



KEMENTERIAN SUMBER ASLI, ALAM SEKITAR  
DAN PERUBAHAN IKLIM

**OPENING CEREMONY SPEECH  
YB DATO' SERI HUANG TIONG SII  
DEPUTY MINISTER, NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND  
CLIMATE CHANGE (NRECC)**

**MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL WATER CONVENTION  
2023**

**5 DECEMBER 2023 | 12.00 PM  
WORLD TRADE CENTRE KUALA LUMPUR**

Yang Berbahagia Dato' Razali Mohamad  
Deputy Secretary-General  
Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change (NRECC)

Yang Berbahagia Dato' Ahmad Faizal bin Abdul Rahman  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Water Services Commission (SPAN)

Yang Berusaha Dr. Ingenieur Teknologis Haji Mohmad Asari Daud  
President  
Malaysian Water Association (MWA)

Mr. Mohamad Hairi Basri  
Chair Committee of Malaysian International Water Convention (MIWC)

Honored Guests, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

1. Good afternoon! It gives me great pleasure to be here today at the Malaysia International Water Convention (MIWC) 2023. I extend my warmest greetings to each of you, who comes from a diverse range of expertise, perspectives and countries. Allow me to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the organisers Malaysian Water Association (MWA), PROTEMP Group, and co-organiser Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Air Negara (SPAN) for their dedication in organizing this significant convention.

2. This year's convention theme, "Sustainability: Transforming Vision into Action," resonates deeply with the direction of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment, and Climate Change (NRECC). It reflects the urgency to move beyond ideology and translate our collective vision for sustainable water management into concrete, actionable initiatives. The collaboration between public and private sectors, as well as the active participation of numerous stakeholders, underscores the importance of addressing the critical challenges currently faced by our water sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

### **A Snapshot of Malaysia's Water Sector**

3. As we convene at this important gathering, it is imperative to discuss about the current state of the water sector in Malaysia. As of 2022, water supply access coverage stood at 97.1% in urban areas and 97.0% in rural areas. Meanwhile, sewerage services covered 85.4% of the main cities. By the end of 2025, we aim to reach 98% coverage of clean water for rural areas and 87.5% for sewerage coverage. Malaysia is committed to achieve these targets in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 6, to ensure access to clean water and sanitation for all.

4. Currently, water challenges are increasingly impacting all parts of the globe due to climate change, natural disasters as well as rapid urbanization. Malaysia, like many countries, faces challenges related to water scarcity, particularly in the face of changing climatic patterns. Irregular rainfall and

prolonged dry spells have underscored the need for innovative solutions to ensure a consistent and sustainable water supply.

5. The disruption of weather patterns also leads to extreme weather events such as the major flood disaster. When disasters such as this happens, it can destroy or contaminate the entire water supplies, which poses health risks to the public due to the spread of waterborne diseases. Considering this, improving the resilience of water and sanitation services, and protecting ecosystems will be key to water security in ensuring safe water access for all.

6. Meanwhile, rapid urbanization brings with it increased demand for water resources. Balancing the needs of a growing population with the preservation of natural ecosystems is a delicate task that requires strategic planning and sustainable practices. Pollution from industrial, agricultural, and urban activities also pose a threat to the integrity of our water bodies. Addressing water quality concerns requires a multifaceted approach involving regulatory measures, public awareness, and advanced treatment technologies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

## **Way Forward**

7. To address these challenges, NRECC is actively working on policies and initiatives to address the challenges and harness the opportunities presented by our dynamic water landscape. The Water Sector Transformation 2040

(WST 2040) identifies key focus areas that will chart the way forward for water and sewage management in Malaysia. The strategies that are laid out in the WST 2040 align with the aim of the Water Action Decade. It focuses on among others, on climate change impact and adaptation on the water sector, sustainable water resources management through Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and places emphasis on infrastructure and technologies in the water sector ecosystem.

8. The Ministry is also committed to provide access to reliable, sufficient, clean, and quality water supply at an affordable cost to all Malaysians very seriously. To stress our seriousness in this matter, a significant amount of funds have been allocated in the 2024 Budget to address water issues in states with major water problems. This is part and parcel of the several actions that the Ministry will take in the implementation of the “Madani Economy: Empowering the People” economic framework.

9. Apart from these measures, the Ministry is also looking at strengthening the legislative framework through the amendments of the Water Services Industry Act [Act 655]. We will also be implementing measures to increase the financial sustainability of the water industry through tariff revisions. The restructuring of water tariffs is important for water operators to continue making continuous investments in infrastructure development needed to increase the operational efficiency and service quality to consumers.

Ladies and gentlemen,

10. I wish to conclude by saying that the MIWC is more than an event; it is a platform for collaboration, innovation, and collective action. I encourage you to actively engage in the sessions, panel discussions, and networking opportunities. Let us leverage our collective knowledge, experiences, and resources to develop practical solutions that will drive the sustainable transformation of our water ecosystems.

11. Again, thank you to the organizers for inviting me today and congratulations on the success of the event. I wish you all a fruitful and inspiring experience at the MIWC 2023. Thank you.