

Zeti Akhtar Aziz: Sasana Kijang – Malaysia’s centre for central banking and financial collaboration and cooperation

Welcoming remarks by Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz, Governor of the Central Bank of Malaysia, at the launch of Sasana Kijang, Kuala Lumpur, 14 September 2011.

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It is my honour and great pleasure to welcome you to the official opening of Sasana Kijang. Today we are also honoured by the presence of Yang Amat Berhormat, the Prime Minister of Malaysia to officiate the launch of Sasana Kijang. Sasana Kijang began with a vision to have a centre for the development of thought leadership and for the promotion of greater regional and international collaboration in Central Banking and finance. Sasana Kijang is also an integral part of the initiatives that have been undertaken by Bank Negara Malaysia in the modernisation and transformation of our Central Bank. These have involved the introduction of new legislation and governance arrangements, the increased leverage on technology, the adoption of new practices in the management of talent, work arrangements and corporate culture, as well as the new institutional arrangements that facilitate our cooperation and collaboration with other monetary authorities and regulators in other parts of the world.

The global economic and financial landscape is currently at an important turning point, as we transition to a fundamentally changed future. The challenges facing us in this environment are manifold. We therefore want to have the skills for this future – to be well equipped to effectively manage our future. Sasana Kijang aims to provide such a platform to pursue this human capital development agenda to become a centre of excellence for learning with the state of the art facilities.

Sasana Kijang also reflects our commitment for regional and international collaboration and cooperation. It is our intention for Sasana Kijang to provide a platform for the meeting of minds and to harness the wealth of expertise in the field of Central Banking and finance. As a centre for collaboration, Sasana Kijang has wide ranging facilities for regional and international meetings, seminars and conferences. These facilities are also shared with the South East Asian Central Banks (SEACEN) Research and Training Centre and the Islamic Financial Services Board (IFSB) which are now located in Sasana Kijang. For the SEACEN Centre, it is hoped that all the available facilities will support its enhanced role in the region, particularly, as financial and economic integration in Asia intensifies. For the IFSB, an international organisation that was established as a result of the collaborative efforts of regulators from different parts of the world, it is hoped that it will facilitate further collaboration in the development of Islamic finance and in safeguarding its soundness and stability.

This is in fact what Sasana means in Sanskrit – a convening point for the wise and learned. When combined with Kijang, a word that is strongly associated with the Bank, Sasana Kijang represents a powerful meaning that is consistent with our identity. The architectural concept of Sasana Kijang is also inspired from our earliest form of currency that was used in the third century and which denotes a harmony of simplicity and class. And the facade design of the building is derived from the geometric patterns of the traditional Malaysian songket fabric which is woven with intricate gold and silver threads which creates a strong bond, thus giving the fabric its strength and elegance. This is similar to the Central Banking community that is interlinked through our similar objectives and bonded through collaboration and strategic alliances. Other features of the building is the extensive use of glass which allows for the greater use of natural light. The building also features a range of green technologies as part of our commitment and responsibility to the environment.

Finally, another important part of Sasana Kijang is the Bank Negara Malaysia Currency and Economics Museum and the Art Gallery that will be opened to the public. These collections that have been built since the earliest days of our Bank over a period of more than five

decades aim to foster greater understanding on the history of our currencies and of our economy and financial system, and also represents our support to contemporary art in Malaysia and thus contribute towards preserving the heritage of our country.

Allow me now to invite Yang Amat Berhormat, Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak to deliver his address and to officially launch Sasana Kijang.

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