



Statement of the IDB Acting Governor for the Brunei Darussalam

The 43rd Annual Meeting of the IDB Board of Governors
Tunis – Republic of Tunisia
17th – 19th Rajab1439H (3rd – 5th April 2018)

Original Text
(English)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

**Your Excellency, Chairman of the Board of Governors,
Fellow Governors,
President of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Group,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Your Excellency, Chairman of the Board of Governors, Fellow Governors, President of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Group, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

First and foremost, on behalf of the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, let me convey our sincerest thanks and appreciation to the Government and the people of the Republic of Tunisia for the warm welcome and generous hospitality. I would also like to thank His Excellency Dr. Bandar bin M. H. Hajjar, President of the IDB Group and the Bank Secretariat for the excellent arrangements of today's meeting.

Mr. Chairman and fellow Governors,

The global environment is ever changing and evolving. With the advancements in technology, especially with the rise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the pace of these changes are getting more rapid. It has changed the way we do things, how we interact and challenged normal practices. With the diverse economic background and levels of development of IDB member countries, this year's theme, " Partnerships for Sustainable Development: Working Together to Drive Human Capital Development, Innovation and Digital Transformation " presents itself as both a challenge and as an opportunity and is indeed very timely. And in this regard, we believe that the IDB can continue to play a catalytic role in further narrowing the development gaps within member countries including through providing support and technical assistance.

Please allow me, Mr. Chairman, to share of our views on this year's theme, as well as, some of the initiatives that Brunei Darussalam has undertaken.

First, promoting youth involvement in technology to foster an innovative culture. Our youth are our greatest assets. They play an important leading role in the use and development of new technology. They are at the forefront of technological application and creation and in providing media-based solutions to address development challenges. They are creative, technologically adept, and are aware of their needs of their local community. We need to listen to them and make full use of their capabilities. By empowering them through ensuring a conducive ecosystem for innovation, they can become our key sources of growth. In line with this, we encourage the IDB to provide appropriate support such as an online platform for the youth from all member countries, to get together virtually, in sharing new ideas, technical skills and know-how in overcoming socioeconomic challenges faced by member countries and their peoples. The best,

practical and implementable ideas can be rewarded and developed into actual products and innovations.

In Brunei Darussalam, we have taken a number of initiatives to involve and encourage our youth in technological innovations. Amongst others, we actively conduct annual nationwide competitions such as the Brunei Info Communication Technology Awards (BICTA) and The Crown Prince Creative, Innovative Products and Technological Advancement (CIPTA) Award. Both competitions are open to individuals, students and associations as well as Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Besides encouraging innovation and creativity in the Info-Communication Technology (ICT) industry, these competitions and awards also give due recognition and motivation and generate interest amongst the younger generation in ICT.

In providing a conducive ecosystem, we have established the 'iCentre' which is the first ICT Incubator in Brunei Darussalam. It aspires to be a centre of excellence for nurturing and cultivating high potential entrepreneurs especially among the youth within the ICT industry. The incubatees in the iCentre are provided with skills enhancing and entrepreneurial workshops and networking sessions that can help improve their business and build up their industry connections.

Second, strengthening education system towards a technology literate society. Strong and quality education systems that are responsive to global changes are critical in achieving socio-economic progress. The current understanding that the core subjects of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) still stands true in preparing our youth for employment, promoting innovation and accelerating future development. However, we share the views of current on-going research that the core subjects have now expanded to include robotics and arts and design (STREAM) in anticipation of the new coming jobs replacing traditional jobs arising from the spillover impacts of the the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Therefore, we encourage the IDB to be ahead of the curve in providing holistic assistance to its members' education systems in particular strengthening the core subjects of STREAM.

Brunei Darussalam through the Ministry of Education, has established The Science, Technology and Environment Partnership (STEP) Centre, with the aim to promote and enhance the development of Science, Technology and Environment Education in Brunei Darussalam in line with the national development objectives through collaboration between education institutions, government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Under the centre, various initiatives and learning activities have been launched in collaboration with our private sectors to promote the use of science, technology and design, particularly in encouraging and supporting students to participate in national, regional and international Robotic projects and competitions.

In order for our workforce to remain relevant in a technology driven world, Brunei Darussalam through the E-Government National Centre, Prime Ministers' Office, has designed a Digital Literacy Certification Programme for Civil Servants. This programme aims to enhance the digital literacy knowledge of civil servants by providing standardized and relevant trainings on ICT usage with globally ratified certifications to build an efficient Government workforce.

Third, encouraging and developing social entrepreneurs in addressing development challenges. The traditional structure of multiple Government agencies at various levels in addressing development challenges may not be sustainable in the long run. Therefore, we believe this is

where social entrepreneurs can play a vital role in narrowing the development gaps through market based solutions. They spur social innovation and transformation in various fields including education, health, environment and enterprise development. They address development challenges such as poverty alleviation goals with entrepreneurial enthusiasm, business know hows and encourage innovation that overcomes traditional practices. We believe that the IDB is well equipped to provide the essential resources and networks for budding social entrepreneurs in member countries to grow and expand their business and products.

Alhamdulillah, in Brunei Darussalam we have seen an active rise in social entrepreneurs that address a wide range of development issues such as poverty alleviation, environment sustainability, education and others. To name a few are Green Brunei a social enterprise that educates young people about sustainable development through education and green community projects to promote and inculcate environmental conservatism in Brunei; and The Society for Community Outreach & Training (SCOT) that aims to look into more sustaining ways and strategies to help the underprivileged by providing them assistance in the form of resources, basic skills and support to help them move out of the vicious cycle of poverty through our ongoing sustainable projects.

With the view of cultivating an entrepreneurial culture in Brunei Darussalam, we have stepped up our entrepreneurship education and training programs, we have introduced the National Entrepreneurship Agenda that aims to instill an entrepreneurial mindset in our local youths. Its programs includes 'Success Weekends', the 'Community Incubation Program', 'Summer Venture Program' and 'Co-Curriculum Student Activities'. An entrepreneurship Village was also established to encourage more school leavers to have the interest and capability to pursue entrepreneurship.

On the entrepreneurship development front, we have established Darussalam Enterprise (DARE), a statutory body to monitor and nurture the growth and development of local enterprises in Brunei including SMEs. Through DARE, a common, unified approach is taken to direct, support and encourage growth of local enterprises under a single entity represented and driven primarily by the private sector.

In support of encouraging the use of ICT, we have also made amendments on our tax structure to enable companies to claim capital allowance at 100% for capital expenditure in ICT as an incentive to companies to increase investment in ICT in improving the efficiency and productivity of company's operations.

Lastly, enhancing cooperation to promote innovation in the digital economy. Knowledge sharing on international best practices to create an enabling environment for growth of innovation and creativity, are key requisites in us moving together towards a better future.

In this regard, we would like to commend IDB's recent initiative, "Engage", in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), a digital hub that aims to accelerate economic and social progress in the developing world through the power of science, technology and innovation. In tandem with this effort, "The Transform Fund" by the IDB will certainly support the communities in taking their ideas to an internationally recognized standard. With key focus closely aligned with United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals, among others, to accelerate progress towards achieving zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, improved innovation and infrastructure in the developing world, I look forward to see the outcome of this initiative in addressing the development needs of our Ummah.

Mr. Chairman,

Before I conclude, we would like to commend the IDB President's leadership for the on-going reforms being conducted holistically within the IDB Group. With the main aim of strengthening its operational efficiency and long term sustainability against the ever changing and volatile global environment, we hope the Bank will continue to foster economic development and social progress of our Muslim communities as well as improving the welfare of the Ummah.

With that, let me conclude by wishing the Bank further success and may all of us always remain under the blessed guidance of Allah Subhanahu Wa Taala.

Thank you.