

Zamani Abdul Ghani: Malaysia - an investment destination

Speech by Mr Zamani Abdul Ghani, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Malaysia, at the Investors' Conference, Kuala Lumpur, 22 June 2005.

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Bismillahirrahmanirrahim
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum warahmatullah hiwabarakatuh and good morning,

First of all, allow me to welcome all of you to this conference on "Malaysia: An Investment Destination" held in conjunction with the 30th IDB Board of Governors' Meeting. We are most heartened that there are representatives here this morning from more than one hundred global financial institutions and from over thirty countries. I would like to welcome all of you to Malaysia especially those who are here for the first time. I hope you have had a good rest after a journey from your respective countries because we have a very special program waiting for you.

Indeed it is a great honour to be given the privilege to host this historic conference. The theme for the conference "Malaysia: An Investment Destination" is a fitting choice as we would highlight to you a wide range of investment opportunities available for you in Malaysia. This theme is most appropriate given a fast changing global and regional financial landscape, driven by financial liberalization and consolidation, economic transformation and more discerning and demanding investors.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We will do our best to ensure that this conference will be rewarding and useful for you. Over this two-day period, we have lined up a panel of distinguished speakers, including the Honourable Prime Minister of Malaysia himself as well as Governor of Bank Negara Malaysia. The invited speakers are from various prestigious institutions, domestic and international with unique expertise and experiences. You can be rest assured that the speakers we are bringing to you are renowned in their own field and their views are well sought after by global investors and the financial fraternity.

The major highlight of this conference is the keynote address by the Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi, the Prime Minister of Malaysia who is also the Finance Minister. His address will offer invaluable insights into Malaysia's policy and strategies to sustain its strong growth performance. The next significant highlight of this conference is a speech by Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz, the Governor of Bank Negara Malaysia, who will touch on investment opportunities in Malaysia in an evolving global environment. This speech is timely given so much interest shown by both domestic and international investors in the Malaysian economy. Both the Prime Minister and Governor will offer invaluable insights into strategic orientation of important policies that will chart the Malaysian economy going forward. Therefore, these are the main events not to be missed.

Of course you should not miss other speakers too! They will touch on various topics according to their areas of expertise. More importantly, you will get to hear investment opportunities in Malaysia with a special focus on conventional and Islamic financial institutions products. For selected topics, there will be workshops for in depth discussions with panel members who are prominent speakers from industries as well as regulatory bodies. It will be interesting to find out what will transpire in the workshops that await you.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This Investors Conference is also a gathering of investors, bankers, fund managers, regulators and industry leaders from Malaysia and the world over. This is an excellent opportunity for you to capitalize on their presence by networking with them. I am sure you have a lot to gain from their experiences and first-hand knowledge in their own fields. Furthermore, for information on investment opportunities in Malaysia, there are 15 exhibition booths from major financial institutions and regulators set up in this convention centre specifically for you. Please make a point to visit the exhibition booths, which showcase financial products and services in Malaysia. I am sure these booths have informative brochures to give out and are more than happy to answer any queries you may have.

There will be a very special event at the end of the second day. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz, Governor of Bank Negara Malaysia will launch two new indices - the Citigroup Malaysian Government Bond Index and Dow Jones - RHB Islamic Malaysia Index. The launching of these indices marks yet another milestone in the development of the Malaysian capital market. As you are well aware, credible and transparent indices are very significant market infrastructure to raise the awareness and interest of investors. This will bode well for our aspiration to broaden and deepen the bond market in Malaysia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to remind you that both the Day One and Day Two programs promise to be eventful. I know the very conducive environment for shopping at the Kuala Lumpur City Center or KLCC can be very tempting for some of us. But please resist that temptation for a while and wait until the conference is over. Then please, by all means savour the sights and sounds of Malaysia.

On this note, I wish you all a rewarding and productive conference.

Thank you.