



MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

OPENING ADDRESS

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MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

FOR

THE 4TH INTERNATIONAL GREEN BUILD CONFERENCE
(IGBC) 2024

“ESG: BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE”

23 JULY 2024 (TUESDAY)

ONE WORLD HOTEL,
PETALING JAYA, SELANGOR

YBhg Datuk Ho Hon Sang

Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association (REHDA) President

YBhg Datuk Seri Fateh Iskandar Mohamed Mansor

GreenRE Chairman

YBhg Datuk Jeffrey Ng Tiong Lip

REHDA Institute Chairman

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and Salam Malaysia Madani.

1. Good morning, everyone. I would like to record my appreciation to GreenRE Sdn Bhd and the REHDA Institute for inviting me to speak at the fourth Green International Build Conference or IGBC 2024. It is a pleasure for me to be at this significant event, joining the crowd and sharing the industry's enthusiasm and commitment towards advancing sustainable real estate in the country.
2. I must start by congratulating GreenRE and the REHDA Institute for sustaining their momentum. This conference, now in its fourth edition, has become something more than just an industry event. It is and hopefully will continue to grow as a platform for collaboration, innovation, and transformation. It brings together experts from various fields to discuss, share, and promote sustainable building practices. The importance of such gatherings cannot be overstated, as they play a crucial role in shaping our collective approach to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

GLOBAL SCENARIO

3. Today, we stand at the crossroads economically, socially and environmentally. Our choice is between stagnation, decline or worse, or evolving, adapting and moving forward. This is why we need to re-examine our values and aspirations, and to forge a new sustainability driven ethos for the road ahead.
4. We are all here because we recognise that the climate emergency will profoundly impact the way we live. The latest IPCC report indicates that we are now experiencing about 1.1°C of global warming. This has already impacted food and water security around the world and will lead to more extreme weather conditions. The crises we face and the suffering people will have to endure will only increase as we approach, or worse, exceed the 1.5°C threshold. So, we must take action now, urgently, before it becomes too late.
5. Asia is at the centre in this war against climate change because it emits about half of the global greenhouse gas emissions. We can and of course must acknowledge that our emissions pale to the historic levels of other continents, including some that used to colonise our countries. However, most of Asia is still categorised as developing nations and as the region develops, energy demand is expected to increase to meet the growing needs of the region's population. For now, these demands are fulfilled through the consumption of fossil fuels to power the economy. Hence, in these few years, much focus has been placed on ensuring a viable energy transition in the Asian region.

6. The building sector is globally responsible for 35% of energy consumption, 38% of energy-related carbon emissions, 50% of resource consumption, and its total footprint is expected to double by 2060. Thus, deep collaboration across the entire value chain, and radical transformation in the way buildings are designed, built, occupied and deconstructed are needed to address these growing concerns. It requires developers envisioning new business models that promote circularity, re-use of buildings and materials, whole life cycle thinking, high performance operations, and ultimately a shift away from fossil fuels.

Ladies and gentlemen,

WHAT MALAYSIA IS DOING

7. The Malaysian Government will continue to develop the nation while balancing environmental protection and economic growth. The rakyat can see, and I think this administration has proven, that sustainability is at the core of our national agenda—to an extent unprecedented in our nation's history.
8. Central to Malaysia's action plan is the **National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR)**, which sets an ambitious target of achieving a 70% renewable energy capacity by 2050. This visionary roadmap encompasses bold targets aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions while significantly transitioning the country towards a low carbon energy, to drive the low carbon energy transition pathway for the power, transportation, manufacturing and oil and gas sectors.

9. Moreover, the NETR goes beyond its contribution to decarbonisation or GHG emissions. It is also a means to revolutionise and transform our economy to the future, so that we can embrace as well as be relevant and competitive in a world whose industrial and commercial basis are rapidly changing by the day. It ensures that we are not simply decarbonising without regard to the effect on society but also ensures that jobs can continue to be created and standards of living can continue to increase.
10. In addition, in the search for environmentally friendly sources of energy and alternate sources to reduce our carbon footprints, the efficiency and sustainable utilisation of energy are also among the critical success factors in lowering our GHG emissions. With the widespread use of energy efficiency, it is anticipated that we will gradually be using less energy to produce the same amount of goods and services. Numerous advantages would be gained by increasing investment in energy efficiency.
11. In achieving the aspirations laid out in NETR, emerging technologies, such as electric vehicles and renewable energy solutions assume pivotal roles. These innovations are the driving forces behind our quest to reach those ambitious goals. They offer sustainable alternatives, heralding an era where we can harmonise economic growth with environmental preservation.
12. Beyond government-led efforts, we are greatly encouraged to see non-governmental organisations taking concrete steps towards a sustainable Malaysia. Collaboration is the cornerstone of our sustainability efforts.

13. I would like to congratulate GreenRE for the commendable advancements made in Malaysia's real estate sector over the past year, as well as for expanding our Malaysian certification tool abroad, particularly in the UK and Cambodia. GreenRE, as a tropical-centric rating system, aims to expand in the ASEAN region to drive sustainability beyond Malaysia. GreenRE's launch of its latest green certification, GreenRE Energy Certification, is timely, as it can work hand-in-hand with the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act (EECA) as an effective mechanism for assessing the compliance of buildings in Malaysia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

14. Gatherings like this are proof that Malaysia's building and real estate industry have joined your colleagues in other industries in the sustainability push, whether on the national, regional or global level. This is an appropriate and heartening development although of course much work remains to be done for the country as a whole.
15. Embracing sustainability and the fight against climate change is necessary for your sector not only because, as noted, your level of emissions. Buildings are also a crucial part of our modern lives—essential for our day-to-day comfort and productivity. They still have the power to inspire and even awe. Iconic buildings in history not only showcase the best of technology and technique but also the indomitable, unquenchable human genius and spirit. Our cities will become drab and then uninhabitable if your leaders and companies fail to innovate. The push to sustainability is hence necessary to ensure the industry and our urban lives continue to thrive.

16. I am hence hopeful that the discussions that will unfold during this conference will regenerate conventional practices with new approaches to address the profound challenges of climate change and environmental sustainability. I am confident that this collective effort will raise awareness about its significance and encourage corporations and firms to design and formulate strategies and business models that integrate the needed ideas and concepts.
17. Our collective goal must be to deliberate on ways we can meet the profound challenges that lie at the intersection of economic growth and environmental sustainability. This includes doing more to fulfil our aspiration to achieve net zero GHG in 2050. If we take decisive action now, we can avoid the predictable – and predicted – disasters coming our way. We need to step up science-based, collaborative solutions across the region.
18. As businesses, organisations and individuals, we are all accountable, as good stewards of our environment, to reduce carbon emissions and enable greener growth. And the Government is committed to supporting you in this important green transition. We are willing to listen—and to learn—and act.
19. Before I end, I would like to again express my gratitude to the organisers, GreenRE and the REHDA Institute, all participants, speakers, and partners who have made this conference possible. Your dedication to this cause is commendable, and your expertise is invaluable. I am confident this conference will continue to be an important annual event for years to come.

20. I hope that the IGBC 2024 will generate conversations and ideas on sustainability, and inspire participants to make sustainable choices in their business decisions and lifestyle. Our decisions today will affect the future living environment of our children and their children. Let us work together to make Malaysia a front runner in sustainable developments, as well as in sustainable and vibrant homes for all. Thank you.