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KEYNOTE ADDRESS

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**MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND
CLIMATE CHANGE**

**1ST CONFERENCE ON RETHINKING THE FUTURE OF
SUSTAINABILITY**

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ROYAL CHULAN KL

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi
Wabarakatuh.

Salutations (TBC)

Esteemed sponsors and partners, members of the media, and distinguished guests;

Good evening and Salam Malaysia Madani to you all,

1. A very good morning to you all. I am honoured and pleased to be addressing you all today as we convene the **1st Conference on Rethinking the Future of Sustainability**, organised by **UMP Holdings Sdn Bhd** in association with the **Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA)**. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to UMP Holdings and UMPSA for bringing this timely event to fruition, addressing themes of utmost significance.
2. Our gathering comes at a moment of great importance, as countries around the world seek to emerge from a global economic downturn caused by an unprecedented pandemic. As policymakers attempt to ensure that the engines of the global economy roar to life, we find ourselves at a crossroads due to geopolitical uncertainty and conflict, including the ongoing atrocities visited upon the people of Palestine, the war in Ukraine, tensions in the South China Sea as well as disruptions to global supply chains and impacted food security. In the midst of it all is the continuing and indeed exacerbating existential challenge of climate change. As such, we must carefully balance our nascent recovery with unwavering attention to environmental sustainability.

Ladies and gentlemen,

WHY SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS

3. In 1972, the **Club of Rome** issued a report entitled the “**Limits to Growth**”, which discussed the possibility of exponential economic and population growth with finite supply of natural resources. It argued that, without substantial changes in world population, industrialisation, pollution, food production and resource depletion, “*the most probable result will be a rather sudden and uncontrollable decline in both population and industrial capacity*”.
4. The report went on to say that “*the limits to growth on this planet will be reached sometime within the next one hundred years*”. While the document provoked extensive debate and even criticism, it was nevertheless the genesis for a series of discussions and research that produced the **Millennium Development Goals** which were superseded by the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015.
5. Today, in the face of growing global temperatures and natural disasters such as increasingly severe floods, which has also affected Malaysia, most mainstream thinking will agree that adopting sustainability—including and especially in our economies—will be crucial if humanity is to continue to have a future on this planet. Indeed, I think the “rethinking” part of this Conference’s title is not so much a call to consider whether sustainability is needed or not.
6. Most sane people will agree that it is. And as I will argue, the means to bring it about, whether in terms of policies or resources, are mostly in place. Rather, the “rethinking” we need is how to ensure the necessary transitions are inclusive and lead to a more equitable world for all even as we work to ensure humanity’s survival on it. Inclusivity is the key to win the climate war.

Ladies and gentlemen,

NETR AS THE CORE TO MALAYSIA'S DECARBONISATION

7. The theme of this conference, "*Emerging Trends on Environment and Automotive Technology*" is in line with the **Sustainable Development Goals**. The SDGs, in turn, were key inspiration behind the **National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR)**. The NETR is not just pertinent; it is profoundly relevant. It charts an ambitious course for our nation, guiding us toward a cleaner and more sustainable energy future. This visionary roadmap encompasses bold targets aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions while significantly transitioning the country towards a low carbon energy.
8. The most prominent environmental concern faced by the international community has been **greenhouse gas emissions (GHG emission)** which is a key determinant of environmental hazards such as climate change and global warming. Carbon dioxide gas, which is mostly derived from the burning and combustion of fossil resources, causes 76% of total GHG emissions and is widely acknowledged as the primary source of GHG and poses serious consequences to human lives and the environment.
9. Because of the global warming induced by GHG emissions, countries all over the world have taken mitigation actions to minimise respective carbon footprints or carbon emissions through sustainable utilisation of resources, including via the adoption of energy efficiency practices and greater deployment of renewable energy. In the case of Malaysia, the government has committed to systematically ramp-up the share of RE power installed capacity to 70% by 2050 as an immediate action to effectively mitigate the impact of climate change.
10. Furthermore, we have also unveiled the National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR) which is an energy sector wide implementation plan to drive the low carbon energy transition pathway for the power, transportation, manufacturing and oil and gas sectors. The Ministry of

Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change (NRECC), and its related agencies is a key implementer of the roadmap, with 6 of the 10 flagship projects being by the bodies under us.

11. Moreover, the NETR should not only be seen in terms of its contribution to decarbonisation or GHG emissions—although those are its main objectives. Rather, 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 that jobs can continue to be created and standards of living can continue to develop.**
12. In addition, in the search for environmentally friendly sources of energy like “renewable 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 emission. 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.
13. In recognition of this, the Dewan Rakyat has recently passed the **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act**, which I tabled. **The EECA will provide the mandate and the means for the government to effectively regulate the adoption of energy efficiency and conservation practices, thus enabling the public and private sectors, as well as the general public, to embrace energy efficiency thoroughly and inclusively.**
14. 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.

15. There are of course many other things that the government of Malaysia is doing to enshrine sustainability. But I have highlighted energy today because it involves all of us since we use it—in one form or another—every day of our lives. We will not be able to address climate change without an effective and just energy transition.
16. With that being said, Malaysia remains committed to its role in transitioning our energy system and reducing our carbon footprint on a national level to support global climate efforts while upholding the principles of climate justice. Nevertheless, it's important to recognise that substantial emission reductions in Malaysia alone won't be sufficient to make a significant impact on the worldwide fight against climate change.
17. The shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy is an absolute necessity, but it must be carried out with fairness and equality. This means acknowledging varying levels of responsibility for the climate crisis, which are rooted in the historical actions of developed nations. Consequently, addressing climate vulnerabilities demands significant emission cuts by major global polluters, particularly developed countries. The developed nations must lead by example by implementing substantial emission reductions within their own borders and by offering technology transfer, climate financing, and capacity building to developing nations, in line with the Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) principle.
18. Malaysia will remain actively engaged on the international stage, especially by collaborating with other like-minded developing nations in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations, including in the upcoming 28th Conference of Parties meeting at Dubai UAE. We will continue to articulate our positions

on matters that could impact our ability to develop or define our policy framework.

Ladies and gentlemen,

BALANCE NEEDED

19. Obviously, there is a delicate equilibrium to be maintained—one that pays equal attention to environmental sustainability and economic growth. Economic growth should not come at the expense of our finite natural resources and the well-being of our global population.
20. Hence, this conference serves as a vital platform for us to explore and deliberate these emerging technologies, to contemplate how they can be effectively integrated into our national framework, and how they can shape a more sustainable future for Malaysia.
21. I hold the firm belief that the discussions that will unfold during this conference will generate new ideas and innovative solutions 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 ideas and concepts of sustainability.
22. I believe this meeting of minds that assembles the wealth of knowledge and diversity of voices from both industry and academia will help to “rethink” the future of sustainability for us to be able to bestow upon our future generations a planet that is clean, fresh, beautiful, habitable and provides a refuge to achieve greater wellbeing for individuals and communities.
23. Our collective goal must be to deliberate on the profound challenges that lie at the intersection of economic growth and environmental sustainability. While no one conference will be able to solve climate

change, I hope that the discussion today can result in resolutions and solutions that will guide the actions of policy decision-makers.

CONCLUSION

24. To conclude, I want again to express my sincere gratitude to the organisers, UMP Holdings and UMPSA, the sponsors, 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 truly honoured to be the guest of honour at the inaugural conference and hope this conference will continue to be an important annual event for years to come.

25. I hope and trust that more bodies in Malaysia, including and especially in the private sector, will soon follow in your noble example. I am eager to witness the outcomes of your deliberations and am committed to working alongside you to build a more sustainable and prosperous future for Malaysia and our global community.

Thank you for your attention and let us now proceed with the great work that lies ahead.

Wabillahi taufik wal hidayah. Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.