

**WELCOME REMARKS
BY MR. AHMAD KHAIRUDDIN
SENIOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
STRATEGIC PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE ON TOURISM POTENTIAL
IN SABAH AND SARAWAK
18 JUNE 2019 (TUESDAY)
PERDANA HALL, LEVEL 10, MIDA**

SALUTATIONS

Madam Catherine Ridu
Senior Director, Services Sector Development, MITI

Mr. Mohd Daud bin Mohd Arif
Undersecretary, Tourism Policy and International Affairs
Ministry Of Tourism, Arts And Culture Malaysia (MOTAC)

Madam Mary Malangking
Principal Assistant Secretary, Research & Tourism Development Division,
Ministry Of Tourism, Culture And Environment Sabah (KePKAS)

Mr. Hii Chang Kee
Permanent Secretary
Ministry Of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth And Sports Sarawak (MTACYS)

Madam Noredah Othman
Acting General Manager, Sabah Tourism Board

Madam Sharzede Datu Hj. Salleh Askor
Chief Executive Officer, Sarawak Tourism Board

Madam Jesi Majungki
Deputy Vice President, Marketing & Corporate,
Sabah Economic Development and Investment Authority (SEDIA)

Mr Ng Kwang Ming
Senior Director, Corporate Technology, MIMOS Bhd.

Mr. Anthony Wong
Secretary, Malaysian Association of Hotels Owners (MAHO)

Distinguish guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Good morning. Selamat datai (in Iban), Kopivosian do kinoikata (in Kadazan) and a very warm welcome all to MIDA's Conference on Potential of Tourism Industry in Sabah and Sarawak.
2. It is encouraging to see many participants with a wide representation of the industry's stakeholders today. This reflects the growing interest of companies towards Sabah and Sarawak, especially in the hospitality and tourism industry.
3. This is the first tourism industry-centric conference organised by MIDA and the various supporting partners. Thank you all for the collaboration and cooperation in making today's conference a success!
4. This initiative is part of MIDA's continuous efforts in providing an interactive platform for industry stakeholders to exchange information and ideas on new and emerging trends in the tourism industry with the relevant ministries, agencies and association. It is also to ensure that the domestic tourism industry players are well informed about the hospitality ecosystems in Malaysia, and to encourage new investments into Sabah and Sarawak.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. In 2018, Malaysia recorded total approved investments amounting RM201.7 billion, an increase from the RM200.6 billion recorded in 2017. Of this amount, the services sector continued to be the cornerstone of the nation's economic growth, contributing a total approved investment of RM103.4 billion with a projected creation of almost 70,000 new jobs.
6. There were 63 hotel and tourism projects approved with investments of RM4.6 billion for the whole of 2018. Promisingly, the hotel and

tourism sub-sector successful contributed RM1.82 billion in approved investment for the first quarter of 2019. The 31 approved projects are projected to create more than 2,300 jobs.

7. Undeniably, the growth prospects of our tourism industry largely depend upon the continued attractiveness of Malaysia as tourist and business destinations. It also relies on the effectiveness of the various initiatives in promoting the industry.
8. MIDA has been looking beyond the common understanding of tourism as being limited to vacation activities only. We have been actively pursuing investments and development in niche tourism areas such as ecotourism, halal tourism, and cultural tourism. Given the dynamic nature of the tourism industry, it is crucial that the domestic players are attuned to gaps and opportunities present in the market to form their niche and seize growth opportunities.
9. For example, Malaysia has recognised the investment potential for sports tourism. For those who have subscribed to MIDA's e-Newsletter, the comprehensive article on the significant economic potential of sports tourism in April 2019 edition would have given a teaser of some exciting international sports tourism events scheduled in 2019, namely the TMBT Ultra Trail Marathon and Borneo International Yachting Challenge, are set to attract more tourists arrivals into Sabah and Sarawak.
10. As some of you might already be aware, Malaysia was also proud to host the World Football Summit Asia (WFSA) on 29 - 30 April 2019, which successfully attracted more than 2,000 professionals and influential experts of football clubs from more than 50 countries. This event is undeniably an example of the potential of sports tourism in the country.
11. Evidently, there are ample avenues for Malaysia to further strengthen its global appeal and position as the leading destination for international meetings, conventions, trade exhibitions and major events. The Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB)

under MOTAC is a pivotal agency that continues to facilitates and offer assistance to ensure the success of making Malaysia a preferred business and major events destination in the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. Going forward, MIDA will continue to play an active role in undertaking engagements such as today's conference to ensure that Malaysia achieves its goals and aspirations for the tourism industry. Together with MITI and its agencies, we will continue to work closely with the state government and authorities to create a more conducive business environment for hospitality businesses to grow.
13. Before I end, I would like to encourage everyone to join the "Business Networking Session" later this evening, as various ministries, agencies and associations present today will be present to engage and further elaborate on the types of incentive, initiatives and facilitations offered. Please take this opportunity to meet with them to also discuss your interests and investment plans.
14. MIDA is ever-ready to assist you. Our doors are always open to facilitate industry stakeholders, such as yourselves in making Malaysia your profit centre, within the ASEAN region and beyond. With that, I wish you all a very productive conference ahead.

Thank you, tabik basa (in Iban) and Kotohuadan (in Kadazan).