

# **PARLIMEN**

**MALAYSIA**

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**ROYAL ADDRESS**

**BY HIS MAJESTY**

**SERI PADUKA BAGINDA**

**YANG DIPERTUAN AGONG XVI**

**AL-SULTAN ABDULLAH RI'AYATUDDIN**

**AL-MUSTAFA BILLAH SHAH**

**IBNI ALMARHUM SULTAN HAJI AHMAD SHAH**

**AL-MUSTA'IN BILLAH**

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**SECOND SESSION**

**FIFTEENTH PARLIAMENT**

**13<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

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Assalamualaikum Warahmatullaahi Wabarakaatuh.

Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Rahiim, Alhamdulillah Rabbil 'Alamin,  
Wassolaatu Wassalaamu 'Ala Asyrafil Anbiyaa'i Wal Mursaliin, Wa'ala  
Aalihi Wa Sohbihi Ajma'iin.

Robbish Rohli Sodri, Wayassirli Amri, Wahlul Uqdatan Min Lisaani,  
Yafqahu Qauli.

Honourable President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of  
Representatives, Members of the Senate and Members of the House of  
Representatives whom We respect.

All praise is due to Allah, to Him belongs the dominion. Glory be to Allah  
who created the heavens and the earth and made darkness and night.

*Selawat* and *Salam* to our Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi  
Wassalam, his family members and his companions.

*Alhamdulillah.* We are grateful to Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala for His  
Munificence in allowing the Opening Ceremony of the Second Session of  
the Fifteenth Parliament to take place on this historic morning.

2. We are grateful that the 15<sup>th</sup> General Election on 19<sup>th</sup> November  
2022 was successfully held in an atmosphere of peace and complete  
harmony. Therefore, We would like to record Our deepest appreciation  
and gratitude to the Election Commission, members of the security forces,  
all Government agencies as well as Our people who fulfilled their

obligations. Let us, together with open hearts and minds, accept and respect the results of the election.

3. We would also like to express our congratulations to all Honourable Members for being elected as representatives of the people. This represents a trust to serve and protect the well-being of Our people. Congratulations to the Right Honourable Dato' Seri Anwar bin Ibrahim, Member of Parliament for Tambun who We have appointed as the Tenth Prime Minister of Malaysia and to the entire Cabinet of the Unity Government.

4. Congratulations are also due to the Prime Minister for securing the Vote of Confidence in this august House on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022. On this occasion, We would like to express our gratitude to the Honourable Dato' Seri Ismail Sabri bin Yaakob, Member of Parliament for Bera for his services and dedication in leading the nation as the Ninth Prime Minister.

Honourable Members.

5. We welcome the agreement among party leaders to form the Unity Government of Malaysia in fulfilment of Our sincere wish to form a stable and strong government. Accordingly, Our Government may then fully commit to ensuring political stability and focusing on generating economic growth for the well-being of the people.

6. We appreciate the introduction of the *madani* initiative which embraces the aspects of sustainability, well-being, creativity, respect, confidences, compassion and mercy. It is Our wish that these aspects and

principles are well-translated into a framework to create a major leap forward for the nation. The government's plan and efforts to upgrade the appearance of the stalls in Kuala Lumpur City, as well as building landmarks is in line with the compassionate aspect enshrined in the government's new *Malaysia Madani* policy.

7. We are also confident in the ability of the Federal Territories Department in formulating a development agenda for the future in a sustainable, liveable and smart manner in line with the *Malaysia Madani* aspiration which also emphasises sustainability based on the green and smart city concept. The target of making the Federal Territory a Smart City by 2030 is realistic and should also emphasise good planning and goal-setting.

8. Efforts to encourage the use of electric buses in the capital city of Kuala Lumpur, transforming Wangsa Maju into a low-carbon pilot city as well as the installation of Wi-Fi facilities in private and public housing projects in Labuan, are also welcomed.

Honourable Members.

9. The spirit of goodwill and mutual respect between races is the basis for the stability of the country. Owing to that, the strength of our harmony through the idea of unity embedded in the principles of the Federal Constitution, should be the primary agenda for the sake of our beloved nation.

10. In addition, the context of culture in the unity agenda needs focus by means of programmes oriented towards the solidarity of the multi-racial communities in Malaysia. This is in conformance with the teachings of Islam which emphasise tolerance and avoiding the scourge of extremism that can undermine racial harmony.

11. We welcome the initiative to strengthen the ummah development agenda based on the principle of *Maqasid Syariah* in the administration of the country. This encompasses empowering the management of Islamic affairs such as Islamic education, *Sharia* law, family institutions, Malaysian halal certification and *Tahfiz Al-Quran* education. This effort is important in engendering a society that is spiritually and intellectually resilient with excellent personal character.

Honourable Members.

12. As a country that practices an open economy, Malaysia is not spared from global economic challenges including the post-pandemic (COVID-19) uncertainties, geopolitical crisis affecting supply chains and heightened inflationary pressures leading to a higher inflation and cost of living. We welcome the focus of the Unity Government to curb the leakage of public funds including initiatives to speed up and ensure that the targeted subsidy mechanism achieves its objectives effectively.

13. In creating a culture of integrity and strengthening governance, We support the Government's commitment and determination to aggressively combat corruption by focusing on the areas of procurement, enforcement and large-scale corruption. Our Government will also focus on the reform

agenda to strengthen the competitiveness of Malaysia's economy in becoming a preferred investment destination.

14. This is evident in the fact that the country recorded exports worth RM1.552 trillion in December 2022, which is a 25 percent increase over the same period in 2021. This achievement of total national export was accomplished three years earlier than the target stipulated in the Twelfth Malaysia Plan which is RM1.25 trillion by 2025. The implementation of national policies and initiatives such as the New Investment Policy based on the National Investment Aspirations will further spur the nation's economy and in achieving the projected targets.

15. In addition, socio-economic development programmes such as the economic empowerment agenda, digitalisation and adoption of technology, entrepreneurship and human capital development are essential to accelerate economic growth. At the same time, Our Government must continue its efforts in combatting extreme poverty through the Hardcore Poverty Eradication Programme to achieve the target of zero extreme poverty by 2025. This is fully in accordance with the first Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) namely the Zero Poverty Indicator to ensure that extreme poverty is reduced.

16. Strategic and high-impact industries such as green technology and electric vehicles need to be further explored to develop new streams of national income. To address the challenges in conserving the environment, the Government has introduced the National Water Sector Transformation Agenda 2040 to ensure sustainability.

17. In addition to contributing to the GDP, the said transformation will also create new job opportunities and facilitate the development of Science, Technology and Innovation (STIE) and Research, Development, Innovation and Commercialisation (RDIC). The government is committed to deal with climate change to reduce greenhouse gases, mitigate the risk of disasters such as floods and others in phases.

18. The agricommodity sector is undoubtedly a major contributor to the GDP, the nation's exports income and the development of rural communities especially in reducing income gap and poverty rates among the population. From January to September 2022, the sector contributed RM61.3 billion or 5.5% of the nation's GDP.

19. To promote science, Our Government will focus on social innovativeness aimed at fostering a culture of innovation among the people and enhancing their well-being through the use of technology. The culture of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in society will be promoted through the Malaysia Techlympics and National Science Week. The competitiveness of local companies will be enhanced through the promotion of the Use of Local R&D Goods and Services in Government Procurement (MySTI). This programme is aimed at promoting recognition and offering market opportunities to local R&D goods and services in Government procurement.

Honourable Members.

20. Like most other countries, Malaysia cannot avoid inflation and rises in the cost of living. In tackling these issues, We welcome the

Government's efforts and initiatives to strengthen the role of the National Action Council on Cost of Living (NACCOL). We are confident that the spirit of compassion and the RAHMAH and DAYA initiatives will positively impact social protection networks as well as help to address cost of living issues. Hence, NACCOL will be further strengthened through a holistic approach in utilising the nation's strengths involving producers, traders, consumers and all Government agencies.

21. The domestic trade ecosystem will continue to be empowered to protect consumers' interests through the concept of economic harmonisation. The Government is always concerned about the people's well-being following the impact of rising global inflation rates, the weakness of the Ringgit against the US Dollar and the recovery phase post-pandemic COVID-19. In this regard, the Government will continue to act to ease the burden of livestock farmers, farmers and food producers due to the continuous increase in production costs to ensure the country's food production remains at an optimal level in guaranteeing our nation's food security.

22. The industrial ecosystem should always be regulated and even improved to be in tandem with the latest developments. Thus, We welcome the aspiration of making Malaysia a high-income country through empowering the role of the private sector and the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). In supporting these efforts, the provision of infrastructure and access to digital services need to be continuously enhanced in keeping with the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030.



Honourable Members.

23. The Government has taken immediate actions to resolve issues relating to the claims of the State Governments of Sabah and Sarawak on the implementation of the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63). Transferring the regulatory powers for gas supplies to the Sabah Government, recognising the Public Works Department (JKR) of Sabah and Sarawak as technical departments, improving the Special Grants to Sabah and Sarawak are among the decisions that have been agreed upon by the Government. At the same time, efforts at developing and empowering the economy throughout the country including Sabah and Sarawak will continue to be stepped up.

24. In order to strengthen the administration of law, the development of court complexes in Sabah and Sarawak should also be given attention. Quality infrastructure and rural access will be accelerated through the construction of roads, bridges, clean water, electricity and better housing. The imbalances in the economic development of all races and ethnicities, including the Orang Asli, will continue to be addressed to create resilient and competitive rural communities.

25. Not to mention, the social protection policy will be restructured to ensure Our people benefit from more comprehensive and integrated security and social protection. The Malaysia Social Protection Council (MySPC) will be strengthened to offer a new dimension to the social protection landscape in Malaysia based on international standards.

26. Today, the aspect of digital connectivity is among the most important foundations for the development of a society in the digital ecosystem. Towards this end, the National Digital Network Plan (JENDELA) has been developed to accelerate the development of the country's digital infrastructure to enable Our citizens to participate in the potential opportunities created by digital technology and further support the nation's digital economic development agenda. The digital economy contributed 23.2 percent to the GDP in 2021 with e-Commerce being the fastest growing sector. To realise the nation's digital education agenda and in ensuring access to education, the Digital Education Policy that includes the provision of infrastructure and digital capability is being formulated.

27. The Personal Data Protection Act 2010 is being updated to ensure the security of personal data in line with technological developments and changes in global privacy legislation. Various programmes have been implemented to enhance awareness among the people and data users including inspection and enforcement activities under the act.

28. In addition, there should be continued focus on the provision of infrastructure and public facilities through the construction sector. The National Construction Policy (NCP 2030) will focus on digitalisation and sustainability of the construction sector as well as uplift the infrastructure maintenance as an aspect of the construction industry that will be developed to ensure a more effective management of assets and facilities.

29. We are also pleased with the performance of Phase 1 of the Pan Borneo Highway Project in Sabah and Sarawak which began in 2015 and is expected to be fully completed in 2024. It is Our dream to drive along

the Pan Borneo Highway, specifically to get to know Our people more closely who live in the interior of the Land of the Hornbills and the Land Below the Wind. This expedition is being planned by Istana Negara in collaboration with the Federal Government and the State Governments of Sabah and Sarawak.

30. Our Government will also continue the high-impact public transport infrastructure projects to improve connectivity and accessibility while generating positive multiplier effects on economic growth. The provision of world-class and environmentally sustainable public transport facilities will continue to be given emphasis. These efforts can be realised through the optimisation of transportation facilities as well as enhancing the people's awareness of switching to energy-efficient and low-carbon transportation.

31. Our Government is deeply concerned at the difficulties faced by the people particularly the B40 group in home ownership. Hence, the home ownership agenda has been formulated by focusing on access to quality and affordable housing. This is in line with the Liveable Malaysia Concept with a new direction in implementing the People's Housing Programme (PHP), which takes into account the 2020 household income classification by the Department of Statistics Malaysia. The maximum household income eligibility rate for PHP applications has been raised to enable more people to have access to PHP homes.

Honourable Members.

32. Our Government is committed to redoubling efforts at protecting children especially from sexual crimes whether physical or online. Existing

legislation will be reviewed to safeguard child victims and witnesses in addition to creating an independent Office of the Children's Commissioner through the drafting of a new act.

33. All segments of society must be responsible for and play an active role in ensuring that the well-being of children is always safeguarded and that their future as vanguards of the nation will continue to be protected. To achieve those objectives, enhancements that include institutional and legal transformation, raising awareness in the community as well as strengthening cooperation among educational institutions, non-governmental organisations, activists, community representatives and others will continue to be implemented. In protecting the well-being of the disabled, We welcome the efforts to review the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008.

34. We also hope that efforts to empower women who are the pillars of family institutions will be stepped up. The endeavour is not only to develop the potential of women but rather to ensure that their participation will boost the national economy and further make Malaysia more competitive towards becoming a high-income country. We support the Government's efforts to reform the laws to ensure institutional independence and good governance including reforms on the legal system, administration of criminal justice system and prison institution.

Honourable Members.

35. In facing the economic challenges of 2023, the Government will improve social security protection for the working class. This includes

raising contributions to the Housewives' Social Security Scheme (SKSSR) which has been in effect since 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022. In addition, the effort to provide centralised labour quarters should also be given emphasis. We support all efforts to continuously empowered the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Among the new approaches to achieve that aim are joint ventures between the public and private sectors where the operation of public TVET institutions will be an industry led programme to ensure that graduates are trained based on the current needs of local industries.

36. We fully support efforts at improving the level of skills among workers through upskilling and reskilling programmes to produce a larger pool of skilled and semi-skilled workers which will subsequently reduce dependency on foreign workers. The provision of safe and conducive infrastructure in educational institutions will continue to be part of the Government's main agenda.

37. No development agenda can be gainful unless a society possesses the requisite knowledge and skills and practices sound values. Therefore, the higher education sector which comprises 20 public universities, 36 polytechnics, 105 community colleges and 415 private higher education institutions, carries a heavy responsibility as the main driver in the agenda to produce talented human capital. It should be the priority of the higher education sector to constantly explore fresh and innovate approaches that are strategic and pragmatic.

38. We also welcome the implementation of the youth empowerment programme and the youth financial literacy programme to prepare youth

to be knowledgeable and visionary with a high sense of patriotism and national identity, awareness of current developments, compassion to society and the environment and capable of managing their finances well. With such character traits, We are confident that our youth will eventually have the capability to lead and move the nation forward.

39. The rise in infectious and non-infectious diseases as well as the growing aging population are among the health issues that should be Our Government's priority. We welcome efforts to formulate a more objective and inclusive strategy to strengthen public health preparedness and improve primary health services including providing better facilities and services to the elderly.

40. The efforts to modernise the delivery of health services, especially in upgrading facilities, strengthening delivery through digitalisation and re-engineering through a collaborative approach with the private sector and non-governmental organisations should be continued. In addition, initiatives to contain diseases and encouraging early detection need to be enhanced through the Health Care Scheme for the B40 group including an emphasis on mental health. We congratulate the Ministry of Health on its efforts to provide support services through psychosocial help lines and counselling services at the District Health Offices.

Honourable Members.

41. In advancing the national economy, issues of security and public order need to be given emphasis. Security challenges and threats are always dynamic and in tackling them, require preparedness on a national

level. This includes the maintenance as well as procurement of latest equipment and apparatus. Weaknesses in the old practices that are detrimental and weaken the national defense need to be discontinued.

42. We are also of the view that issues relating to illegal immigrants and refugees, including asylum seekers, should be dealt with firmly by Our Government. In addition, the rising trend of cybercrimes is a cause for concern. For that purpose, law enforcement requires efficient and effective governance and coordination. Continuous and integrated efforts must be intensified to ensure that the country is protected from any form of threat so that Malaysia remains a peaceful, prosperous and sovereign nation. Malaysia also needs to further strengthen cooperation and defence diplomacy with regional and other countries to preserve the nation's interests and security.

43. In facing future challenges, disaster risk management needs to be improved to preserve the livelihoods and safety of the people. Systematic and strategic approaches must be implemented promptly to deal with the impacts of natural disasters, especially floods that occur annually. The landslide disaster in Batang Kali, Selangor on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022 should serve as a warning and should not recur. It is important to ensure that disaster management mechanisms remain effective and well-coordinated.

Honourable Members.

44. During visits to several countries, We welcome the willingness of the leaders of those countries to further strengthen diplomatic and trade cooperation with Malaysia. Such opportunities must be fully capitalised for

our benefit. Malaysia cannot be left behind in forging cooperative alliances to face global competition. In navigating foreign relations, Malaysia needs to continue to adopt a pragmatic and principled approach. We support a foreign policy based on peace, stability and prosperity with the interests of the people as its main precept. From the aspect of the tourism industry, We congratulate Malaysia for reaching its target of 9.2 million tourists and earnings of RM26.8 billion from tourism at the end of 2022.

Honourable Members.

45. We commenced our reign as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong of Malaysia on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019. Until today, We have gone through various events and experiences that are unforgettable. It will be inscribed in the nation's history that We were the only Yang di-Pertuan Agong who has had the good health to reign during the administration of 4 different Prime Ministers together with their 4 respective Cabinets.

46. We commenced Our reign with the Honourable Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, the Seventh Prime Minister. However, on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020, for the first time We were drawn into the the country's political turmoil due to the resignation of the Seventh Prime Minister. In accordance with the discretionary powers bestowed on Us by the Federal Constitution, We noted that the Honourable Tan Sri Muhyiddin bin Haji Mohd Yasin commanded the confidence of the majority of the Members of the House of Representatives to be appointed the Eighth Prime Minister on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Just as things seemed to have had stabilised, We were presented with another situation. The Eighth Prime Minister of Malaysia resigned on



the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2021. Therefore, We once again had to assume the heavy responsibility of selecting and appointing a new Prime Minister.

47. We were then satisfied that the Honourable Dato' Seri Ismail Sabri bin Yaakob commanded the confidence of the majority of the Members of the House of Representatives and he was duly appointed the Ninth Prime Minister on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2021. Not long after, the Ninth Prime Minister sought Our consent for the dissolution of Parliament to make way for the 15<sup>th</sup> General Election and We consented to Parliament being dissolved on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

48. Following the 15<sup>th</sup> General Election, for the first time in the history of Malaysian democracy, the nation was confronted with a hung Parliament. Therefore, We once again had to bear the responsibility of selecting and appointing a Prime Minister. The burden on one's shoulders is always heavier than what is visible to others.

49. Following the 15<sup>th</sup> General Election, when there was no dominant political party or coalition that had obtained a simple majority, the Federal Constitution required Us to appoint a Prime Minister who commanded the confidence of the majority in the House of Representatives.

50. Towards that end, We provided the broadest possible space for the Honourable Members to come to a consensus and agree on the principle of unity for the future of the country. After taking the approach established by the Federal Constitution, on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022, We consented to the appointment of the Right Honourable Dato' Seri Anwar bin Ibrahim, as the Tenth Prime Minister of Malaysia. We hope that the Tenth Prime

Minister will be the last one for Us, before We return to the state of Pahang Darul Makmur.

Honourable Members.

51. There is an old Malay saying which reminds us that *“if an ox is held by its rope, a man is held to his word”*. On 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019, We had sworn an oath to truly and faithfully perform Our duties in the administration of Malaysia in accordance with its laws and the Federal Constitution. In reality, We only fulfilled the trust and promises mandated as what We had pronounced and pledged. We had no intention of interfering in the nation’s political affairs, let alone arrange its political landscape.

52. In Our observation, if the episode that led to the resignation of the Seventh Prime Minister had not occurred, the chain of political upheavals that lasted until the 15<sup>th</sup> General Election would also have been avoided. More importantly, the political turmoil that has plagued the country for almost 4 years can be avoided if the Honourable Members and the nation’s politicians are willing to set aside their differences and unite for the sole purpose of safeguarding the interests of Our people and the country that we love.

53. For the 66 years since the nation’s independence, we have acknowledged the plurality and diversity that exist as the main strength of the country. At the age of 66, we as a nation should be matured enough to accept these unique differences as the main pillar in the formation of a

Malaysian nation with mutual respect and affection for one another, tolerant and living in unity.

54. If diversity, pluralism and political upheavals continue to cause strife and division, We are concerned that the peace and progress that we yearn for will forever elude us.

Dear Honorable Members.

55. Time passess quickly, as quickly as the clouds that drift away. On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024, We will end Our reign as the 16<sup>th</sup> Yang di-Pertuan Agong. Therefore, this would be the last time We attend the Opening Ceremony of the Parliamentary Sessions and address this august House.

56. Accordingly, allow Us to express Our appreciation for the loyalty of all members of the Civil Service, the Malaysian Armed Forces, the Royal Malaysia Police, health services staff and all Government agencies who have served tirelessly with utmost professionalism and independence.

57. Thank you also to all Our people who have lived in harmony and peace and persevered in the face of the various challenges posed by the pandemic, the economic depression and political turmoil affecting our nation. As Our last message to all Honourable Members, do not have the presumption that people are indebted to our service and therefore expect to be lauded. Instead, safeguard the good name and honour of this august House and serve wholeheartedly as representatives who always have Our people and the future of the country close to your hearts.

58. Set aside narrow political agendas and come together in the name of unity. The stability of the political landscape through the bonds of unity of the Honourable Members should be used as a manifestation in forming the Malaysian nation and a glorious new era for Malaysia.

Indeed:

Unity is a union of differences.

Unity is the foundation for fostering stability.

Unity is the pillar of prosperity.

Unity contributes to progress.

Unity brings success.

59. We pray that Malaysia, together with the people whom We love, will continue to live in harmony on the basis of unity and always be under the protection of Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala.

Sekian.

Wabillahi Taufik Wal Hidayah,

Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh.