

Revised DRAFT



**WORLD URBAN FORUM 9
CLOSING CEREMONY
SPEECH**

**THE HONOURABLE DATO' SERI DR. AHMAD
ZAHID HAMIDI
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA**

**13 February 2018
(Tuesday - 2.00pm)**

Good afternoon Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the people of Malaysia, I thank you all for your presence here and I hope you have had an enjoyable stay in Kuala Lumpur and have beautiful memories to take home with you. I wish you a safe journey.

(KIV)

Let me firstly thank The Honourable Datuk Seri Abdul Rahman bin Dahlan, Minister of the Prime Minister's Department who is here with us today. He was instrumental in securing Malaysia's bid as the host of this Forum during his tenure as the Minister of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government.

I would like to inform that due to some very urgent matters, The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister is unable to be with us today. He apologized to all of you.

I shall be reading his speech on his behalf.

SALUTATION

The Honorable Dato' Maimunah Shariff, Executive Director, UN Habitat;

Right Honorable Ministers, Ambassadors and Consuls, Esteemed Officials, Participants from NGOs, Community Based Groups, Academicians, Professionals, Students, Distinguished guests, ladies & gentlemen.

I am indeed honoured to be invited to officially close the 9th World Urban Forum. I have been informed that the last 7 days have been filled with many activities and programmes, from high level Ministerial meetings, Assemblies of grass roots, women, business, children and youths, dialogue sessions, networking events to technical visits. It has been recorded that there were 33,654 participants from 194 nations. It is just like the

Olympics of conferences, only this time, it's not competing for medals, but a meeting of the minds to find practical solutions and actions to address prevailing urban issues.

OVERALL APPROACH TO URBAN ISSUES

Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Seeing so many young faces today reminds me that the youth are the urban future; they will be the citizens, the managers, the employers, the policy makers of our future cities. We all have a role to play in respecting and caring for our cities, not just to further improve on what we have today, but also sustaining it for our future generations. It is too easy to forget that the urban problems that prevail today are a result of our inadequacies of yesterday, and the only way to address prevailing urban issues is to act without delay today for a

better tomorrow. If we want change for the better, we have to make them ourselves by not repeating mistakes of the past.

As billions more are expected to live in cities by 2035, improving the quality of life in cities is an important goal that goes beyond boundaries.

Likewise, our successes can only be built on coordinated efforts of the entire international community. For instance, no nation or community can single-handedly deal with the global warming that is already having an effect on our day-to-day living whether it is in urban, suburban, rural, temperate or sub-tropical areas.

Different countries are at different stages of economic growth and prosperity. We know that some are capable of doing more and have a lot more to make their cities liveable whereas others may not have the capacities and financial

resources to work on in improving their cities. That is why a forum such as this is pertinent for us to share ideas and actions, to see ourselves working towards a common goal of making our future city places for all, so that no one is left behind.

I hope the Forum's events over the last 7 days have created the networking for sharing of ideas and knowledge, and the creation of opportunities. I hope each one of you have taken every opportunity available to fully grasp and appreciate all the success stories shared, transformative ideas and innovative ways to deal with issues of urbanisation for a successful implementation of the New Urban Agenda. I was also informed that there have been many dialogue sessions which have facilitated better understanding of each other's positions and enhances our ability to make informed decisions. All these, including the

assemblies and high level roundtables have resulted in the formulation of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration. I believe this is just the beginning of a much anticipated and hopeful journey towards a sustainable urbanisation for all of us and for the generations to come.

I congratulate all delegates and participants that have worked diligently to arrive at the resolution. It may be an ambitious target which involves a great deal of hard effort and close co-operation, but it also underlines the commitment and determination of governments at all levels, professional bodies, community and non-governmental organizations and all citizens in working closely towards a future of better cities.

WAY FORWARD FOR URBANIZATION IN THE MALAYSIA

As host and signatory of the KL Declaration, Malaysia agrees to uphold the principles and goals of the KL Declaration and will ensure the necessary actions will be implemented. We will also ensure the following:

- i. That the policies, strategies and action plans in Malaysia's Development Policies and growth plans are enforced and implemented with the right government support of finance, coordination, man power and machinery;
- ii. That we give priority on urban issues and climate change without compromising on rural equality, social cohesion and economic growth in all sectors;

- iii. We ensure the voices of the people are listened to and partnerships developed to have more effective actions and desired outcomes for the good of all.

We will also ensure that at the national level the strategies and actions of this year's 2018 Budget and the 11th Malaysia plans, which have embodied the needs of the people, will be implemented effectively and efficiently. As an example, we will ensure that the citizens or peoples' home ownership agenda since 2013 will be continued and the Government aims to build 1 million affordable houses through collaboration between the state governments and the private sector.

To support national innovation, our major cities need to innovate to stay relevant. Today, major cities in the world do not only compete for investments but also for best talents to transform

themselves. Hence, to increase the competitiveness of our nation, cities, namely Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu have been identified to spur economic growth.

Visualising Malaysia in 2030, among others, the population would have reached about 36 million, the urbanisation rate would have increased to 80 percent, the GDP at 2.6 trillion ringgit, GDP per capita of more than 117 thousand ringgit and world trade would have exceeded 44 trillion US dollars. However, Malaysia will not be neglecting the rural areas even though the focus will be on cities and urban issues.

The urban and the rural are increasingly interconnected. Rural areas have become places of consumption, as leisure and recreation have become important functions of rural areas. There are also indications that increased urbanisation

even leads to a stronger appreciation of green areas situated far beyond city limits. Rural areas with their highly valued natural amenities nowadays seem increasingly to host urban wellbeing, given the positive relation found between green areas and human wellbeing. Malaysia will strive to ensure that our National public policies and urban and regional plans help to support economic growth while protecting natural and agricultural land uses.

Malaysia already has its economic planning framework and we have the national physical development as well as the urban development frameworks that support sustainable development, growth and management of our cities. To implement the strategies and programmes, we will strengthen the role of the local government as the third tier of government machinery so that they are innovative, efficient and capable of collaborating

and partnering with the community, the private sector as well as with organizations from other countries.

CONCLUSION

Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Improving our cities is not a job just for either the Government, the private sector or the public. It requires collective efforts and more importantly a change in the way we do things – it requires public-private-peoples' partnership - the 4P's , so to speak, to achieve our goals and objectives. Let us pool our resources, let us take down barriers and seize opportunities arising from this Forum. Our watchwords should be knowledge, innovation and collaboration. Because sharing knowledge and learning from others is the only way to move forward.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in organising this ostentatious event and ensuring that it ran smoothly.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you have had a long week and have participated actively and I am sure you are all looking forward to getting back to your respective homes. I hope you have had a memorable and enjoyable stay in Kuala Lumpur and will continue to see the rest of our country. This may be the end of the World Urban Forum 9, but it may also be the new beginning for many more great things to come.

Once again I thank you for your participation and contribution to this Forum and till we meet again, let me wish you all a safe journey home.

Thank You