



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI

**SPEECH TEXT:
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HIGHER EDUCATION MINISTER
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**FOR:
OPENING CEREMONY & WELCOME DINNER FOR
THE UTM 13th UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS FORUM (UTM-UPF
2023)**

**DATE/TIME:
8 AUGUST 2023 (TUESDAY) | 8.00 PM**

**LOCATION:
KSL HOTEL & RESORTS, JOHOR BAHRU, JOHOR**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

1. Good evening, everyone. I am truly humbled to be here among such a prestigious gathering of university leaders from across the nation and around the world.
2. I take this opportunity to welcome everyone, not only to this forum, but also to Malaysia.
3. I can proudly say that Malaysia is indeed a country that places great emphasis on education, especially higher education.
4. It is our belief that education is not only the beacon that illuminates our path to progress, but also the most powerful realm for each and every one of us to collaborate and learn from each other.
5. Let me emphasize that the truth of this statement is even more evident when we find ourselves gathered in an esteemed assembly like this, where brilliant university leaders come together to exchange invaluable insights that will ignite betterment and progress.
6. This is because, brain sharing among university leaders is a powerful catalyst for innovation, as it fosters the exchange of ideas and experiences, propelling the scholastic world forward.

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. Malaysia is committed to becoming a hub of talent and knowledge.
8. We aim to attract and nurture talented individuals and minds from around the globe and serve as a centre of excellence for generating, disseminating, and applying knowledge.
9. We believe we have several advantages and strengths that will help us emerge and become a talent hub to all.
10. **Firstly, unwavering commitment by the government to position higher education as a catalyst for growth.**
11. At the ministry, we are aware of the importance of collaboration between the government and higher education institutions.

12. We adhere to the notion that no real progress can be properly advanced in the absence of continuous research and academic exploration.
13. New knowledge is key to almost every aspect of modern life.
14. **Secondly, our current national ethos that is Malaysia Madani, is all about creating values and meanings.**
15. For that, we will welcome and host all young talents and great minds from all over the world, with open arms.
16. I can assure you that under my leadership, our ministry of higher education is now in the process of aggressively revising relevant policies and immigration practices to ensure that Malaysia will be a welcoming home to all.
17. Our focus is two-fold.
18. **One**, we want to host as many talents and great minds as possible so that we will be able to learn and better ourself.
19. **Two**, we will share our expertise and experience with as many countries as possible.
20. Throughout this year, I have had the privilege of sharing this unwavering aspiration with our local universities on multiple occasions.
21. This evening, allow me to once again reaffirm our deep commitment to fostering such collaboration with each and every of your institution.
22. In this regard, allow me to propose **two** things.
23. **Firstly, lets us all align our education vision and goals to go beyond providing high-quality tertiary education and producing individuals with excellent credentials.**
24. More importantly, we must all strive to formulate critical solution to challenges that we face nowadays.
25. Food security, climate change, disruptive technologies, are instances of many themes and issues that we can all work on together.
26. **Secondly, we must foster relationships and partnerships in a more strategic manners.**
27. Limited resources should no longer be an impediment to progress.

28. Instead, strategic and effective partnerships will help seed more impactful result.
29. Take for instance the internationalisation of higher education.
30. It requires ongoing efforts by universities to promote global R&D collaborations, such as satellite labs, transnational consultancy, and students' and faculty members' mobility programmes.
31. University leaders, as inspirational figures, play a pivotal role in driving internationalisation and global R&D collaboration.
32. By championing global collaboration, you proactively motivate academic communities to seek international opportunities.
33. Your influence extends beyond the academic realm. By showcasing the positive impact of cross-border partnerships, you can advocate for international cooperation and diplomacy, promoting a more interconnected and peaceful world.
34. And for that, let us embark on a journey of more assertive and strategic cooperation to advance the cause of higher education and drive our nation's progress to new heights.

Ladies and gentlemen,

35. I am a politician. As much as I would like to think that we are the force that decides on the direction of our country, I also want to be practical and realistic.
36. It is not the politicians that determine the future of this country, or any country in the world. It is the university!
37. Being university leaders, all of you are indeed at the position to better affect changes. Changes that can take place in ways and scales that no politics or politicians will be able to create.
38. Tonight gathering, among others, should reaffirm this reality.
39. Let us embrace our roles as catalysts of progress and ambassadors of enlightenment.
40. I encourage you to connect, share your stories, and inspire each other.

41. Let us forge new partnerships, spark collaborations, and leave a lasting impact not only on the academic landscape. But more importantly, on society and those surrounding us.
42. With this, I hereby officiate the 13th UTM University Presidents Forum 2023.
43. Thank you. Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.