



MINISTRY OF NATIONAL UNITY

SPECIAL KEYNOTE ADDRESS

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MINISTER OF NATIONAL UNITY MALAYSIA**

**“STRENGTHENING NATIONAL UNITY & INTEGRATION
THROUGH BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS”**

**KSI FORUM NATIONAL UNITY AND NATION BUILDING
THROUGH BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

12 OCTOBER 2023

CORUS HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR

INTRODUCTION

1. As we gather here today to discuss the paramount importance of unity, I'd like to draw your attention to a phrase that embodies our collective aspirations: '*Segulai Sejalai.*' This phrase, rooted in the Iban language, beautifully aligns with our vision of unity as we strive towards the ideals of Malaysia Madani. I am honoured, as the Minister of National Unity, to champion such a powerful sentiment.
2. Today, I wish to spotlight an important ally in this journey: our businesses. Businesses, with their vast reach and influence, are more than just commercial entities. They have the capability to shape not only our economic trajectory but also the very soul and ethos of our nation.

INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE PRACTICES

3. Firstly, let's talk about Inclusive Workplace Practices. Every successful business, at its core, is powered by its people. In today's dynamic globalized world, diversity is not just a buzzword; it's an imperative. When a business actively fosters a diverse environment and ensures equal employment opportunities for all, it doesn't merely function

efficiently – it flourishes. Such a business isn't solely driven by profit; it drives progress. It doesn't just welcome diversity; it becomes a tapestry of it.

4. Moreover, true inclusivity stretches beyond recruitment and leadership. It's about creating a culture where everyone feels at home. Celebrating various cultural, religious, and national events isn't just about acknowledging them; it's about immersing the entire organization in the festivities.
5. In essence, an inclusive workplace isn't just a place where diversity exists; it's where it thrives. It's a space where differences are not just tolerated but celebrated, where every individual, irrespective of their background, feels seen, heard, and valued.
6. However, what's profound about genuine partnerships that span across racial and ethnic divides is that they symbolize much more than just a business strategy. They embody the very essence of unity in diversity. When two or more businesses from diverse backgrounds unite, it's a confluence of cultures, ideologies, and practices. It's like an orchestra where different instruments come together, each contributing its unique sound, producing a symphony that's richer and more harmonious than any solo performance.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CSR

7. I want to stress upon Community Engagement and Corporate Responsibility. In today's interconnected world, businesses are recognized not just by their balance sheets, but by their contributions to society, the environment, and their governance practices. The growing emphasis on environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) criteria is a testament to this shift.

8. In line with the ESG criteria, our commitment to societal progress is deeply interconnected with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the most pivotal SDGs is Goal 17, which advocates for partnerships to achieve these objectives.

9. Through collaborative CSR initiatives aimed at promoting national unity and integration, we are actively contributing to this global vision. Our endeavours go beyond local impact; they resonate with global aspirations of unity, peace, and inclusive progress. By aligning our CSR initiatives with the goals of promoting national unity and integrating them with the broader SDG objectives, we ensure our actions are both locally relevant and globally resonant.

10. Strategic collaborations can involve sponsoring cultural exchange events, supporting programs that bridge cultural divides, or promoting inclusive education through funding through programs. **There are various initiatives under Ministry of National Unity where the corporates also can play a major role on societal development agenda:**

- **Kebuniti Madani** - For example, a kebuniti in Terengganu able to earn up to RM70,000 a year after becoming a supplier of chillies and cucumbers to supermarkets. We plan to expand the programme nationwide by opening 100 more kebuniti next year. We need more corporates to support this initiative by providing financial aid to produce organic crops, and technology advancement.
- **Tuisyen Kami**- the programme implemented through the Yayasan Sukarelawan Siswa by targeting rural communities, the asnaf and the B40 group. Recently, Lembaga Tabung Haji, has channelled a total of RM500,000 for the implementation of the tuition for the period 2023/2024.

- **RT Cares and Kotak Rahmah-** RT Cares Center is mobilized throughout the country involving 116 Districts/Divisions that function as operational centers for the collection and distribution of food boxes-Kotak Rahmah and basic necessities.
- **Biasiswa Tunku Abdul Rahman** - Over the last 57 years, the YTAR Foundation has empowered over 9,000 youth across Malaysia through scholarships, loans, financial assistance, higher education upskilling programmes, and employability programmes.
- **National Heritage Digital Exploration-** The Ministry also put a significant focus in the effort to preserve the national heritage and its historical archives. We hope to embrace the digitalisation and maybe soon enough enable a virtual reality exploration experience of national heritage. This effort will be enabled strategically by our hardworking agencies such as the National Museum Agency, National Archive Agency and The National Library.

- **KRT as a "Progressive Community Driver"**- The Ministry's latest initiative aims to empower the KRT to play a pivotal role in fostering a progressive community.

- ❖ The transformation initiative that positions the KRT as a "Progressive Community Driver" draws strength from its dynamic role as a voluntary organization with over 200,000 committee members and a wide-reaching presence encompassing 12 million residents. The aspiration to create a progressive community, as outlined in the National Principles (Rukun Negara), is fundamentally in line with the broader national goal to positioning Malaysia as an advanced nation.

- ❖ The MADANI Economy and 12th Malaysia Plan explicitly emphasizes the empowerment of KRT as a crucial facilitator and mediator in organizing community programs, volunteer activities, and civic participation at the grassroots level. The focus is on strengthening KRT's capacity as a bridge builder within the community through enhanced capabilities, a robust administrative structure, and strategic collaborations with

diverse stakeholders. The role of KRT has grown from the early day of its initiation as a neighbourhood patrol, but now as a bridge builder within the community.

11. These efforts not only strengthen community bonds but also enhance a company's reputation for promoting social harmony and unity. Active community engagement, guided by the ministry's initiatives, allows businesses to actively involve themselves in local communities, address societal issues, and build long-lasting relationships.
12. We also invite individuals and corporations to explore other forms of partnerships and support for our strategic focuses on ***Community Empowerment, Educational Advancement, Shaping National Identity, Social Wellbeing and Heritage Conservation***). The Ministries' door is open for discussion, and the potential is limitless.
13. As a country possessing unique qualities, unity is a prominent agenda to ensure sustained national development. Unity is not something static that may be acquired in a complete sense but something that must be

continuously cultivated, nurtured, and reinforced. Unity requires complete commitment by all parties, namely government agencies, the private sector, civil society, and the populace as a whole.

14. Lastly, the newly minted national slogan “Malaysia Madani” (Civilised Malaysia) is the key to uniting Malaysians of all races and religions to appreciate the peace and freedom enjoyed for 66 years until today. In the Concept of Malaysia Madani, unity is the main key to ensure that the people experience all forms of progress and modernity.

Let’s embrace “Unity in Diversity”.

Thank you.