CLOSING SPEECH

BY
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MTCP ON
HALAL STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE INFRASTRUCTURE

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Yang Berbahagia Datuk Fadilah Baharin

Director General, Department of Standards Malaysia;

Yang Berusaha En. Mad Aznor Mahat

Undersecretary of International Cooperation and Development Division

Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

Yang Berusaha Dr. Mokhtar Bin Tahar

Undersecretary of Industry Division

Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation;

Senior officials from Ministries and Agencies;

Honoured guests and distinguished participants;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, Salam 1 Malaysia, Salam 1 MOSTI and a very good morning to all of you.

1.   We are grateful to Allah Al-Mighty for blessing this occasion and giving all of us the opportunity to be here this moment. On behalf of the Department of Standards Malaysia, I would like to extend my warm welcome to all delegates if it still not too late. It is an honour for me to be standing here with international key players in the Halal industry and and it is my earnest hope that the ideas discussed at this MTCP Training will advance the development of Halal industry to the next level.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2.   Malaysia is happy to share our experience and expertise in Halal with our friends and neighbours. Malaysia's involvement in promoting the growth of the Halal industry goes back decades. Indeed, it was in 1974 that the Research Centre of the Islamic Affairs Division of the Prime Minister's Office started to issue Halal certification letters for products that met the criteria. We have come a long way since then, and have made great strides in seeking to achieve our ambition of making Malaysia the Global Halal Hub.

3.   For instance, Malaysia's Halal Certification and logo are now universally recognised and accepted. We have also developed 13 Malaysian standards for the Halal industry that meet international benchmarks. A significant milestone was the adoption of Malaysia's MS1500:2004 as the international Halal standard by the Codex

Alimentarius Commission of the United Nations. This standard is the only Halal reference under the World Trade Organization, which provides internationally recognised guidelines on labelling food products.

4.   Malaysia had recognised very early the enormous potential of this niche in the global marketplace. Hence, the government introduced various policy initiatives, programmes and activities and encouraged our private sector to participate fully in enlarging the contribution of the Halal sector to our own economy. In this regard, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) through the Department of Standards Malaysia has contributed substantially to this effort, working in collaboration with other relevant government agencies such as JAKIM, Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC), MARA University of Technology (UiTM) and SIRIM Berhad in ensuring the standards and conformance activities are in line with national halal agenda.

5.   Today, Halal is a global phenomenon no longer just associated with religion. The Halal label has become a symbol for good quality and wholesomeness. It is an emerging market force that attracts not only Muslims but is also becoming a lifestyle of choice for non-Muslims. To reflect this growing trend, increasingly everyone seems to want a slice of the Halal market. With the global Muslim population estimated to about 2 billion or about 23% of the world population, the Muslim world must develop and promote Halal products and services for the Ummah rendering the Halal industry as a new dynamic source of economic

growth. As Muslims, we are duty bound or 'Fardu Kifayah' to work towards developing alternatives and choices of Halal products and services for the Ummah.

6.   The branding of Halal products and services has to be of International Standards as Halalan Toyibban means permissible and of High Standards which in turn makes the whole world our market, not confined purely to the Muslim Ummah. This will also enhance the image of Islam to being the *ad deen* or way of life and I believe that through Halal products and services, the Muslim world will be able to foster good relations and deflect the adverse portrayal of Islam today.

7.   While we recognise that there are significant opportunities in the Halal market, there are still many hurdles to overcome to realise the full potential of this sector. One of the reasons why the Halal industry cannot grow faster, despite rising demands for Halal products worldwide, is because there is no consensus on a Halal standard that is acceptable to all Muslim communities. Each country establishes her own certification body and sets differing standards with regards to slaughtering methods, animal feeds, packaging and other related issues. Therefore, uniformity of Halal Standards that meet international best practices will ensure that the Islamic community would feel safe and convinced that the food and products they consume are Halal.

8.	There are between 500 and 3,000 certification agencies around the world, of which 80 per cent are from non-Muslim countries. The lack of a unified standard has also raised production costs for exporting companies, as they must follow different national regulatory standards. Thus, by having a unified standard among OIC countries for a start, these matters can be addressed and hopefully will help minimise the cost of doing business.

9.	In order to optimise the immense potential of the global halal industry and to further exploit halal products and services, there was a further need to acquire greater understanding of the various aspects of halal certification and ensuring uniformity in the application of halal standards globally. Hence, Malaysia is ready to collaborate with any party to ensure an efficient halal ecosystem in the country and take advantage of the halal market's vast commercial potential in the region and at the global stage. Halal ecosystem must meet the standards imposed by Islamic philosophy, only then will it be able to attract the attention of non-Muslims to buy halal products. So from this training, Malaysia will be able to benchmark with other countries which involves various processes from the manufacturing to the provision of the halal products to the consumers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

10.   Accreditation is another field that goes hand-in-hand with the standards development in Halal. Our accreditation service, under the purview of Standards Malaysia ensures the credibility of the Halal testing facilities, which in turn provides assurance to the consumers that the quality value chain of Halal goods and services are sound and reliable.

11.   With all that in mind, Malaysia as a lead global player in the Halal industry, would like to share our experience and know-how with other developing countries. Leveraging on the wide acceptance of the Halal Malaysia logo and our Halal standards, we encourage the development of Halal industry in your respective countries in the field of Halal Standard and conformance infrastructure and supply chain.

12.   Malaysia, having 50 years' experience in Standards Development and almost 30 years in Accreditation field has established a structured and systematic framework for these two (2) fields. The short-term goal of this training programme is the sharing of experiences, technical expertise and concerns between participating countries as well as an entry point for Malaysia to establish network with them in the implementation of Halal standards.

13.   I would like to record my appreciation to the Department of Standards Malaysia for their efforts in making this training programme a reality. Not to forget the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, JAKIM, HDC, SIRIM Berhad, and UiTM. It is hoped that this programme has enabled us to assist agencies related to Halal Standard and conformance Infrastructure based on Malaysia's experience in developing a quality framework of quality assurance for Halal products, through sharing of experiences and concerns between participating countries. On behalf of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Malaysia, I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to all participants who have successfully completed this training programme.   I wish you well and every success in your future endeavour.

14.   On that note, I officially close the MTCP Training on Halal Standards and Conformance Infrastructure 2016.

Thank you.