

OFFICIAL OPENING SPEECH BY
THE HONOURABLE DR. AHMAD ZAHID BIN HAMIDI
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

AT THE
OPENING CEREMONY OF MIHAS@DUBAI 2024

18 NOVEMBER 2024 (MONDAY)
10.00AM

MIHAS PAVILION, HALL 3
DUBAI WORLD TRADE CENTRE (DWTC)

(Salutation will be provided)

Representatives from the Media,

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh and a very good morning.

MIHAS@Dubai 2024: A New Era for Malaysia's Global Halal Leadership

1. It is my profound honour to stand before you at the opening ceremony of MIHAS@Dubai 2024. Today, we begin a significant journey – the first international debut of the Malaysia International Halal Showcase, or MIHAS, outside of Malaysia. This expansion underscores our commitment to elevating Malaysia's halal industry on a global stage.

2. Hosting MIHAS in Dubai is a strategic decision to leverage Dubai's role as a trading hub in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. After 20 successful editions in Malaysia, this expansion reflects our vision to globalize the halal industry and introduce it to new markets.

3. The **Halal Economy** has evolved far beyond food, now encompassing pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, finance, and tourism. This expansion speaks to the universal values embedded in halal – fairness, ethics, and inclusivity – showing that halal is relevant to all, regardless of background or faith.

4. The potential of the halal economy is immense, with global demand for halal products projected to reach USD 5 trillion by 2030. However, challenges such as inconsistencies in certification and gaps in supply chains remain. Malaysia is committed to addressing these issues and ensuring halal products are trusted and accessible worldwide.

5. Notably, Malaysia has developed a comprehensive and globally trusted halal certification system. Through the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), our certification is internationally

recognized, with **88 certification bodies worldwide** endorsing it. This trust has positioned Malaysia as a leader in the halal industry.

6. Malaysia also has built a robust and mature halal ecosystem, **consistently ranked at the top of the Global Islamic Economy Indicator.** This achievement reflects our unwavering commitment to high standards, quality, and integrity, which collectively underscore Malaysia's leadership and dedication to advancing the global halal sector.

7. A significant opportunity for our global partners lies within Malaysia's **Halal Parks**, which play a crucial role in our halal ecosystem. With **14 strategically located parks covering 200,000 acres**, these Halal Parks serve as dynamic hubs for halal businesses, enhancing food security as well as attracting multinational corporations and local SMEs alike. I warmly invite each of you to explore these opportunities and join us in Malaysia, where you can invest in a thriving halal ecosystem that is primed for growth, innovation, and sustainability.

Strengthening Malaysia's Halal Trade: Achievements, Partnerships, and Future Aspirations

Ladies and gentlemen,

8. In 2023, Malaysia recorded **USD12.5 billion** in halal exports, with MIHAS playing a critical role in unlocking even greater potential for the industry. Significantly, the UAE emerged as the largest destination for Malaysian halal products among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

countries, with imports valued at **USD256 million.** This strong trade relationship between Malaysia and the UAE underscores the high demand and trust in Malaysia's premium halal products within the region.

9. InsyaAllah, This year, with MIHAS@Dubai, we aim to achieve an export sales target of **RM1 billion (USD250 million)**, demonstrating our confidence in the demand for Malaysian halal products.

10. I applaud **MATRADE**, Malaysia's trade promotion agency, for its dedication in advancing Malaysia's position in the global halal market. By hosting MIHAS here in Dubai, MATRADE is strengthening Malaysia's ties with the Middle East and beyond. This isn't just a showcase of our commitment; it's a pledge to continue building a robust, inclusive halal ecosystem.

CLOSING

Ladies and gentlemen,

11. As we come together today, let us view MIHAS@Dubai not only as a trade fair but as a platform for building enduring partnerships. Through our commitment to **Halal Diplomacy**, Malaysia seeks to strengthen international ties, create a dynamic halal ecosystem, and establish strategic partnerships that advance shared goals.

12. I encourage all attendees to seize this opportunity at MIHAS@Dubai as a platform to forge lasting relationships. Together, we can strengthen

the global halal community, benefiting our businesses, societies, and future generations.

13. With that, it is my honour to officially declare **MIHAS@Dubai 2024 open**. May this event be a resounding success, fostering new bonds and advancing the halal economy worldwide.

Thank you.

Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.