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**SPEECH TEXT FOR THE LAUNCH CEREMONY OF THE  
'HUTAN KITA' EXHIBITION**

**KUALA LUMPUR TOWER**

**23 AUGUST 2019 (FRIDAY)**

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**YANG AMAT BERHORMAT TUN DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD**  
Perdana Menteri Malaysia;

**YANG BERHORMAT PUAN TERESA KOK SUH SIM**  
Menteri Industri Utama;

**YANG BERHORMAT TENGKU ZULPURI SHAH BIN RAJA PUJI**  
Timbalan Menteri Air, Tanah dan Sumber Asli;

**YANG BERHORMAT TIMBALAN-TIMBALAN MENTERI;**

**YOUR EXCELLENCIES AMBASSADORS AND HIGH COMMISSIONERS,**

**YANG BERBAHAGIA DATUK ZURINAH PAWANTEH,  
KETUA SETIAUSAHA, KEMENTERIAN AIR, TANAH DAN SUMBER ASLI;**

**YANG BERBAHAGIA DATO' MOHD RIDZA BIN AWANG,  
PEMANGKU KETUA PENGARAH PERHUTANAN SEMENANJUNG MALAYSIA;**

YBhg. Tan Sri-Tan Sri/Dato'-Dato'/Datin-Datin,

Tuan-Tuan/Puan-Puan yang saya hormati sekalian

Selamat Pagi dan Salam Sejahtera kepada semua

1. Terlebih dahulu, saya ingin mengambil kesempatan ini untuk mengucapkan selamat datang ke Pameran 'Hutan Kita' yang julung-julung kali diadakan pada tahun ini di Menara Kuala Lumpur.

2. Di kesempatan ini izinkan saya untuk merakamkan ucapan setinggi-tinggi terima kasih kepada Yang Amat Berhormat Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Perdana Menteri Malaysia atas kesudian meluangkan masa untuk hadir pada pagi ini.

3. Sekalipun kita tahu bahawa Yang Amat Berhormat Tun sentiasa sibuk dengan tugas sebagai Perdana Menteri, namun beliau masih sudi meluangkan masa untuk hadir dan seterusnya menyempurnakan Majlis Perasmian Pameran 'Hutan Kita' yang bertemakan *Journey Through our Rainforest* yang akan berlangsung selama satu (1) bulan di Menara Kuala Lumpur ini.

4. Kesudian Yang Amat Berhormat Tun melapangkan masa untuk hadir ke majlis ini menunjukkan komitmen beliau dalam menjaga dan memulihara hutan kita.

**Hadirin yang dihormati sekalian,**

5. Saya memohon izin untuk meneruskan ucapan saya dalam Bahasa Inggeris memandangkan majlis kita ini juga turut dihadiri tetamu daripada kedutaan asing. Terima kasih.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

6. Malaysia is known as one of the 12 megadiverse countries in the world. We are home to more than 42,000 known plant and animal species with a high level of endemism. A large part this biodiversity is hosted by our vast forests, covering a land area of about 33.03 million hectares. These lush forests span all three regions - Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak.

7. The Government recognizes that our forests provide valuable assets that contribute significantly towards the national socio-economic development. It has been established that Malaysians derive countless ecosystem services, health and well-being benefits from our forests.

8. However, the size, complexity and diversity of our forests also means that they are of global importance. Malaysia's forests provide the global climate system with key functions such as carbon sequestration, temperature regulation and continuous oxygen production. By preserving Malaysia's forest, we are also preserving habitats for flora and fauna found nowhere else in the world.

9. The global importance of Malaysia's forests come with a heavy burden for all of us Malaysians. It is our responsibility to not only fully appreciate Malaysia's forests, but to also protect and conserve this natural resource for all mankind.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

10. Forests come under the responsibility of the States as enshrined in the Malaysian Federal Constitution. The executive authority of the Federal Government only extends to the provision of advice and technical assistance to the States, training and the conduct of research. The Federal Government however is responsible for trade policies, import and export controls and international cooperation among others.

11. KATS is responsible in overseeing three (3) key agencies for forest and wildlife conservation namely Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia (JPSM); Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia (PERHILITAN) and Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM).

12. The JPSM is responsible for the management, planning, protection and development of the Permanent Reserved Forests (PRF) in accordance with the National Forestry Policy 1992 (NFP) and the National Forestry Act 1984 (NFA). The JPSM involves in the formulation of forestry policies, providing technical advice and assistance to the State Forestry Departments with regard to forest planning, management and development, forest harvesting and wood-based industries, forest operational studies as well as training and human resource development.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

13. The forestry sector realizes that current management of forests needs to address emerging issues such as climate change impacts, ensuring food security and sustaining livelihoods. To do so, we are currently reviewing the NFP and related laws to incorporate these new developments.

14. Malaysia is fully committed to the implementation of sustainable forest management (SFM) which is in line with our commitment to international conventions and treaties. SFM addresses forest degradation while increasing direct benefits to people and the environment. At the social level, SFM contributes to livelihoods, income generation and employment.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

15. There has also been a successful thrust for certifying the forest area under the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS). MTCS provides for independent assessment of forest management practices and audit of timber product manufacturers or exporters to ascertain that the timber products manufactured or exported are sourced from sustainably managed forests.

16. This is to ensure the sustainable management of Malaysia's natural forest and forest plantations, as well as to meet the demand for certified timber products. As of 28 February 2019, 4.61 million hectares of natural forest and forest plantation is Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) certified which includes 15 Forest Management Units (FMUs) and 7 Forest Plantation Management Units (FPMUs) and 362 Chain of Custody (CoC) companies obtained PEFC Certificate.

17. All plantations, including timber latex clones (TLC) must follow the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of the Forest Plantation Development Program (FPDP) and developed outside environmentally sensitive area (ESA)/high conservation value (HCV) such as Central Forest Spine (CFS) in the Peninsular Malaysia and the Heart of Borneo (HoB) in Sabah and Sarawak, except for areas designated for forest plantation.

18. The SOP also ensures that all plantations meet the requirement of Forest Management Plan (FMP), Wildlife Management Plan (WMP) and Environment Management Plan (EMP) to ensure that plantation activities are compatible with long-term conservation of biodiversity and minimise human-wildlife conflicts. This will further support PERHILITAN's effort in enhancing the management of wildlife and its habitat.

19. The plantation area under the FPDP does not encroach the gazetted area for forest reserves except for areas designated for forest plantation crops in the Peninsular Malaysia, Licensed for Planted Forest (LPF) area in Sarawak and areas that have been approved to be zoned as Industrial Tree Plantation (ITP) in Sabah. It aims to preserve and ensure the sustainability of forest ecosystems and biodiversity.

20. It is evident that Malaysia has shown leadership in SFM. But I do recognize that our journey is still long and there is much to accomplish together.

21. The formation of enduring partnerships with the private sector will be crucial for supporting our efforts. In this view, I would like to express my appreciation to a number of corporate partners including AirAsia, KLIATV, Kuala Lumpur Tower, Vivo Malaysia and Edotco Group Sdn. Bhd. for supporting our efforts. I hope many more would come forward to support our initiatives to preserve and conserve 'Hutan Kita' for future generations.

**Hadirin yang dihormati sekalian,**

22. Sebelum saya mengundurkan diri, izinkan saya mengambil kesempatan di sini untuk sekali lagi merakamkan ucapan setinggi-tinggi penghargaan dan terima kasih kepada Yang Amat Berhormat Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Perdana Menteri Malaysia atas kesudian menyempurnakan Majlis perasmian Pameran 'Hutan Kita'.

Sekian, terima kasih.