

OFFICIAL KEYNOTE ADDRESS
THE RT. HON. DATO' SERI DR. AHMAD ZAHID HAMIDI
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

GRAND DINNER
IN CONJUNCTION WITH
GLOBAL HALAL SUMMIT 2024 (GHAS 2024)

18 SEPTEMBER 2024 I WEDNESDAY I 8.30 PM
GRAND HYATT KUALA LUMPUR

SALUTATION

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,

Assalamualaikum Warrahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,

1. Alhamdulillah, with deep gratitude to Allah, we are gathered here tonight to reflect on our journey and our shared mission to elevate halal standards around the world. Our mission not only ensures economic growth and enhanced trade… but also promises better livelihoods for communities globally.

2. As we move forward on this path, I am reminded of the words of Allah in the Qur'an:

   "… eat from the good things We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah." (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:172)

   This verse reminds us that halal is not just about compliance.. it embodies our faith, gratitude, and commitment to quality.

3. Together, we have the opportunity to capture a trillion-dollar market and uplift the global halal industry. As the saying goes, *"Coming together is a beginning,*

staying together is progress, and working together is success."

4. The power of collaboration is at the heart of this summit's theme. By working in unity - governments, industry leaders, certification bodies, and global partners - we can elevate halal standards worldwide, ensuring sustainable growth and better living standards for halal communities.

A Half-Century of Halal Leadership: Malaysia's Impact and Future Prospects

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. Tonight, we celebrate a major milestone - 50 years of Malaysia's pioneering journey in the halal industry. Our journey began modestly with the issuance of our first halal certification letter in 1974. Today, Malaysia stands as a leading authority in halal excellence - setting global benchmarks for certification and innovation.

6. This progress has been supported by a robust halal ecosystem… which has driven significant economic growth. This year alone, Malaysia's halal exports surged by 18% - underscoring our

position as a key player in this rapidly expanding market.

7. By 2030, the global Halal Economy is projected to reach USD 5 trillion, with Malaysia expected to contribute over USD 113 billion domestically. The halal sector is poised to account for 8.1% of Malaysia's GDP by 2025… highlighting our country's important role. These achievements represent more than just statistics - they signal real opportunities for businesses of all sizes to thrive.

8. A notable opportunity or **a solid game changer is the development of Halal Parks.** Malaysia is home to 14

strategically located halal parks, spanning 200,000 acres. These parks serve as thriving hubs for both multinational corporations and local SMEs.

9. Our dedicated **Task Force is actively working to enhance these halal parks**, transforming them into *epicentres* of production and innovation. They are designed to foster growth and advance halal business practices - positioning Malaysia as a global leader in the halal market.

10. During my recent visit to Shanghai, the Chief Ministers of Pahang and Perak joined me in collaborating with local halal players to leverage our resources. We are offering prime locations for factories and farms, along with comprehensive infrastructure and a skilled workforce - to attract investors to the halal sector. This initiative highlights our commitment to building a strong halal ecosystem and creating a business-friendly environment for growth.

11. Furthermore, these halal parks are pivotal in promoting sustainable practices and embracing technological advancements. I believe by continuing to invest in and expand these halal parks - Malaysia not only bolsters its own position in the global halal market but also contributes significantly to international economic development and collaboration.

Strengthening the Halal Ecosystem: Enhancing Governance, Collaboration, and Expertise for a Thriving Global Halal Economy

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. Halal certification is fundamentally built on trust, transparency, and confidence - traits that are essential for an institution like JAKIM, which plays an important role in this process. While JAKIM's efforts to enhance halal certification and regulations are commendable - **the rapid expansion of the halal economy commands a robust regulatory and governance framework.** Though… the ultimate authority over halal certification rests with JAKIM and the State Islamic Religious Departments, as entrusted by the Conference of Rulers… there is always a room to elevate this governance structure to keep pace with the fast-

evolving halal landscape.

13. Just as the Malaysian Institute of Accountants (MIA) regulates the accountancy profession… the Board of Engineers governs engineering practices… and the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC) upholds medical standards - **the enhancement of our existing regulatory framework for the halal industry would streamline certification processes, bolster industry growth, and ensure rigorous oversight.** This strengthened framework will drive continuous improvements both domestically and globally.

14. As the halal economy continues to expand, **investing in the training of a new generation of halal certification professionals is essential.** With increasing global demand, expanding the pool of qualified experts is crucial to upholding the highest standards of authenticity and integrity. While JAKIM remains central in guiding this transition, an enhanced regulatory framework will help manage rising demand efficiently, streamline certification processes, and maintain consistent, reliable halal practices.

15. Furthermore, to enhance our halal certification framework, we must also leverage cutting-edge technologies like blockchain. Countries such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Australia are already using blockchain to improve transparency and combat fraud in halal certification. By adopting this technology, Malaysia can strengthen its halal processes, reduce trade barriers, and align with global standards. This strategic move will boost consumer confidence and solidify Malaysia's position as a leading global halal hub.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

CONCLUSION

16. In conclusion, our unwavering commitment to enhancing the halal ecosystem underscores Malaysia's dedication to excellence in halal certification. As we celebrate 50 years of pioneering achievements… it is crucial to recognize the contributions of those who have championed halal practices, driven innovation, and ensured compliance with Shariah law. Your relentless efforts as our "halal warriors" have established Malaysia as a beacon of global halal leadership, and for that, I extend my heartfelt thanks to you all.

17. **Looking ahead,** the future of halal certification in Malaysia is bright and full of promise. Our efforts today will not only sustain but also propel the growth of the global halal sector, ensuring that Malaysia remains at the forefront of halal excellence.

18. Let us remain dedicated to these goals, as we continue to build a future where halal practices are celebrated and upheld with the highest standards. Thank you.

Wabillahi Taufiq wal Hidayah, Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.