

**SPEECH BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL,
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MALAYSIA**

GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE DIPLOMA IN DIPLOMACY (DiD) 2/2010 – 2011

**Yang Berhormat Senator A. Kohilan Pillay
Deputy Foreign Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia**

**Yang Berbahagia Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari
Director General of the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations**

[Your Excellencies,]

Distinguished Guests,

Participants of the Diploma in Diplomacy,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh and a very good evening to all.

Let me begin by taking this opportunity to congratulate all the participants for having completed the Diploma in Diplomacy. I would also like to congratulate the international participants for completing the two-week module of “Regional and International Affairs” within the DiD programme.

2. Today, all of you have indeed achieved an important step forward in your professional career. I hope the skills and knowledge that you have acquired from the course will enhance your ability to contribute towards the Ministry’s effort to increase the professionalism of Malaysian diplomats and strengthening the credibility of Wisma Putra as the main government agency in implementing Malaysia’s Foreign Policy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. As echoed by the Director General of IDFR, participants need to understand and have a clear view of the high expectation set upon each of you. The role of the Foreign Service today is very challenging amidst the dynamics of globalisation, trade and financial engagements, calamities and the challenges posed by the rapid development of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

4. The Ministry recognises the need to continuously invest in human capital development in order to create a pool of high-calibre diplomats with the necessary competencies. As all of you are aware, in enhancing human capital development, the Ministry has outlined strategies aimed at increasing the capacity for knowledge. This is evident in the training diary and the training path that has been prepared for every officer. Malaysian diplomats have to be equipped to meet the challenges of global change.

5. Apart from the need to constantly acquire new knowledge and skills, the observance of ethical practices and a professional code of conduct must also be complete and comprehensive. Indeed, an unrelenting adoption of the highest standards of professionalism and integrity is essential in producing high standard Malaysian Diplomats. The challenge now is to embrace the opportunities as they present themselves and to continuously develop new skills and competencies. In this case, I urge all of you to work even harder because the only competitive edge that could sustain the Ministry in the future will be the quality of our human capital.

6. I am most certain that the exposure all of you had gone through in the Diploma in Diplomacy covering topics such as defending Malaysia's national interests, presentation skills, speech writing, book reviews, journal writing, international economics, intelligence, international security, international law and negotiations had equipped you with the best practices of diplomacy and international relations as well as the right attitude required in the conduct of foreign relations. Let me remind you that the basic operating skills that you have learnt in IDFR are expected to enable you to take up your job assignments and to discharge your duties and responsibilities with a high level of competence and confidence.

7. I hope that all of you have indeed seized the opportunity given to learn the foreign languages offered during the course. I wish to take this opportunity to stress the importance of mastering languages. Do not limit yourselves to only Bahasa Malaysia and English Language. A diplomat who speaks the local language fluently is twice more effective. The government has given allocation to enable you to study foreign languages when you are posted abroad. I urge you to take the opportunity to learn and master the local language.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. I would like to urge you to rise to the challenge by building on your achievements today to continually improve your skills and knowledge. The inculcation of a culture of lifelong learning is essential to enable you to adapt to the constantly changing environment and to contribute to the growth and development of the Malaysian Diplomacy. Bear in mind that Malaysian Diplomats must always promote and defend the country's interests in keeping with the ever increasing pace and breadth of modern day diplomacy resulting from global changes.

9. I would like to thank Yang Berbahagia Dato' Ku Jaafar, trainers, officers and staff of IDFR for ensuring the success of the Diploma in Diplomacy. Once again, let me congratulate all the junior diplomats for having successfully completed the Diploma in Diplomacy today. For the international participants, I hope the module has benefitted all of you and deepen your knowledge in diplomacy.

Thank you.