



**Y.B. DR XAVIER JAYAKUMAR
MINISTER OF WATER, LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**SPECIAL ADDRESS & OFFICIAL OPENING
MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL WATER CONVENTION**

MITEC

1 OCTOBER 2019

YBHG. DATUK ZURINAH PAWANTEH,
Secretary General, Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources;

YANG BERUSAHA PUAN AZIZAH BINTI ARIFFIN,
Deputy Secretary General, (Water and Sewerage);
Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources;

YBHG. DATUK IR. ABDUL KADIR MOHD DIN,
President, the Malaysian Water Association[

Members of the Media,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Good morning and welcome to the Malaysia International Water Convention (MIWC 2019). It is my pleasure to be here this morning, and I would like to extend my warmest welcome to all of you distinguished delegates to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Selamat Datang!

2. We are honored to gather here at the Malaysia International Water Convention this year. Bearing the theme **Advancing Innovation – Embracing Transformation – Securing The Future**, the conference brings together renowned experts in water and wastewater, academia, regulators, practitioners and young water professionals from several parts of the world. This gathering emphasises our collective agreement on how important water is at the global level.
3. Through this conference, lets aim to address integral issues on both water and wastewater challenges faced by the region and offer opportunities for collaboration and innovation that will move us towards advancing innovation and embracing transformation for a promising sustainable water future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. As we progress from the 11th Malaysia Plan, the management of water resources from source-to-source through the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) concept would be the foundation for a total water sector transformation by 2040.
5. Water is a key prerequisite for sustainable development. Under the new strategic direction for the water sector, my Ministry is determined to complete and ensure the success of the water transformation plan by bringing water into the mainstream of the national development agenda, covering the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environment– which I believe must all be addressed for effective water management.

6. Malaysia in particular is continuing its mission to implement strategic programs as a foundation for water sector transformation. Some of the continuing strategies in the 12th Malaysia Plan include ensuring sustainable water resources for productive agriculture use, improving flood mitigation measures in critical areas, improving management of river basins through data-driven decision-making, and increasing monitoring and enforcement activities of point and non-point sources of water pollution under the government's timeline to bring Malaysia in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for Water by 2030 and further on to the government's new ***"Shared Prosperity Vision"*** by 2030.

7. Let me briefly share the Visions for Water Sector Transformation as follows:
 - (i) recognizing the potential of Groundwater as a source of water supply to meet the demand of rising population;
 - (ii) achieve an inclusive and sustainable provisions of safe and affordable water supply and sanitation systems;
 - (iii) recognize water as a wealth creation sector; and
 - (iv) Positioning Malaysia as an Asian frontier in Integrated Water Resources Management.

8. In this context, let me give you a general idea of what to expect as we move to transform the water sector into a dynamic economic sector that supports environmental, social and economic prosperity by 2040. The strategic direction will entail:

- (i) better structuring of and improving the nation's business and industry ecosystems through the adoption of Industrial Revolution 4.0;
- (ii) application of the digital economy and adding more high-skilled jobs and competent workers;
- (iii) exploring new growth sectors to produce products of international standard;
- (iv) reforming human capital, to improve labor market and wages;
- (v) strengthening social well-being through needs-based policies;
and
- (vi) inclusive territorial development;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. A holistic economic growth of a country lies in the sustainability of its water resources management for the usage across various sectors namely agriculture, industries, domestic, energy generation as well as for environmental sustainability. Despite having abundance of water resources that is renewable in its nature, water is not an inexhaustible resource. The utilisation of water resources for economic growth should not destroy or disrupt the water cycle in terms of its quality and quantity to meet present and future needs. Hence, there is a huge opportunity for companies and investors to invest in projects that improve water resource management whilst also generating robust financial returns.

10. Digital transformation can spur innovation and productivity growth across many activities, including shaping future policy for water resilience. The digital market for water services will provide the water business community, particularly SMEs, with new opportunities to scale up across the water sector.
11. Cyber Physical Systems (CPS) are drivers of the ideal systems administration of virtual and real water frameworks, with tasks generally done by programming. This permits the intelligent networking of water users and components in a sustainable water infrastructure. Besides that, digitalization also permits a high level of transparency for water users, hence covering current needs and providing opportunities for sustainable and creative activity areas in water management.
12. As we move towards achieving the SDGs, one thing is clear – the response and responsibility for water must be integrated, limitless and comprehensive, involving all relevant stakeholders, from the public and private sectors to academia and civil society at large.
13. The water and wastewater industries require a continuous development of a workforce that is knowledgeable, skillful and strong in leadership. I commend the organizers in bringing together young and senior water professionals and the various stakeholders to convene here. Through sharing and learning from our colleagues both locally and internationally, I hope you, the young professionals, will be enabled to create a lasting change for the better. The Conference provides an invaluable networking opportunity for all water professionals in the country as well as those attending to create and share business opportunities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. The Malaysian Government is always committed to position our water communities to play an active role in moving forward the water agenda as a key pillar of sustainable development. The adequate solutions you will propose in the next three days will hopefully assist in laying a solid foundation to relevant future undertakings dependent upon water. And on this note, I would like to officially open the Malaysia International Water Convention (MIWC2019). I wish you a successful conference and an enjoyable stay in Kuala Lumpur.

Thank you.