

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

2nd INTERNATIONAL URBAN PLANNING CONFERENCE (INUPC) 2025

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**“ASEAN SYNERGY FOR COLLABORATIVE PLANNING
AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH”**

(30 minutes)

23 June 2025 (Monday) | 8:00 am – 5.00 pm

**Dewan Premier Sarawak, Fakulti Alam Bina dan Ukur,
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru**

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَوةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ
وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ وَعَلَىٰ إِلَيْهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

Assalamualaikum wbt, good morning, Salam Sejahtera, Salam Malaysia MADANI and Salam PLANMalaysia, the **Lead Agency for the National Development Planning Agenda**.

[- SALUTATION DISEDIAKAN BERASINGAN -]

INTRODUCTION

1. Syukur alhamdulillah, with the grace and blessings of Allah SWT, it gives me a great honour to be here this morning with all esteemed delegates at the opening of the **2nd International Urban Planning Conference (iNUPC) 2025**. The theme of the conference, “**ASEAN SYNERGY FOR COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**” is both timely and deeply aligned with the Malaysia’s role as ASEAN Chair this year. A role that brings both responsibility and opportunity to drive a more **integrated, inclusive and sustainable growth** among member states. This conference is a

strategic platform to highlight **HOW URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING CAN ACT AS A UNIFYING FORCE IN ADDRESSING SHARED URBAN CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVING THE KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION ON ASEAN 2045: OUR SHARED FUTURE.**

2. First and foremost, on behalf of PLANMalaysia and as the alumni and adjunct professor of my alma mater, UTM, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to UTM, especially the Faculty of Built Environment and Surveying, for the privilege to address keynote presentation in NUPC again. It is my pleasure to share **HOW WE RESHAPING MALAYSIA'S PLANNING SYSTEM AND DRIVING FORWARD NEW INITIATIVES THAT SUPPORT MALAYSIA MADANI ASPIRATIONS AND OUR REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER ASEAN 2045.**
3. As we gather under the shared banner of ASEAN cooperation, I am reminded of the importance of regional **academia-government collaboration** in shaping the future of urban planning. Over the years, PLANMalaysia and UTM have cultivated a meaningful partnership. From developing advanced planning tools to capacity building

programme, our joint efforts clearly demonstrate how **KNOWLEDGE DIPLOMACY CAN BRIDGE THE GAPS.**

4. Last two years in 2023, this mutual collaboration was formalized through the signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding** (MOU) between PLANMalaysia and UTM. This MOU strengthened our commitment to work together to co-create knowledge, advance research and drive innovation in urban and regional planning.
5. Indeed, we cannot work in silos, we need each other to support and improve the standard and quality of the urban planning profession. We all have a role to play to produce quality, knowledgeable and **future-proof urban planners**. To the students and young planners here today, your ideas, your energy, and your passion does matter. **YOU WILL BE THE ONES TO SHAPE OUR CITIES THAT ARE GREENER, MORE INCLUSIVE AND PEOPLE-CENTRED NOT JUST FOR MALAYSIA BUT FOR OUR ASEAN REGION AS A WHOLE.**

Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen.

ASEAN 2045 : OUR SHARED FUTURE

6. As we all know, ASEAN has come a long way from more than six (6) decades ago. Today, it has grown from five (5) to 10 member states, with Timor-Leste will officially become the 11th member expected this October. Today, ASEAN is **home to over 695 million people with more than 500 officially designated cities**. Each diverse in size, function and character, but all playing a critical role in shaping our shared future. Urbanization is happening fast. In 1967, only **21% of the ASEAN's population lived in urban areas**. By 2023, the urbanization rate has been doubled up to 51.7%. **WITH SUCH RAPID URBANIZATION RATE, WE HAVE NO CHOICE. WE NEED TO PLAN, GOVERN AND MITIGATE ITS IMPACTS TO OUR CITIES.**
7. In this context, the recent 46th ASEAN Summit marked a new journey of regional integration with the adoption of **ASEAN 2045: OUR SHARED FUTURE**. This forward-looking vision reaffirms ASEAN's role not only as a pillar of regional stability but also dynamic force for sustainable development. It is often said that "**the best way to predict**

the future is to create it”. Therefore, ASEAN 2045 invites us to create a future that is people-centred, inclusive and sustainable.

8. But today, we must acknowledge the challenges ahead. The ASEAN region faces complex issues from economic fragmentation and environmental degradation to political instability and rapid technological shifts. Climate change, geopolitical tensions, tariff wars and the widening digital divide risk fragmenting our progress. Social issues like migration, labor rights, human trafficking, ageing population, access to education and healthcare also require coordinated regional solutions. The road ahead is very challenging, but it is also full of opportunities if we work together. In short, **“DOING NOTHING STRATEGY IS NOT THE OPTION”. THIS IS WHERE URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING BECOMES A POWERFUL GAME CHANGER.**

9. Our cities are not just economic centers, they are hubs of innovation, identity and social cohesion. As we look forward ASEAN 2045, we must ensure that urban planning becomes a unifying platform across the region, bringing together governments, professionals, academia and the most importantly, the **RAKYAT** to close the development

gaps. Urban planning must be genuinely **PEOPLE-CENTRED**. Our ability to embrace digital innovations, and advance green and blue economies will shape **HOW WE DESIGN AND GOVERN OUR CITIES, ENSURING OUR URBAN SPACES REMAIN INCLUSIVE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE.**

10. As a key contributor to this agenda, PLANMalaysia is committed to aligning Malaysia's urban planning and community development with the **ASEAN Community Vision 2045**. This year, five (5) flagship ASEAN urban development events will be held to strengthen collaboration planning and sustainable urban growth.
11. In July (23rd-25th July), **ASEAN Real Estate Conference (AREC)** will showcase new ideas in affordable housing and inclusive real estate development strategies. Followed by three (3) major forums in August (10th - 15th August) – the **ASEAN SUSTAINABLE URBAN FORUM (ASUF)**, along with **ASEAN GOVERNORS AND MAYORS FORUM (AGMF)** and **MEETING OF GOVERNORS AND MAYORS OF ASEAN CAPITAL (MGMAC)**. These platforms will bring city leaders across ASEAN to address the shared urban challenges. It emphasizes on regional collaboration and helps align city level initiatives with

ASEAN's framework such as **ASEAN Sustainable Urbanization Strategy (ASUS)**, **ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN)**, **ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan 2045** and **ASEAN Community Vision 2045**.

12. Building on this momentum, the **8th ASEAN SMART CITIES NETWORK ANNUAL MEETING (ASCN)** will be held in this September (8 - 12th Sept.). It will include **Smart City Expert Talk and Smart City Connect Expo** to showcase the innovation urban solutions and Smart City flagship projects from ASEAN Member States. This year, PLANMalaysia is proud to lead the launch of the **ASEAN SMART CITIES NETWORK ACTION PLAN (2026–2035)**. A long-term strategy blueprint that will guide smart, inclusive and sustainable urban development by integrating digital innovation and people-centric governance in the spirit of ASEAN Synergy.

Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen.

URBAN PLANNING DIGITALISATION INITIATIVES – THE MASTER PIECE OF PLANMALAYSIA

13. In line with ASCN vision, Malaysia is taking bold steps to position ourselves as digital economy leader in the region by driving inclusive and sustainable urban transformation. KPKT through PLANMalaysia is championing this national aspiration through the **MALAYSIA SMART CITY FRAMEWORK 2019-2025**, which provides a clear direction for local authorities in planning and implementing sustainable urban solutions. As we look forward, the upcoming **MALAYSIA SMART CITY BLUEPRINT 2026-2040** will continue to serve as the next generation guide for local governments to scale digital solutions, improve governance and ensure no one is left behind. Most importantly, our commitment is gaining global recognition. Malaysia's ranking in the **IMD SMART CITY INDEX** published by the **International Institute for Management Development (IMD)**, Switzerland in collaboration with the **Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD)** **HAS IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY FROM 89TH IN 2023 TO 73RD IN 2024.**

14. To drive the implementation and development of smart city initiatives on the ground, we have introduced the **SMART CITY RECOGNITION PROGRAM** based on **Malaysia Smart City Standard Indicators MS ISO 37122:2019**. This program adopts a structured performance-based roadmap comprising of 85 indicators and categorising local authorities into four (4) stages, namely **Smart City Early Adopter, Developing Smart City, Leading Smart City and Visionary Smart City**.

15. Indeed, our goal is ambitious but achievable. All **62 local authorities with the status of municipality and above** are targeted to achieve **Smart City Early Adopter** status by 2025. As of last year, I am pleased to share that **43 local authorities** have reached the **Smart City Early Adopter status**, and **2 local authorities** has attained the **Developing Smart City status**. On the other hand, we have developed the **SMART TOWNSHIP RECOGNITION PROGRAM** to acknowledge private property developers that successfully implement and integrate smart city initiatives into their development projects. **THIS PROGRESS REFLECTS STRONG LEADERSHIP AT THE FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LEVEL TOWARDS ASEAN 2045, A SHARED FUTURE.**

16. As continuous effort to share Malaysia's journey and the governance of Smart City Agenda, KPKT via PLANMalaysia now working on the formation of **CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (COE) FOR ASEAN SMART CITY.**

Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen.

17. As we move into the digital age through **National Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)**, **evidence-based planning** becomes essential. Initiatives such as **MURNInets** (Malaysian Urban Rural National Indicators Network for Sustainable Development), **i-PLAN (Integrated Planning Land Use Information System)** with over 10 million of polygons and cadastral lots that captures geospatial land use data, **and S-CHARMs (Spatial Characteristics of Rural Malaysia System)** that covers 19,474 villages in Peninsular Malaysia and WP Labuan have been explored and implemented.
18. As we embrace digitalisation through **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, **Internet of Things (IoTs)** and **Digital Twin**, these certainly will be reshaping the future of urban planning. We cannot rely solely on conventional physical land use model anymore. Urban planning must evolve beyond conventional from merely **descriptive** to become more **analytical, predictive** in anticipating future trends

and **prescriptive** in guiding evidenced-based planning. Therefore, we have developed the **Malaysia Urban Observatory (MUO)** as the national development planning big data, serving as the cornerstone to accelerate achievement for **Smart Nation Agenda by 2040**. Through MUO, we have been able to carry out various data analytics such as Sustainability Index, Happiness Index, Liveability Index (iDAM) and the provision of multi-sectoral dashboards such as affordable housing dashboards, **Malaysia Electric Vehicle Charging Bay Network (MEVnet)** dashboard, **Urban Renewal dashboard** and many more.

19. Achieving Sustainable Development for Malaysian Cities becomes the prime Agenda for PLANMalaysia. **MURNInets (the Malaysian Urban Rural National Indicators Network for Sustainable Development)** that developed since 2002, will continue to serve and used as a tool to assess the level of sustainability for Malaysian cities. Under the 12th Malaysia Plan, our target is for 120 out of 156 **local authorities including Sabah dan Sarawak**, to achieve sustainable city status by 2025. As of 2024, **113 cities have already met this milestone**,

signalling significant progress toward Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030 and ASEAN 2045.

Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen.

MALAYSIA'S STRATEGIC URBAN PLANNING INITIATIVES TOWARD A SHARED FUTURE

20. As we look forward, the upcoming **5th National Physical Plan (NPP5) and the 3rd National Urbanisation Policy (NUP3)** will play a crucial role in strengthening the economy, social and environmental aspects for our future cities as visualised in the aspiration of **Malaysia MADANI** (*Sustainability, Care, Compassion, Respect, Innovation, Prosperity & Trust*) and **MADANI Economy to Build Back A Better Malaysia**, coupled with the **National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR)** and **New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP 2030)**.

21. Together, these policies lay the groundwork for sustainable urban development to **BOOST REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY AND VIBRANT ECONOMY CLUSTER THROUGH CROSS BORDER INITIATIVES** like the **JOHOR-SINGAPORE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE (JS-SEZ)** and the revived **KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE HIGH SPEED RAIL (HSR)**. PLANMalaysia as the

custodian of Malaysia's urban planning, is committed to deliver and to realise this vision.

22. Alongside with these efforts, we have covered a **WIDE SPECTRUM OF STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVES** as the follow through exercise from our National Physical Plan (NPP), to address specific pressing matters and challenges that Malaysia faces in both urban and rural areas. From **Forest Conservation and Coastal Management to Food Security, Regional Economic Growth and Blue Economy**, we need to work together in leveraging urban planning and urban management as a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable development.
23. Our efforts in conserving Malaysia's forest have been solidified through the review of **Master Plan for Central Forest Spine (PIRECFS)** in 2022. This plan aims to address the forest fragmentation by reconnecting forest through **39 ecological linkages, with a target to achieve 50% forest cover by 2040**. For the first time, our work has even gained international recognition, as we presented the PIRECFS at the **4th Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation**, by incorporating **ecological corridors into land use planning**. This demonstrates that urban planners are not only safeguarding cities but also

safeguarding biodiversity, including animals and other faunas.

24. The **recent tragic death of a young Asian Elephant** while crossing East West Highway (Gerik-Jeli) with his mother was a heartbreakingly reminder of the real life consequences of forest fragmentation. It has sparked public concern and triggered the urgent need to accelerate implementation of **ECO VIADUCT TO REDUCE HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICTS AND PROTECT THE ICONIC MALAYSIA'S BIG FIVE.** (Elephant, Tapir, Sun Bear, Panther and Malayan Tiger).
25. In safeguarding Malaysia's coastlines, we have come out with the **2nd National Coastal Zone Physical Plan (RPP-2)** as our proactive approach to overcome issues related to climate change such as sea level rise, coastal erosion and the risk of tsunami disasters. The **NCVI (National Coastal Vulnerability Index)** has been developed as an innovative urban solution for all coastlines in Peninsular Malaysia and the Federal Territory of Labuan. It serves as a guide in planning, management, preservation and land use development along the national coastline.

26. With a rapidly growing population and the impacts of climate change, our approach to **food security** must change. **The Land Use Planning Master Plan for the National Food Production Area (KAGUMN)** redefines how we can utilize our land to enhance our **Self Sufficiency Level (SSL)** so that we can meet the needs of our growing 34 million population sustainably. As town planner, I feel so proud to share that we have given opportunity to present this important planning document to the **Cabinet Committee on National Food Security Policy**, chaired by YAB Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister, where we successfully positioned land use planning as a cornerstone for boosting food security. Not only that, we are also given responsibility and thrust by two ministries, i.e. Economy Ministry and Ministry of Agricultural and Food Security to prepare the formula for **FISCAL INCENTIVE, TO CALCULATE AMOUNT TO STATE AUTHORITIES THAT PRESERVE PADDY FIELDS.**

27. From the perspective of investment, PLANMalaysia also involve in preparing **ECRL Integrated Land Use Master Plan (PeGTaECRL)** which receive internationally award-winning study from ISOCARP (International Society of City and Regional Planners). This master plan try to align urban

planning with economic development along the ECRL corridor – one of the economic game changers of Malaysia. With **20 strategically located stations** from Kota Bharu to Port Klang, this plan prioritizes **transit-oriented development (TOD)** while driving regional economic growth. For the first time, **PLANMalaysia** played a significant role in linking the **ECRL Economic Accelerator Project (ECRL-EAP)** to the national economy, underscored by the high-profile handover of the plan to both **Chairman and CEO of MIDA**, alongside with key figures such as the Minister and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI). This moment represents a historic milestone, where urban planning has been elevated alongside with national priorities, highlighting our influence and impact on strategic national game changer project that are shaping the future of our country. We are also feel very appreciated, when the PeGtaECRL is selected by the government to be **exhibited in OSAKA Expo in September 2025.**

28. In an unprecedeted move, we are expanding our urban planning and urban management efforts to include marine environments, underscoring the importance of integrating both land and sea in achieving sustainable development. During the recent MPFN meeting on 23rd October last year,

we have received a strong mandate from YAB PMX to expand the scope of urban planning to include not only land but also marine areas, that is through MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING (MSP).

29. On top of this, we have formulated more than **50 planning guidelines** to address a wide range of urban and regional planning issues, ranging from creating inclusive spaces like **Autism-Friendly City, Child-Friendly City, Elderly Friendly City and Social Impact Assessment**, to advancing climate change through initiatives like **Low Carbon City and Disaster Resilient City**. Additionally, we are supporting the economic growth by fostering innovation in areas such as **Data Centre, Electric Vehicle Charging Bay (EVCB), Micro Mobility, Solar Farm, Recreational Vehicle Parks (RV), Plant Factories, Rare Earth Element (REE) Mining** and many more. These efforts ensure that our cities are not only sustainable and resilient but also equipped to drive economic growth (**membugar ekonomi**) in the future.
30. Nonetheless, we must remember that planning is more than just policy documents. It involves **four (4) essential “Ps”** of urban planning, namely **FORWARD PLANNING, PLANNING CONTROL, PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION**

AND MOST OFTEN NEGLECTED IS PLANNING PROMOTION. Learning from the past weaknesses, since 2023, we have aggressively and extensively promoted these planning documents and guidelines by conducting various launches and press conferences to actively address the pressing planning issues and challenges in Malaysia. In 2023, there are 1,069 media coverages followed by 1,115 media coverages in 2024.

31. Planning Implementation also now becomes the agenda of urban planning. We have worked for constructing physical projects under the Safe City Program involving more than RM400 million since 2010, more than RM10 million for Healthy City Initiatives and Agenda National Malaysia Sihat (ANMS) and starting 2024, more than RM20 million is allocated for Smart City Projects.

Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen.

MALAYSIA URBAN PLANNING LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

32. One of the key pillars of our urban planning system is the **LEGISLATIVE REFORMS**. The Act 172 has undergone **five (5) amendments**, with the **sixth (6th) amendment** to be tabled in parliament next year. This amendment is a

proactive method to address environmental, economic and social issues to suit current changes and growth in urban planning.

33. For more than two decades (since review in 2001), Malaysia's urban planning hierarchy has been structured across three tiers: **National, State, and Local Planning**. This has served us well, but I recognized there is a necessity for a more responsive framework.
34. Thus, when I took over the position of Director General of Town and Country Planning, I have introduced the 4th Tier of Urban Planning. **I STRONGLY FEEL THAT, TO ADDRESS PEOPLE'S NEEDS, TO PLAN FOR THE PEOPLE - BY THE PEOPLE, OR TO LET THE PEOPLE SHAPE THE ENVIRONMENT THEY WANT TO LIVE IN, WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO ADOPT A SMALLER SCALE (HUMAN SCALE) OF PLANNING, called as MICRO PLANNING.**
35. To operationalise this, PLANMalaysia has rolled out several special action plan, namely **Urban Special Action Plan (PTKB) and Rural Special Action Plan (PTKLB)**. We have a bigger role to play to make sure **NO**

COMMUNITY IS LEFT BEHIND whether living in urban area or rural kampungs.

36. This paradigm shift aligns closely with the MALAYSIA MADANI's aspiration and ASEAN 2045. We have to revisit our way of developing cities and regions that are not only functional but stressing on **HUMAN CENTRIC URBAN PLANNING** which are **harmonious, people-centred, and conducive to the well-being of all.**

Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen.

TOTAL PLANNING DOCTRINE - DON'T FORGET THE FUNDAMENTAL OF URBAN PLANNING

37. In doing so, we must not forget the fundamental of urban planning. Humanity in planning philosophy can be traced back to 1995 when the **TOTAL PLANNING DOCTRINE** was developed as the **FUNDAMENTAL OF URBAN PLANNING**. The Planning Doctrine emphasizes 3 relationships which are:

- (i) Man and Creator**
- (ii) Man and Man**
- (iii) Man and Environment**

38. We believe that this holistic approach should focus on people as the heart of planning system. Let us as planner, urban managers, professionals and all stakeholders in urban development carry this doctrine forward. Let it shape not just our policies and plans but also our purpose.

39. To further enhance the efficiency of our planning processes and improve **EASE OF DOING BUSINESS**, we have established the **Planning Advisory Management Office (PAMO)**. This includes the implementation of the 3 new OSC initiatives, namely the **Industrial Green Lane (IGL)**, **Pre-Requisite and Self-Regulation** to expedite the planning permission process. In addition to these initiatives, we have senior officers seconded to the **Invest Malaysia Facilitation Center (IMFC)**, **MIDA** to streamline collaboration and provide direct support for direct foreign investment facilitation. I believe that **a new paradigm shift is required from controlling development to facilitating development** to encourage economy growth, investment, and improve the national economy.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

FUTURE CITIES – TO BRING BACK PEOPLE TO CITIES

40. Urban Renewal holds the key to revitalise our cities into vibrant, liveable, and inclusive places that attract people back to urban centres. **WE HAVE NO CHOICE.** Again, **“Doing Nothing Strategy” is not the option** as we can see many of our cities, particularly Kuala Lumpur, face the risk of becoming urban decay. Yet, for the first time, we are facing a **strategic communication crisis** surrounding the proposal of **Urban Renewal Act**, which is set to be tabled in the Parliament this July. The proposal has put PLANMalaysia under the spotlight and become “famous” following the public concerns over **gentrification and the possible Malay displacement** following the enactment of the **Urban Renewal Act**.

41. To address these concerns, KPKT through PLANMalaysia has organized the **URA Expedition Tour** on 29th April 2025, bringing over 20 Members of Parliament and Senators to witness firsthand and condition of dilapidated areas and the success stories of urban renewal projects like Razak Mansion and Residensi Kerinchi. This

expedition demonstrated that URBAN RENEWAL CAN UPLIFT THE LIVING STANDARD OF THE COMMUNITIES WITHOUT UPROOTING THEM.

42. Allow me to explain and make it clear that there will be NO GENTRIFICATION AND NO LESS FAVOURABLE TREATMENT for any community under this Act. Malays reserves lands remain protected and any urban renewal initiatives must undergo meaningful stakeholder engagement through various mechanism including Mediation Committee, Federal and State Executive Committee to ensure preserving the existing community, fair compensation, and social equity. Given this new legislation, I believe that it (URA) will transform our cities and balance between progress and societal needs. The dilapidated buildings will be able to be redeveloped more holistically and effectively, leaving no one behind.

43. As we diligently drafting this legislation, the **Implementation Guideline of Urban Renewal (GPP PSB)** has been approved by the cabinet in 2023. This comprehensive guideline focuses on four (4) types of urban renewal (i.e. **urban redevelopment, urban regeneration, urban revitalisation and urban conservation**), including prioritizing the principal aspects

of landlords' consent, preserving the existing community, safeguarding owners and community interests, and providing conducive temporary settlements.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

WAY FORWARD: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

44. I would like to emphasize that "**TOWN PLANNING IS ABOUT FACILITATION**". Every plan requires our imagination to explore and then implement small actions with a big impact. PLANMalaysia will continue to commit to **collaborative programs and partnerships** with universities, international institutions, industrial players, NGOs, as well as government agencies at the federal, state and local levels. I always believe that "**If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, let's go together.**"

FUTURE-PROOF DEVELOPMENT BY URBAN PLANNERS

45. In preparation to become a town planner, we need to always be alert and anticipate to the current situation and issues either at the national and global level and be equipped with a **GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**, always read, seek knowledge, and always be prepared for any new possibilities including new ideas which can be thrown (voice out). Do bear in mind, "**COMPETITION MAKES US FASTER, COLLABORATION MAKES US BETTER**". This mindset will accelerate the idea of "**THINK GLOBAL ACT LOCAL**", as highlighted by Datuk Seri Maimunah Mohd Sharif, former Executive Director of UNHABITAT.

46. And today, Malaysia has been appointed as **President of the Asia Pacific of UN-HABITAT Assembly from June 2025 to 2027 and also a member of UN-HABITAT Executive Board for 2027-2029** in advancing the implementation of the **United Nations New Urban Agenda (NUA) for the period 2025 to 2029**. The global stage is no longer distance. Now, this is our time and our responsibility as urban planners to step onto with purposes and confidence to strengthen **ASIA PASIFIC AND ASEAN SYNERGY TOWARD COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH.**

47. In order to support these efforts and improve human capital, especially for the students of Urban Planning, I suggest that the momentum of enrichment of knowledge (core knowledge and peripheral knowledge) be strengthened to include a **variety of knowledge in the field of law, macro and micro economics, international trade and investment, and contemporary global development agenda initiatives.**

48. My advice to all students, equip yourself with skills in various ‘brains’ in line with the **digital and artificial intelligence (AI)** era, in addition to being an active student in sports and other appropriate co-curricular activities in order to be able to compete with other university graduates. We have no choice but to be fully aware of what is digital literacy and AI literacy. It will be a huge loss for us if **WE FAIL TO MAKE OPTIMAL USE OF IT.**

49. Allow me to promote here that PLANMalaysia has established a special unit called **CENTRE OF AI IN MALAYSIA URBAN PLANNING** aimed to explore, conducting research and guide planning authorities in implementing AI in planning and developing our cities.

CLOSING - RECIPE OF MAKING CITIES FOR ALL

50. Finally, I want to leave the audience with the recipe in crafting and transforming our cities for a better urban future, that is by embedding '**the humanity**' aspect as one of the ingredients in all city development thoughts and practices. As a master chef who carefully selects the finest ingredients to create a culinary masterpiece, so too must we infuse our cities with the essence of humanity. Let's together pledge to cultivate a future where our cities are not just built, but nurtured with love, care and compassion, ensuring "**CITIES FOR ALL, and LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND**".

Thank You.

**Sekian, Wabillahitaufik Walhidayah, Wassalamualaikum
Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.**

*Disediakan oleh:
Bahagian Korporat, PLANMalaysia.
20 June 2025
(dikemaskini 11.15 am)*