUESTIONS THAT CROPS UP IN THE ROBOTICS WORLD.

OUR GOALS, MISSION AND VISION FROM IN THIS WORKSHOP FOCUSES ON FEW TOPICS, NAMELY, 'ARTICIAL BRAIN RESEARCH', 'ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE', 'ROBUST VIRTUAL ENGINEERING', 'BIOINFORMATICS' AND 'NANO-ROBOTICS'. THESE ARE VERY IMPORTANT TRENDS THAT CAN BE CONTRIBUTE FOR GOOD CAUSE ESPECIALLY FOR THE BETTERMENT OF MANKIND CIVILISATIONS.

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WELCOME ALL OUR DISTINGUISHED PROFFESORS, RESEARCHERS AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES TO WORK AND COLLABORATE WITH KUKUM IN THIS ARTIFICIAL LIFE AND ROBOTICS FIELDS ALTHOUGH WE ARE PARTED BY GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES AND CULTURES DIFFERENCES. KUKUM

CANNOT STAND ALONE AS THE IRISH PROVERB ONCE SAID WHEN A TWIG GROWS HARD IT IS DIFFICULT TO TWIST IT.

THERE ARE MANY POTENTIAL AREAS OF RESEARCHES AND COLLABORATIONS WE CAN WORK ON TOGETHER IN ORDER TO INVENT, GENERATE AND FIND SOLUTIONS TO MANKIND PROBLEMS. IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS, I ONCE AGAIN WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY, LADIES AND GENTELMEN, TO WELCOME ANY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDINGS (MoU), MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENTS (MoA) AND RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, I ONCE AGAIN WOULD LIKE TO OFFER MY ZILLION THANK YOU TO ALL PARTICIPANTS, PRESENTERS AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT TOWARDS THIS INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP. THE SMOOTHEST WAY IS FULL OF STONES BUT CONFIDENCE IS HALF OF VICTORY. WHEN A NEEDLE FALLS INTO A DEEP WELL, MANY PEOPLE WILL LOOK INTO THE WELL, BUT FEW WILL BE READY TO GO DOWN AFTER IT.

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MOST GRACIOUS AND THE MOST MERCIFUL, IT IS MY HONOURED AND GREAT PLEASURE TO OFFICIALLY LAUNCH THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ARTIFICAL LIFE AND ROBOTICS. THANK YOU.