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PR CONFERENCE**

SPEECH

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SECRETARY GENERAL

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MULTIMEDIA MALAYSIA

14TH NOVEMBER 2019 (THURSDAY), 12.00PM

RENAISSANCE HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR

SALUTATION:

Encik Jaffri Amin

KLIP 2020 Conference Director, Vice President of IPRM & Asia Pacific Council of Global Alliance

Ibu Prita Kemal Gani

President of APRN (Asean Public Relations Network)

Ms Fiona Cassidy

Secretary of GA, Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communications Management

Yang Berbahagia Dato' Sri Haji Ibrahim Abdul Rahman

Fellow and President of IPRM (Institute of Public Relations Malaysia)

Professor Datuk Sri Dr Syed Arabi

Senior Fellow of IPRM (Institute of Public Relations Malaysia) and Professor of Department of Communication – International Islamic University Malaysia

PR Consultants, Professional Communicators, PR Practitioners, Corporate Communication Executives, Business Communicators, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. First of all, congratulations to the organisers of the Kuala Lumpur International PR Conference 2020. Well done for bringing together top PR practitioners from Malaysia and around the globe to provide the opportunity to discuss, network and deliberate on the future of PR. I also applaud the participants who have courageously attended, as the boxing gloves and the term Face Off must surely have created some curiosity.

2. In a sense, today's PR challenges are about Face Off or confrontations and disruptions and how we, embrace disruptions. Some do it well, while others may struggle. In the spirit of PR camaraderie, I have chosen the topic "Embracing

Disruption: Empowering All with Local and Global Information” to shed some of my insights and experiences on how we can use disruption as our tool.

3. As the Secretary General for the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia, one of our roles is to work with the various agencies under us to deliver government information using the most efficient and effective methods to share genuine news and facts, and at the same time to prevent the public from believing fake news. Well, easier said than done.

4. While I will not want to discuss why people share fake news, we all know the world today is a very different place with the availability of all kinds of information, instantly, and in everyone’s hands.

5. Over the past 10 years, Malaysia has gone through various crisis and conflicts that challenged the government’s abilities in handling them. They include the Lahad Datu Invasion, the missing flight of MH370 and the crash of MH17. These calls for a series of demands for far-reaching solutions and unravelling of communications.

6. Information and its dissemination is no new chapter in our country’s development, from the days of radio and simple posters, then the television and now, where modern technology allows all citizens to be a journalist. What is dynamic however, is the way Malaysia wants to use information as a tool to bring about new growth in the country.

7. Like any government, we use information to keep our people abreast of all the facilities, amenities and benefits created for them. We have used information technology extensively to bring government services into the very palm of the people.

That is why I find this event, KLIP2020, to be very timely.

8. Those who do their research will know that Malaysians are among the top users of social media, worldwide. Along with many other countries in the world, we get most of our news from social media sites, rather than from print.

9. While this empowers many of us with the information and tools to get ahead, the same open pathways to information have also been misused by some.

10. All of us here, as communicators at one level or another, understand the potential of good and the destructive possibilities that information can have. You may have your own stories to tell.

11. Our digital economy is thriving. Our schools and universities enjoy broadband access. As I speak, Malaysia is testing out its rollout of 5G technology. So we are all familiar with the chaos that fake news can cause to government, businesses and individuals. As communicators, we have a personal and professional stake in how we manage news and information. And because technology allows instantaneous dissemination, it is crucial for us to be quick-thinking. Speaking of quick-thinking, it is not easy for us in Government.

12. Our decisions have to consider a vast number of factors, themselves dependant on many other inputs. And once implemented, policies will have far reaching and long standing consequences.

13. We have seen that being able communicators will also help in government policies being clearly explained to our citizens, and being consistently applied. This is where all of us have to grapple with the idea of Disruption.

14. Disruption used to be about a spanner thrown into the works, and the whole machinery coming to a halt. Disruption today is a more dynamic team. It is not necessarily negative. It is about changing the narrative. It takes the boldness of creative and innovative thinkers to change the way things are done, but we all know, disruption is what ignites the change that is needed. What we want in Malaysia is a culture of innovation. Therefore, innovate we must. Citizens are no longer content with top-down modes of communication. Their input matters, transparency also matters.

15. Debates, proposals and inputs from the people we serve, from all Malaysians should be taken into consideration. That's where innovation, or out of the box solutions, by the government comes in. Before policies come into place, the internet can be the space for deliberation. These online spaces are translated by our agencies through various platforms. So, do visit their portals to get latest updates on how these innovations could be transmitted.

16. This can be the purpose of innovative technology. It can be used for the greater good of communications, be it social media, social computing or collaboration platforms.

17. There are many countries that use these channels to enable innovative forms of public participation and engagement, and I believe that's a good thing. After all, netizens are already holding open discussions on issues that affect them. We can be innovative by engaging the public with the use of these new channels to create a culture of participation. To have participatory governance.

18. With innovation, you can give fresh impetus to an entire field of business. And by extension, to the economy.

19. In any country, people want access to information so the government must do everything possible to make information available and useful. Freedom of expression and transparency are common phrases.

20. The government creates platforms for citizens, stakeholders, and employees to share ideas, opinions and priorities. And government reaches across internal and external barriers to solve problems collaboratively.

21. In trying to be more open, Ministries are all on social media, besides administering their own websites. And this openness is one of the ways that enables the citizens to have instant access. We are constantly looking for ways to enhance participatory communications.

22. For all of you in Public Relations and Communications, I urge you to be disrupters for good, all the time. Take your inspiration from all over the world. Innovate. Implement. Be game changers.

23. The Malaysian Government's embrace of information technology has brought about many changes to daily life, both for our citizens and in the way our economy generates value. We are looking far beyond this, of course, and are studying how we can be ready in the field of artificial intelligence or AI.

24. One of the ways is to learn from those who have a head start in AI. We have made that move. Among others, we have strengthened our technology tie-ups. The Minister of Multimedia and Communications, the Honourable Gobind Singh Deo, had talks with his counterparts in the UK early this year. The result has been immediate. Six UK companies in the field of AI will set up operations in Malaysia.

25. We have been careful to enter this field keeping in mind the mischief makers who are ready to exploit anything to their benefit. We are keen to promote ethical AI, so that while we reap the benefits of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, we will also be protecting the integrity of this important new area to our growth and development.

26. I would like to assure all of you that the Government is keeping pace with mitigating measures to protect the gains made in information technology. We are but one of the stakeholders in this.

27. You, as communicators, have an important role to play in getting your ideas and stories out there, and your clients have their roles to play as well. Together we can all be Disruptors whose efforts will empower many others to make the difference.

28. Thank you KLIP2020 for giving me this opportunity to speak in front of PR's finest. Enjoy the rest of the programme today.