



CLOSING REMARKS
BY
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DINNER & CLOSING CEREMONY
“ASEAN+3 WORKSHOP ON
PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM”

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LUMPUR CITY CENTRE
HOTEL & RESIDENCES

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Assalamualaikum W.B.T.

[SALUTATION]

A very good evening to everyone!

1. First and foremost, I would like to thank all esteemed delegates from ASEAN Plus Three Member States who have come all the way from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, Japan, South Korea as well as our counterparts from the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC).

2. I would also like to record my sincere appreciation to esteemed delegates from Timor-Leste who have participated in this programme as observers. I was informed

that due to unforeseen circumstances, representatives from Myanmar, China and ASEAN Secretariat were not able to join our programme this year.

3. Nevertheless, I am very sure that your stay here in Malaysia since last Monday has been an enjoyable experience. And above all, I remain optimistic that all sharing of experiences and discussions during the workshop have been fruitful and useful for further deliberations with your colleagues when you return to your respective organisations.

BACKGROUND

Esteemed ladies and gentlemen,

4. The **ASEAN+3 Workshop on Public Sector Reform** is organised by the **Public Service Department of Malaysia** as part of our commitment under the **ACCSM+3 Work Plan 2021-2025** to enhance the capacity and capability of ASEAN civil servants. The

programme also corresponds with the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Strategic Measures which intend to strengthen civil service through effective capacity building, human resource development and collaboration programmes among ASEAN Member States.

5. This programme mainly aims to enhance service delivery effectiveness and future-readiness of public sector in the region through sharing of experiences, key insights and best practices. It also aims to propagate ASEAN Member State's own initiatives in public sector reform based on practical advice from experts.

6. I have been briefed by my colleagues on the outcome of this workshop. I must say that the input we gathered from our expert speakers, from public and private agencies as well as international organisation, will add

values and strategic ideas to our ongoing public reform initiatives, particularly in enhancing our productivity, citizens' satisfaction and quality of decision-making processes.

EMERGING MEGATRENDS IN THE ASEAN REGION

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. Today, we live in a complex and dynamic world where megatrends such as digitalization and globalization rapidly change our environment. Technological advancements and innovations are now daily occurrences. Meanwhile, ASEAN Member States are also working towards greater economic, social and political integration, which requires coordination and cooperation in the public sector. Initiatives such as the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) aims to create a single market and production base,

driving harmonization of regulations and standards across the region.

8. Thus, the leadership of the public service should be sensitive to challenges of megatrends, as well as its impact on the public sector. We need to develop new competencies such as digital and data literacy, as well as emotional wisdom in solving complex problems. We also need to redesign organizations so as to improve service delivery to be more efficient and relevant, with a focus on strategic collaborations.

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS IN ASEAN

9. Many ASEAN countries are focusing on **governance and institutional strengthening, enhancing transparency, and combating corruption**. This includes reforms in public procurement processes,

whistle-blower protection laws, and the establishment of anti-corruption agencies.

10. Also of importance is ongoing efforts by members of ACCSM to **enhance human resource management practices** in the public sector to attract, retain, and develop a skilled workforce. This includes initiatives such as merit-based recruitment, performance-based incentives, and training and capacity building programs. Improving service delivery and citizen engagement is a priority for ASEAN to enhance public trust and satisfaction. This involves adopting citizen-centric approaches, establishing feedback mechanisms, and leveraging technology to deliver accessible and responsive public services.

11. Overall, public sector reform in ASEAN requires comprehensive and coordinated efforts across multiple dimensions to build

effective, accountable, and responsive institutions that can meet the evolving needs and aspirations of the region's citizens. Collaboration and knowledge-sharing among ASEAN Member States can also facilitate learning and exchange of best practices to support reform efforts.

VALUES OF H.E.M.A.T TOWARDS BUILDING MALAYSIA MADANI

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. Allow me to briefly share my expectations of the Malaysian civil service. When I assumed the role as the Director-General of Public Service, I was determined to shoulder this great responsibility based on three (3) principles, "Facilitate, Accommodate and Accelerate". These principles are important in ensuring that the Malaysian civil service is able to meet the expectation of our stakeholders and citizens in general.

13. Facilitate means that we need to always ease and assist. Accommodate refers to how we adapt our way of working to achieve objectives and agendas in line with the Government's aspirations, and Accelerate relates to the need for speed and fast actions on decisions, to ensure benefits to the people.

14. At the same time, in my inaugural speech as the Director-General of Public Service, I urged Malaysian civil servants to adhere to the values of H.E.M.A.T as a guide in carrying out their duties and delivering quality services to the people.

15. H.E.M.A.T is an acronym in Malay which stands for five core values:

H : *Hijrah Tata Kelola* – Attentive to ever-changing environment

E : *Empati Rakyat* - Empathy towards Citizens

M : *Minda Pekin* - Mindful in Spending Public Funds

A : *Apresiasi Inovasi* - Appreciation of Innovation

T : *Telus Tadbiran* - Transparency in Administration

16. As a concept, H.E.M.A.T instils vigilance as well as diligence in the execution of tasks and is a guide to ensure quality services to the people. The concept requires civil servants to be more innovative and efficient in spending public funds as well as practice effective communication.

17. In addition, other core values include the empowerment of agile organizations, which involves continuous efforts to rationalise the size of the public sector while ensuring the best level of service, the

digitization of service delivery which involves application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies as well as the inculcation of values and culture inherent and important to an effective civil service.

18. As civil servants, these values of H.E.M.A.T. must be embraced. H.E.M.A.T. will ensure the successful execution of our national agenda of building Malaysia MADANI.

BEST PRACTICES OF PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS

Ladies and gentlemen,

19. I was made to understand that, during this programme, participants have presented initiatives on public sector reforms in their respective countries. I would like to thank all

of you for the sharing of best practices, what works and what doesn't, which we may all emulate and implement, according to our own local context.

20. Just to cite a couple of remarkable examples, in Thailand, the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC) initiated "Hack a Box, Civil Service HR Playground 2023." This innovation-driven hackathon aims to focus on the voice of the young generation by inviting them to participate in the OCSC competition and present their outside-in perspectives and innovative ideas. This initiative turned out to also serve as an excellent tool for rebranding the civil service with a positive perception among the younger generation.

21. While in Viet Nam, the implementation of "personality" interviews in civil servant recruitment marks a major breakthrough to fundamentally improve the quality of civil servants. With the support from JICA Japan,

Viet Nam has developed a handbook to guide the organizations on "personality" interviews, learning from Japanese experience. This, ladies and gentlemen, is an outstanding success story, of how cooperation in the ASEAN+3 region contributes towards the ongoing reform in civil servant recruitment.

22. In Malaysia, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative force with the potential to revolutionize Malaysia's public sector. Generative AI, powered by advanced algorithms, has the capability to generate new, unique content and solutions, opening doors to unprecedented opportunities for growth and innovation. It can lead to a more empowered and skilled public sector workforce.

23. I would like to take this opportunity to propose for ACCSM to consider developing

a common framework for AI adoption in public service. As the ASEAN region embraces the opportunities presented by generative AI, it can position itself at the forefront of technological advancements, fostering a future where public sector organizations are agile, responsive, and well-equipped to address daunting challenges.

APPRECIATION

Ladies and gentlemen,

24. Today marks the conclusion of our programme. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the organizer, particularly those from the Research, Planning, and Policy Division of the Public Service Department Malaysia, as well as the committee members, speakers, participants, and all others whose contributions have been instrumental in the success of this programme.

25. I would like to once again sincerely thank:

Yang Berbahagia Datuk Haji Rodzi bin Md Saad, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Digital;

Yang Berusaha Mr. Rushdi Abdul Rahim, President and Chief Executive Officer of MIGHT;

Dr. Marco Larizza, Senior Public Sector Specialist, Governance Program Lead, The World Bank Malaysia Hub;

Puan Nazmiyah Binti Jamaluddin, Deputy Director, Public Administrative Modernization Division, Public Service Department of Malaysia;

Mr. Azrin bin Abdul Majid, Deputy Director, Research, Planning and Policy Division, Public Service Department of Malaysia;

Our strategic partners from the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC),

Ms. Christine Shannon, Executive Director, International, APSC; and

Mr. Tony Gu, Assistant Director, Transformation and Strategy, APS Reform Office, APSC,

as well as PETRONAS, for taking time to be part of this programme and for sharing valuable experiences and insights that are of great benefit to all participating ASEAN Plus Three member countries.

WISH AND HOPE

26. I strongly believe that all the insights and best practices shared by our esteemed speakers serve as invaluable guidance for bolstering institutional reforms within the public sector across individual countries. It is my fervent hope that the outcome of this workshop will be a stepping stone for a greater collaboration among all ASEAN

Member States, Plus Three Countries and our Dialogue Partners. This workshop signifies not an end but rather a continuing cooperation and collaboration among ASEAN Plus Three member countries.

27. The future of ASEAN civil service lies in our hands. Let's shape innovative, inclusive and forward-looking policies for the benefit of our fellow citizens and for our future generations. Let's remain dedicated to serve the public, with good governance, speed, professionalism and compassion. Indeed, the rise of ASEAN starts with its public services. It starts with public servants. It starts...with us!

CLOSING

Ladies and gentlemen,

28. Last but not least, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to everyone who have contributed their time and energy in ensuring the successful hosting of this Public Sector Reform (PSR) Workshop under the ASEAN+3. As we all know, Malaysia is rich in cultural diversity, with Malay, Chinese, Indian, and indigenous influences. So, to all our esteemed guests, I say this: embrace the spirit of Malaysian hospitality with open arms and open hearts. Allow yourselves to be swept away by the beauty of our land and the generosity of our people. May your stint in Malaysia be filled with unforgettable moments, cherished memories, and the warm embrace of Malaysian hospitality. Know that you are always welcome in Malaysia, where hospitality knows no bounds.

29. With that, I hereby solemnly officiate the closing of the “**ASEAN+3 Workshop on Public Sector Reform**”.

30. I wish you all the very best, enjoy the rest of your stay in Kuala Lumpur and have a safe journey back to your beloved countries.

Thank you and *terima kasih*.

– THE END –

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