



MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

SPEECH

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**MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY**

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INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON ANTARCTICA**

BANGI RESORT HOTEL, BANGI SELANGOR

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TERIMA KASIH TUAN PENGERUSI MAJLIS

MENGHADAP,

**KEBAWAH DULI YANG MAHA MULIA AL-WATHIQU BILLAH SULTAN
MIZAN ZAINAL ABIDIN IBNI ALMARHUM SULTAN MAHMUD AL-
MUKTAFI BILLAH SHAH,**

SULTAN BAGI NEGERI TERENGGANU DARUL IMAN SERTA SEGALA
JAJAHAN TAKLUKNYA

DAN JUGA PENAUNG, YAYASAN PENYELIDIKAN ANTARTIKA
SULTAN MIZAN.

SEMOGA TUANKU DILANJUTKAN USIA DAN DILIMPAHKAN RAHMAT
OLEH ALLAH SWT.

TERLEBIH DAHULU, PATIK DAN SEMUA PARA HADIRIN
MENJUNJUNG DULI DAN MENJUNJUNG SETINGGI-TINGGI KASIH
DI ATAS LIMPAH PERKENAN KEBAWAH DULI YANG MAHA MULIA
TUANKU MENCEMAR DULI BERANGKAT KE SEMINAR
PERSIDANGAN ANTARABANGSA ANTARTIKA MALAYSIA YANG
KESEPULUH (MISA10) PADA PETANG INI.

SESUNGGUHNYA, INI JELAS MENUNJUKKAN KEPERIHATINAN DAN
KOMITMEN TINGGI KEBAWAH DULI YANG MAHA MULIA TUANKU
TERHADAP ISU WILAYAH POLAR DAN PERKEMBANGAN YPASM.

AMPUN TUANKU,

Yang Amat Berhormat Dato' Seri Dr Ahmad Samsuri Mokhtar
Menteri Besar Terengganu

Merangkap Pengerusi Lembaga Pemegang Amanah Yayasan Penyelidikan Antartika Sultan Mizan

**Yang Berhormat Mulia Tengku Seri Bijaya
Raja Dato' Seri Tengku Farok Hussin Tengku Abdul Jalil**
Setiausaha Kerajaan Terengganu

Yang Berbahagia Datuk Dr Ching Thoo A/L Kim
Ketua Setiausaha Kementerian Sumber Asli dan Kelestarian Alam

Yang Berbahagia Dato' Dr. Haji Megat Sany Megat Ahmad Supian
Timbalan Ketua Setiausaha (Dasar), Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi

Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Salleh Mohd Nor
Ahli Lembaga Pemegang Amanah,
Yayasan Penyelidikan Antartika Sultan Mizan

Yang Berbahagia Prof Dato' Ts Dr Norazah Mohd Nordin
Timbalan Naib Canselor
Hal Ehwal Jaringan Industri & Masyarakat, UKM

Yang Berusaha Abd Shukor Jamaluddin
Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif YPASM

Duta-Duta Perwakilan Asing

Ahli Lembaga Pemegang Amanah YPASM

Pegawai-pegawai Kanan
Kementerian Sumber Asli dan Kelestarian Alam dan UKM

Ketua-Ketua Organisasi dan Penyelidik Polar Dari Dalam dan Luar
Negara

Dif-dif Jemputan

AMPUN TUANKU,

PATIK MOHON LIMPAH PERKENAN KEBAWAH DULI YANG MAHA MULIA TUANKU UNTUK PATIK MENYAMPAIKAN UCAPAN DALAM BAHASA INGGERIS KEPADA PARA HADIRIN SEKALIAN.

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. It is with great enthusiasm that I stand before you today on the auspicious occasion of the *Tenth Malaysian International Seminar on Antarctica*. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the organisers for extending this invitation to speak. Additionally, I extend a warm Malaysian welcome to all our esteemed foreign guests and participants. Your presence here enriches our gathering, highlighting the global significance of our shared commitment to Antarctic research and exploration. Again, *Selamat Datang*, welcome.

2. The Antarctic continent continues to evoke a sense of mystery and excitement among all. The world scientific community is especially curious about the potential benefits that it can offer humanity. Our growing understanding of the Great White Continent likewise increases our awareness of the importance of this unique ecosystem. For instance, the highly reflective surfaces of the Antarctic ice sheets make a significant contribution to regulating global climate by reflecting 80% of incoming solar radiation into space. However, climatic changes symbolised by the melting of Antarctic ice sheets are predicted to continue and accelerate. The excessive freshwater from the melting ice promotes ocean acidification and sea level rise, seriously affecting areas with considerable coastal populations, fishery, and farming such as Malaysia. This is why the Antarctica matters, even to a country like ours so very far from it.

MALAYSIA AND THE ANTARCTICA: A BACKGROUND

Ladies and gentlemen,

3. As most of you are aware, as early as 1982, our then Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad raised the “Question of Antarctica” at the Thirty-seventh United Nations General Assembly. Malaysia advocated that “Antarctica should be an area of common interest for the benefit of all mankind”. Malaysia’s involvement in Antarctic research began early in 1997 and the first scientific expedition started in 1999, which marks 25 years—a quarter of a century—of our country’s research in Antarctica.

4. With the establishment of the **Yayasan Penyelidikan Antartika Sultan Mizan (YPASM)** in 2012 and its mission to sustain Malaysia’s presence in Polar and to strengthen research capacity in the area of global frontier sciences, I am pleased to see the increasing amount of research in ever-widening fields. I am also happy to note Malaysia's global ranking of 36th in the publication of papers on Arctic and Antarctic studies. These contributions, fostered through collaborative efforts by YPASM and **The National Antarctic Research Centre (NARC)**, underscore the dedication and excellence of Malaysian researchers. As we gather for this momentous Opening Ceremony, YPASM will also award its 2024 research grants to selected Malaysian scientists, further fuelling the discovery and innovation in our polar endeavours.

5. Let me also say that the theme of MISA10, *'Polar Research for Sustainability and Planetary Health,'* aligns with the NRES ministry’s commitments, which encompass:

- i. Developing and coordinating the implementation of environmental sustainability-related policies,

- ii. Designing, negotiating, and coordinating the implementation of multi-lateral agreements related to environmental sustainability and,
- iii. Enhancing and promoting environmental sustainability knowledge among the public.

6. On 20 March 2023, the final segment of the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report (AR6)** was released. The IPCC also released 10 major findings from the 2023 IPCC Report on Climate Change and these included:

- i. Human-induced global warming of 1.1 degrees Celsius has spurred changes to the Earth's climate that are unprecedented in recent human history. Should warming reach between 2 degrees C (3.6 degrees F) and 3 degrees C (5.4 degrees F), for example, the West Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets could melt almost completely and irreversibly over thousands of years, causing sea levels to rise by several meters.
- ii. Some climate impacts are already so severe they cannot be adapted to, leading to losses and damages. For example, coastal communities in the tropics have seen entire coral reef systems that once supported their livelihoods and food security experience widespread mortality, while rising sea levels have forced other low-lying neighbourhoods to move to higher ground and abandon cultural sites. New research also shows that the climate crisis is projected to cause a nearly 20% decline in countries' income globally over the next 26 years, with

damages increasing up to six times more than the cost to limit global warming.

7. Reflecting on the profound findings of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report, it becomes evident that urgent action is imperative to mitigate the catastrophic impacts of climate change, including in relation to the Antarctic. These insights serve as a reminder of the interconnectedness of global ecosystems and the pressing need for collaborative efforts to address climate challenges.

WHAT MALAYSIA HAS DONE

Ladies and gentlemen,

8. Other than making progress in science, we have taken several steps to participate in the governance of the Antarctic. Since 2011, Malaysia has acceded to the **Antarctic Treaty System (ATS)** and ratified the **Madrid Protocol or Protocol on the Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty in 2016**. We also have been accepted as an observer in the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs or COMNAP since 2017.

9. Malaysia is committed to preserving the Antarctic continent through participation in the **46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM 46)** in Kochi, India next week. Additionally, I am pleased to note that **Dr. Sheeba Chenoli** who is an associate at the NARC-UM and currently chairs the **SCAR Action Group on Tropical and Antarctic Teleconnection (TATE)** will deliver a SCAR Lecture at the ATCM Meeting entitled "Decoding the intricate link between the Tropics and

Antarctica”. I am proud to see one of our researchers representing Malaysia in this significant capacity.

CONCLUSION: POLAR REGIONS MUST BE PRESERVED

Ladies and gentlemen,

10. I believe the polar regions, the Arctic and Antarctic, are the barometers of our planet's health. If the rapid warming of these areas cannot be halted, then we will see, and we will suffer, from significant changes in climate and sea level rise. Indeed, we are arguably, already witnessing some of the most profound and rapid changes due to human-induced climate change and global warming. These changes will directly impact Malaysia's climate and ocean conditions.

11. The heatwave we're going through now will be nothing if we cannot get climate action right. Therefore, the theme of the 10th MISA seminar, Polar Research for Sustainability and Planetary Health, is highly appropriate for leading Malaysian scientists and the international community to understand how this climate crisis will impact not only the Arctic and Antarctic but also its effects on this region.

12. I am confident that the deliberations and outcomes of this seminar will deepen our understanding of the critical issues at hand and pave the way for concrete actions and impactful change. Together, we can shape a more sustainable and resilient future for current and future generations. Doing so, among many other things, requires us to preserve the polar regions. Our gathering here today is part of Malaysia's contribution to this weighty but crucial task.

13. As such, I would like to express my sincere hope that each of you will find this seminar and workshop to be profoundly enriching and productive. Before concluding, I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the organisers, particularly YPASM, UKM, and NARC, as well as all those who have contributed their tireless efforts to bring this event to fruition. Additionally, I wish to convey our deepest appreciation to the Government of Terengganu for their unwavering support of the Foundation. With these brief remarks, I extend my sincere thank you to each of you for your kind attention and participation. Thank you.

AMPUN TUANKU,

Sekianlah sahaja persembahkan ucapan patik, patik sekali lagi menjunjung duli dan menjunjung setinggi-tinggi kasih di atas limpah perkenan Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku mencemar duli berangkat ke persidangan seminar pada petang ini.

AMPUN TUANKU,

Wabillahitaufik walhidayah wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.