

Opening Speech

By Y.Bhg. Datin Sri Siti Rubiah Datuk Abdul Samad

Patron Of The Ladies Association/PERWAKILAN

Of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

For Wisma Putra International Charity Bazaar

At The Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations

Kuala Lumpur

16th April 2011

Y.Bhg. Dato' Sri Anifah Aman

Minister of Foreign Affairs Malaysia,

Y.Bhg. Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari

Director General of the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations,

Your Excellencies,

Tan Sri, Puan Sri,

Dato', Datin,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be the one to welcome all of you to Wisma Putra International Charity Bazaar held at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR). On behalf of the Ladies Association of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia/ PERWAKILAN, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia and IDFR I would like to extend a warm welcome to you who are here to join us in a joint effort to make this fund-raising event a success.

A few months ago, members of the a Ladies Association of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia/ PERWAKILAN decided to hold a charity bazaar and we made our intentions known to the Ministry. The response to the idea was positive and we identified IDFR as our venue. As it turned out to be, IDFR has not only become the hub of activity but has taken on the all important role in the coordination and management of this special occasion. I would like to express our sincere thanks to the Director-General, Y.Bhg. Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari and the staff of IDFR for coming on board from the beginning. Your involvement, commitment and enthusiasm have helped to make this event possible.

The Bazaar has provided us with a 'window of opportunity' to work together not only with the Ministry but with all for a worthy cause. It is indeed a step forward towards future collaborations as we have eased the way through working together on this project. This event has also given a platform for the various foreign missions in Kuala Lumpur to meet the general public and to promote your culture, tourism and cuisine which in turn can help foster understanding and heighten appreciation of your countries. It is indeed an excellent opportunity to spread goodwill, to strengthen associations and to provide a direct access between the general public and government ministries/ departments/ agencies as well as the corporate world. This mode of showcasing your countries will give you an edge as you will be doing it in a more personalized manner which augurs well with promotion efforts made by your missions. The benefits of participating in this charity bazaar are many but the one with the icing is the feeling that we have done our part to help raise funds for charity, reaching out to people who need assistance.

This event has also created an avenue to take the existing spirit of collaboration and cooperation to another level and has brought us together for a common cause. This commonality of purpose will definitely draw people together again and we therefore look forward to working with you in the future. The presence of the foreign missions here today tells us of your support for a noble cause as fund-raising is an activity which is not new to people at missions. It's part of diplomacy – social and cultural diplomacy and is an integral part of being members of the diplomatic community abroad. Your support, active participation and invaluable contribution have made it possible for us to hold this meaningful event, without which our plans for an event of the size would not have been realized. We have managed to translate our ideas and the Bazaar today is testimony of the force behind a concerted effort by all parties involved. Thank you very much.

Y.Bhg. Dato' Sri Anifah Aman

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I've noticed that the spirit festivity surrounds IDFR and this has created the right mood for merriment and enjoyment for the next two days. This conducive atmosphere sets us on the right footing for a charity bazaar of this nature. I have observed that a lot time and energy have gone into actualizing our ideas into reality. Needless to say, it is real achievement for those involved in pulling the fine multi-coloured cords in a way to ensure that the final product would be a masterpiece of different hues. The cords can be equated to all of us from different countries and of diverse backgrounds. I think this is very much in line with our government's efforts at enhancing integration, unity and solidarity for our people of many races, religions and cultures and to move forward as a nation. In a nutshell, with this event we are integrating as 'one international community' despite our differences but coming together and united in our cause. At this juncture, we hope that members of the public will be here to join in the fun for the next two days. Do spread the word round.

For the Bazaar, the Institute grounds are divided into five main areas and each has a theme: the Global Village, International Cuisine, It's A Small World, Aim High, and Bazaar Malaysia. The foreign missions are showcasing their countries in the Global Village and this is where we will be able to go round the world in the shortest possible time and in a very conventional way which costs nothing: you can do it on foot. This is our chance to make contact and interact with the 'locals' of various participating countries, thus enriching ourselves. They are joined by merchants and traders who are displaying their products for sale. The International Cuisine is a one-stop centre for us to taste and savour an array of food from different parts of the globe. This will be quite an experience. So be adventurous. The international flavor is further given prominence in It's a Small World where different countries will be presenting cultural performances to complement the promotion efforts carried out in the Global Village. Aim High has a range of colleges and universities promoting their institutions, the publishers with the

book exhibitions and the travel agencies with their holiday packages for us the see some of the places we have of and daydreaming about at the Global Village. Malaysian Bazaar is an area not to be missed as you can find local products and handicrafts on display.

Before I end my address I would like to thank our sponsors, for it is also due to them that this event has been made possible or else it would have been on a far smaller scale. I would also like to say a big thank you to the participating institutions, the vendors, the diplomatic community, the ministries, government departments and agencies, for without your support and active participation, we would not have been able to run this bazaar smoothly and efficiently. My thanks go to members of PERWAKILAN, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia and IDFR for being the pillars of this bazaar. Hopefully, this inaugural bazaar will be an annual event from this year onwards.

Let me urge to find the time to walk through the grounds, which have been decorated to evoke a carnival – like atmosphere. Browse round the tents to discover the “treasures’. Soak up the ambience. Mingle and interact with the crowd. This is the time to make friends and the time to network on a global scale and most of all to have a great time. A quotation taken from Anonymous “ I hope you’ll find a way and not an excuse.

With ‘Bismillahirrahmannirahim” I declare the International Charity Bazaar open.

Thank you.