

Yang Amat Berbahagia Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad,
Former Prime Minister of Malaysia,

Yang Amat Berbahagia Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Ali,

Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Dr Sulaiman Mahbob,
Chairman of MIDA and Board Member of ISIS
Malaysia,

Mr. NISHIDA Shigenobu,
Auditor and Representative for Japan Malaysia
Association,

Ms. KATO Akiko,
Executive Director, Japan Future Leaders School,

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt
appreciation to ISIS Malaysia for hosting this event.

ISIS and our embassy have constant collaboration. Just one week ago, ISIS hosted a lecture by a Japanese scholar in cooperation with our embassy. In May this year, ISIS organized a webinar featuring the 40th anniversary of the Look East Policy or LEP.

My gratitude also goes to Japan Malaysia Association or JMA. The Association has been long dedicating itself to promoting the Japan-Malaysia relations. It is remarkable that JMA has been planting trees in Sarawak since 1995. The number of planted indigenous species has now exceeded three-quarter million. Thanks to their hard work, approximately 5,800 hectares of the planted forests have been designated as National Parks of Sarawak. Of course, I also thank JMA and Ms. Kato for highlighting the LEP by publishing a book that elaborates the history of the policy.

And I would like to thank Tun Dr Mahathir, a long-time friend of Japan, for his presence here today with Madame, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Ali. It is meaningful that Tun's testimony about the Look East Policy is recorded in Ms. Kato's book, which is featured in this event.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the beginning of this year, our embassy has approved almost 180 events to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the LEP. I have attended many of them, and I have discussed the policy with various figures on various occasions. Those experiences always made me realize how significant the LEP has been for the Japan-Malaysia relationship. The LEP is a policy of the Malaysian government, but it can be called a joint project of the two countries as well.

Under the policy, more than 26,000 young and hopeful Malaysians have studied or received training in Japan. They are taking full advantage of the experiences and achieving success in a wide range of fields. You can find specific stories in Ms. Kato's book.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are now approaching the end of the year 2022 and I believe the 40th anniversary has given us a great opportunity to discuss how the LEP should be developed, looking ahead to the future.

While the Japan-Malaysia relationship has become even more solid through a series of the anniversary events this year, the world has changed dramatically in the past 40 years. Considering the changes, I believe

that we should expand the scope of the Look East Policy to non-traditional areas of cooperation such as ageing society, digital economy and disaster risk reduction.

At the same time, Japan can learn from Malaysia's expertise in the area of Islamic finance and Halal industry as well as its experience how to keep a diverse society with stability and prosperity.

These attempts will develop the LEP into a deeper and multi-faceted collaboration, and the bilateral relations will enjoy a mutual benefit and play a role more relevant to the world today.

Actually, these points that I just described are in line with what Malaysian government expects to implement as potential cooperation under the LEP. In

August this year, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, MITI, hosted a business seminar to commemorate the LEP 40th anniversary and on that occasion then Prime Minister Ismail Sabri named some new fields of cooperation, which overlapped with my proposed areas to a large extent. I hope that the new Malaysian government continue to put importance on cooperation under the LEP and that we can celebrate the 50th anniversary with fruitful achievements.

To change the point of view, the world is now facing an increasing number of challenges. Let alone the situation in Ukraine, we see issues and complications, such as North Korea, Taiwan, the East and South China Seas and Myanmar, to name a few. In the world today, it is more important for countries that share the value of rule of law to collaborate in defending the rules-based world order.

In this backdrop, maintaining a strong and cordial relationship between Japan and Malaysia will not only benefit the peoples of the two countries but also lead to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, in particular in ASEAN countries. ASEAN and Japan agreed to designate next year, the year 2023, as the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, and Japan will be hosting a Commemorative Summit in Tokyo toward the end of the year.

I would like to conclude my remarks by expressing my expectation that the book launch today will remind the audience of the magnitude and relevance of the Look East Policy and that the forum part will contribute to revitalization of the LEP towards the next 40 years.

Thank you, terima kasih ありがとうございます。