



OFFICE OF THE
MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT
(FEDERAL TERRITORIES)

MINISTERIAL KEYNOTE ADDRESS

YB DR. ZALIHA MUSTAFA
MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT
(FEDERAL TERRITORIES)

IN CONJUNCTION WITH

WE IEM CONFERENCE 2024

21 SEPTEMBER 2024

KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTRE
(KLCC)

INTRODUCTION

Distinguished guests, esteemed experts, ladies and gentlemen,

1. Alhamdulillah, it is an honour for me to address this esteemed platform at the 2nd Women Engineers Institution of Engineers Malaysia (WE IEM) Conference 2024. The theme, 'ESG: Leveraging Global Talents and Diversity,' is profoundly relevant to the challenges and opportunities we face today, making our discussions both timely and necessary.

2. We must harness the full potential of human talent and diversity to address global challenges and implement bold solutions. I have personally seen how diverse talents and perspectives drive innovation and contribute to sustainable development.

3. A guiding principle I hold dear is that the well-being of individuals should be at the core of every decision we make. Whether in engineering, governance, or environmental preservation, our ultimate goal is to serve and uplift people. This ties directly to the essence of ESG, where complex systems are built for the good of society.

4. Throughout my career, I have witnessed how diversity, such as team members with various backgrounds come together to tackle challenges. The inclusion of different perspectives often leads to innovative solution across various fields, unlocking spectrum of ideas, building effective teams, especially in addressing ESG challenges, which demand comprehensive yet inclusive result or conclusion. Diversity shall be considered in every dimension, including gender, ethnicity, thought, culture, as well as background.

UNDERSTANDING ESG

Ladies and gentlemen,

5. ESG, which stands for Environmental, Social, and Governance, is not just a policy framework but a transformative tool guiding both public and private sectors, towards equitable and sustainable growth.

6. Globally, we have seen several nations that make bold moves towards sustainable economies. France's Anti-waste Law, Japan's 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) framework, and Australia's waste reduction efforts are prime examples of how different regions are championing sustainability. In fact, here in Federal Territories, we introduced waste to wealth initiatives, zero waste policy that leads to circular economy programs like 1 Community 1 Recycle or 1C1R @ PPR, including mobile 1C1R in order to encourage and inculcate the values.

7. Malaysia has also committed to ESG principles through energy efficiency programmes and large-scale renewable energy initiatives such as the Large-Scale Solar (LSS) projects, positioning us as a regional leader in sustainable development.

8. In our efforts to advance these objectives, we recently launched the ESG Centre Kuala Lumpur at TRX. This milestone sets a new standard, offering a unique platform that goes beyond traditional ESG centres, which often focus solely on research.

9. The ESG Centre Kuala Lumpur is publicly accessible, providing open resources and knowledge to educate industries and communities alike. Through this initiative, we are empowering everyone to play an active role in addressing global challenges, further strengthening our commitment to sustainable and equitable growth.

10. For your information, this centre has received interests from international communities that wanted to learn from us.

11. I am sure that everyone here is aware of the impact of ESG on climate change and resource management is particularly crucial. The collective efforts of diverse perspectives will ensure a sustainable future that benefits both businesses and society or the community.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ESG

Distinguished guests,

12. ESG plays a critical role in shaping sustainable economic growth by creating pathways that are equitable and future-proof. The Environmental component focuses on reducing harm

and developing strategies to preserve our planet. Malaysia has embraced energy efficiency, particularly in government buildings in Putrajaya, our model low-carbon city. Solar panels, smart cooling systems, and LED lighting have been implemented to reduce energy consumption.

13. The Green Building Index (GBI) has played a vital role in ensuring sustainability in construction. Buildings such as Menara CIMB and The Pinnacle Sunway showcase how engineers are contributing to sustainability by reducing energy use, lowering operational costs, and minimising carbon footprints.

14. The Social component emphasises fairness, inclusion, labour rights, and community development. Incorporating these values strengthens the social fabric of our nation and uplifts all individuals.

15. The Governance pillar promotes accountability, transparency, and ethical leadership, ensuring that corporate strategies align with societal needs. Within this pillar, integrity is of utmost importance, especially for engineers. As problem-solvers and developers of infrastructure, engineers must uphold the highest ethical standards. The decisions engineers make today will shape the future, and only through a steadfast commitment to integrity can we ensure that their solutions are fair, reliable, and benefit society as a whole.

16. ESG initiatives are projected to drive Malaysia's economic growth and solidify our role as a regional leader in sustainability.

DIVERSITY'S ROLE IN ESG

Ladies and gentlemen,

17. Diversity is the foundation of innovation, strengthening the Environmental, Social, and Governance pillars by providing fresh perspectives to tackle complex challenges.

18. These diverse viewpoints bring ground-breaking solutions for issues like climate change, resource management, and ecosystem protection, as seen in Malaysia's Renewable Energy Roadmap and Large-Scale Solar projects.

19. I believe, Engineers, with women leading alongside men, are key drivers of this transformation. In line with Malaysia MADANI, IEM has great opportunity to champion 'Inclusive Engineering,' reshaping sustainability and inclusivity in engineering practices, creating a more progressive society.

THE GLOBAL TALENT ADVANTAGE

Distinguished guests,

20. In today's interconnected world, the ability to draw from a diverse, global talent pool is critical for achieving innovation and progress. Global talent not only brings unique skills and experiences but also different cultural perspectives that are crucial when addressing complex global challenges like climate change and sustainable development.

21. By tapping into expertise from around the world, industries can enrich their strategies and develop more comprehensive solutions, particularly in the implementation of ESG principles.

22. A prime example of how global talent contributes to ground-breaking results is the Penang Second Bridge project. This ambitious infrastructure development brought together engineers from Malaysia, China, and South Korea, blending diverse engineering techniques and technologies.

23. Such collaborations demonstrate the immense value of cross-border expertise in overcoming technical challenges, achieving cost-effective solutions, and implementing innovative designs. The success of this project highlights the importance of attracting and retaining international talent to execute complex initiatives.

24. To remain competitive and sustainable, Malaysia must actively promote itself as a hub for global talent. This involves creating an ecosystem that attracts top professionals from around the world while nurturing local expertise.

25. The fusion of local knowledge with global insights allows not only technology transfer but will ensure Malaysian industries to remain adaptable and forward-thinking.

26. At the same time, establishing strong policies that support diversity and inclusion will make Malaysia an attractive destination for professionals seeking to work on impactful ESG-related projects.

27. Integrating diversity into every aspect of ESG strategies is essential for driving progress. When a workforce represents different perspectives, ideas, and problem-solving approaches, it is better equipped to tackle pressing global challenges.

28. Malaysia's success in ESG will depend on its ability to embrace diversity in all its forms, including gender, ethnicity, nationality, and thought leadership. By doing so, the nation will solidify its position as a leader in sustainable development and ensure long-term resilience in an increasingly competitive global economy.

THE ENGINEERING COMMUNITY'S ROLE

Ladies and gentlemen,

29. Engineers are natural problem-solvers, and the challenges posed by ESG require both technical and innovative solutions. The future of cities, transportation systems, and energy grids rests in their hands.

30. Beyond technical expertise, engineers must consider the broader social and ethical impacts of their work to ensure equitable, inclusive, and sustainable solutions.

31. Recently, an unfortunate sinkhole incident in Jalan Masjid India, Kuala Lumpur raised concerns about the city's safety among citizens. However, expert assessments have confirmed that Kuala Lumpur remains safe. This highlights the need for vigilance and collaboration among engineers, policymakers, and experts to ensure resilient infrastructure.

32. IEM plays a crucial role in boosting public confidence by working with stakeholders to propose bold mitigation strategies and sustainable urban planning solutions that ensure long-term safety.

INCLUSIVITY AND GROWTH

Distinguished guests,

33. As we pursue sustainability, it is essential that the benefits of ESG reach everyone, particularly marginalised groups such as the ageing population, whereby in 2030, 15% of Malaysia's population will be aged 60 years and above.

34. Therefore, engineers play a key role in designing age-friendly urban planning and infrastructure that allows older adults to live independently and with dignity.

35. Learning from our neighbour country for instance, Singapore's Housing Development Board (HDB) has already introduced senior-friendly features in its flats, which could inspire similar initiatives here.

36. I have been there, and I was quite impressed to see their advancement. Nevertheless, Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur Pedestrian Walkway Project includes age-friendly features such as ramps and seating areas, demonstrating how thoughtful engineering can make cities more inclusive.

37. Engineers contributions to healthcare solutions, such as telemedicine platforms and smart homes equipped with technology tailored to the elderly, creating cities that are inclusive and sustainable for all generations.

A CALL TO ACTION FOR IEM

Ladies and gentlemen,

38. I would like to suggest a progressive concept for IEM to adopt at this juncture. Let us be the first to advocate for a framework I refer to as 'Inclusive Engineering'.

39. This innovative approach encourages engineers to consider not only technical solutions but also how your own work impacts marginalised communities, promotes social equity, and aligns with ESG goals.

40. Inclusive Engineering will foster collaboration between government agencies, industry leaders, and educational institutions, setting a new benchmark for engineering practices that emphasise inclusivity and innovation.

41. By championing Inclusive Engineering, I believe IEM can set a powerful example for the industry, demonstrating that engineers are at the forefront of creating a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient future.

CONCLUSION

Ladies and gentlemen,

42. I would say that ESG is more than a set of guidelines; it is a movement that calls us to rethink our approach to the future. We have the tools, talent, and diversity to make a lasting impact.

43. As we conclude this conference, let us commit to integrating ESG principles into every decision we make, ensuring that our actions benefit both present and future generations.

44. Engineers, particularly women engineers, are at the forefront of this movement, shaping a better tomorrow.

45. With this, in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, I am honoured to officiate the 2nd Women Engineers Institution of Engineers Malaysia (WE IEM) Conference 2024.

46. May our collective efforts lead to ground-breaking achievements and set new standards in engineering excellence.

Thank you.