

OPENING REMARKS
YBHG. DR. HAJI ABDUL RAHMAN BIN HASAN
CHIEF STATISTICIAN, MALAYSIA

Second National Statistics Conference (MyStats 2013)

**“Promoting Innovation in Economic and Financial Statistics
to Support Policy Making in a Dynamic Environment”**

18 November 2013
Sasana Kijang, Kuala Lumpur

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim;

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh; and

A very good morning, Salam Sejahtera and Salam 1 Malaysia.

YB. Senator Dato' Sri Abdul Wahid Omar,
Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia;

YBrs. Dr. Sukhdave Singh,
Deputy Governor, Bank Negara Malaysia;

YBrs. Prof. Dr. Aziz bin Jemain,
Presiden, Institut Statistik Malaysia (ISM);

YBrs. Prof. Dr. Vijayan N. Nair,
President, International Statistical Institute (ISI);

YBhg. Dato'- Dato', Datin-Datin, Dif-Dif Kehormat;

Distinguished speakers and guests, ladies and gentlemen;

Assalamualaikum dan selamat pagi. YB. Senator Dato' Sri Abdul Wahid Omar, Menteri di Jabatan Perdana Menteri, para penceramah dan peserta yang dihormati sekalian.

1. Saya berbesar hati untuk mengalu-alukan YB. Menteri dan semua yang hadir dalam persidangan MyStats 2013. Kejayaan persidangan kali kedua ini adalah hasil kerjasama erat dua organisasi, iaitu Bank Negara Malaysia dan Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia serta Institut Statistik Malaysia sebagai penganjur bersama. Kami amat berbangga dengan kehadiran YB. Menteri bagi menyampaikan Ucaptama dan seterusnya menyempurnakan majlis perasmian. Kami juga amat gembira dengan sokongan yang ditunjukkan oleh para peserta dan pembentang kertas kerja. Peserta persidangan kali ini meningkat kepada 400 orang, yang terdiri daripada sektor swasta dan awam, *stakeholders*, perangkawan serta ahli-ahli akademik. Saya yakin persidangan ini boleh menjadi platform yang berkesan untuk kita berkongsi pandangan, pengalaman dan pengetahuan berkaitan domain statistik yang sentiasa berkembang merentasi masa dan perubahan sejagat. Perbincangan yang kondusif selama kita berseminar ini pastinya juga akan mencernakan idea-idea baru bagi manfaat bersama.

2. I am pleased to welcome the Honourable Dato' Sri Abdul Wahid Omar, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department and all the participants and speakers to the Second National Statistics Conference (MyStats 2013). I am also very encouraged by the strong support from all of you present here today. This is the second conference after the successful inaugural MyStats 2012. The Conference this year is a collaborative effort

between Bank Negara Malaysia, the Department of Statistics, Malaysia and supported by our new partner, Malaysia Institute of Statistics.

3. The key objective of MyStats 2013 is to facilitate greater discussion and collaboration between statisticians, compilers and users of statistics, such as economists, analysts, academicians and policy makers, in improving data compilation, communication and usage of statistics. It also provides an avenue for the participants to discuss new ways and innovative approaches in the compilation and usage of statistics to support analysis, surveillance and policy measures in the increasingly dynamic environment.

4. This year, the Conference is held in conjunction with the International Year of Statistics (IYOS) 2013, which was initiated by the International Statistical Institute (ISI) and American Statistical Association (ASA). More than 123 countries and 2,250 statistics-related organisations celebrated IYOS 2013 around the globe. We are grateful that the President of ISI, Prof. Dr. Vijayan N. Nair is also with us today and will give his talk on the latest activities undertaken by ISI.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. The theme of MyStats 2013 is “Promoting Innovation in Economic and Financial Statistics to Support Policy Making in a Dynamic Environment”. Among the topics of discussion include: (i) New Statistics for Better Surveillance and Policy Action; (ii) Innovation in Analysis and Statistics; (iii) New Horizon for Financial and Economic Statistics; (iv)

Leveraging on Statistical Methods and Scientific Approaches for Better Analysis; (v) Application of Technology in Transforming Malaysia's Statistical Landscape; and (vi) Innovation in Statistics and Analysis for Responsive Policy Action.

6. This year, the Conference is introducing parallel sessions and it is hoped that the sessions will give more opportunity for us to cover broad areas of interest.

The statistical system and guiding frameworks

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. Let me briefly share about official Statistical Framework in Malaysia. Every country has its statistical system and the country's statistical system is designed based on the country's requirements. Appropriate national statistical system ensures the efficiency and effectiveness in compiling national statistics. Official statistics are statistics produced by the national statistical office and other government agencies. The United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics provide the basic framework for official statistics.

8. Malaysia adopts a centralised statistical system whereby the process of collection, compilation and dissemination of national statistics is governed by the Statistics Act 1965-revised 1989. The centralised statistical system allows DOSM to coordinate and integrate the national

statistics through standardised definition, concept, methodology and classification. This also provides a platform in integrating the entire process of data collection, interpretation and dissemination under one roof in order to produce sound statistics.

Dynamism of Statistical Service

Ladies and gentlemen,

9. The borderless economy and the rapid structural changes have resulted in high expectations and the need for a more diverse spectrum of statistics. This entails a new set of indicators and more short term statistics to monitor and identify the changes. One of the new set of indicators developed by DOSM was the statistics on Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Starting 2005 onwards, DOSM has compiled statistics on SMEs to examine the role of SMEs as the next engine of economic growth. Using these statistics, the SME Master Plan was formulated with the goal of stimulating the SMEs' contribution to the economy.

10. In 2012, the Department continues to develop new products and among the new products produced include Tourism Satellite Accounts, Information & Communication Technology Satellite Accounts (ICTSA), indicators for ETP such as Gross National Income by 11 NKEAs, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Malaysia by Sector and Country, Statistics on Direct Investment Abroad by Sector and Country, Index of Distributive Trade and others. The reports on Economic Census 2011 were released

last year and a special report on Small and Medium Enterprise was launched in September 2012.

11. The developments of new products will be continued in a few areas which include Index of Services, Services Production Price Index and Job Creation statistics. Other statistics such as small area statistics will also be compiled as an input for micro planning purpose and investment programme under the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).

The ICT as enabler and a tool for moving forward

Ladies and gentlemen,

12. Innovation and creativity in the Department of Statistics, Malaysia are being fostered through various activities whereby the activities undertaken have created many new ideas in improving the services provided by the Department. The uses of technology and innovation as well as creativity in routine work activities are also being optimized. e-Survey is first being implemented for the Monthly Manufacturing Survey and followed by the International Trade in Services and recently extended to the Quarterly Survey of Services.

13. Moving forward in terms of a modernization of data collection, the use of Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) and Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) are currently being tested in our Household based surveys.

14. In tandem with the Department's ICT Strategic Plan, the Department undertakes continuous enhancement in various aspects of the Generic Business Statistical Process Model (GSBPM). DOSM has taken several new initiatives to integrate individual systems and applications; and streamlined the statistical workflow through a computerised system known as National Enterprise Wide Statistical System (NEWSS).

On Challenges

Ladies and gentlemen,

15. Lack of awareness on the importance of statistics is said to contribute to poor cooperation in terms of not completing the surveys questionnaires and the delay in submitting them within the time frame. To overcome this, the Department undertake continuous engagement and awareness programmes. One of the strategic directions outlined in DOSM's Strategic Plan 2010 – 2014 is the strategy 'to expand networking with data providers and users'. In line with that, DOSM has moved towards intensifying data tapping on secondary and administrative data from other agencies instead of solely relying on the primary data to cater for the increasing demand for new statistics. This is vital in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to reduce respondents' burden as well as to use the resources more effectively.

16. Prior to data tapping, it is important that respective agencies accommodate DOSM's data requirements. In addition, full understanding of the usage of the codes, classifications and concepts by the respective agencies is a must to ensure standardisation and compliance to international recommendations.

17. Data requirements and needs have never ceased but continue to increase, thus giving rise to the need for data prioritisation. The current focus of the department is to fulfil the requirements of statistics for the preparation of the 11th Malaysian Plan which is scheduled to be tabled to the parliament by the Prime Minister in June 2015.

On data quality and integrity

Ladies and gentlemen,

18. The department is rigorous with respect to the standards for data collection, methods of data processing and the derivation of results. The staff is instilled with an ethos of quality to promote the achievement of such high standards. In this way, the sense that what are produced are the result of quality inputs, as well as quality methods of production and control, is constantly reinforced.

19. DOSM also gives priority to standardisation of definitions, codes and classifications. These codes and classifications are continuously updated in tandem with the development of the related manuals and standards. An

Inter Agency Technical Committee was set-up in 2007 to promote and coordinate uses of standard codes and classifications and are scheduled to meet twice a year.

20. In terms of timeliness, DOSM complies with the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). According to the IMF Annual Observance Report of the Special Data Dissemination Standard for 2011, DOSM supersedes the SDDS in terms of timeliness requirements for national accounts, labour market, balance of payments, merchandise trade and international investment position statistics. For example, recognising the urgency of obtaining quarterly GDP and BOP data by stakeholders, DOSM managed to improve the timeliness of releasing these indicators from 9 weeks to less than 7 weeks.

On data dissemination

21. The Department's portal will continue to be used strategically for data dissemination and communication. Improvement of the website contents will be continuously undertaken. e-Services that include free download services have been expanded to include all of the Department's publications and as to date more than 100 publications are available for free on-line download. The Department's portal, being the medium of information dissemination, will continue to provide informative and user-oriented services.

Ladies and gentlemen,

22. The need to fulfil comprehensive economic and financial statistics cannot be materialised if it is not supported by efficient delivery system, adequate regulatory and surveillance framework. Hence, the innovation and modernisation of the statistical delivery system is certainly a paramount effort in the Department to support dynamic economic policy making.

23. To conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my deepest gratitude to all who have contributed to the preparation of this conference. My special thanks to YB. Senator Dato' Sri Abdul Wahid Omar, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department for being with us today. My appreciation also goes to our co-organisers, BNM and Institut Statistik Malaysia (ISM) for the valuable cooperation in making this conference a success.

THANK YOU

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