

PRESS CONFERENCE:

THE WORLD HALAL FORUM 2007

Speech by:
YBhg Datuk Jamil Bidin
Chief Executive Officer
Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC)
Tuesday, December 19, 2006

Salutations:

Encik Khairy Jamaluddin, Chairman of the World Halal Forum
Pn Jumatun Azmi, Managing Director, KasehDia Sdn Bhd; Organiser of the
World Halal Forum;
Distinguished guests; Earnest sponsors:
Members of the media;
Ladies and gentlemen.

Assalamualaikum and salam sejahtera.

Introduction:

On behalf of Halal Industry Development Corporation HDC, I would like to take this opportunity to bid everyone a warm welcome and to express our gratitude to the World Halal Forum Committee for extending us the honour to host WHF 2007. It is, I believe, a most appropriate move for the HDC, as it was during the inaugural World Halal Forum 2006 that our Prime Minister, Dato Seri Abdullah Badawi first announced his intention for the creation of the HDC.

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Ladies and gentlemen,

The Halal Industry Development Corporation Sdn Bhd (HDC) was officially incorporated just three months ago, on September 18, 2006 as a private company, wholly-owned by the Government of Malaysia through the Ministry of Finance. This organisational structure was formulated by the Prime Minister himself to enable an integrated approach as well as for quick decision-making processes and approvals.

HDC has been charged with the task of driving the development of Malaysia's Halal sector, in all its aspects, and to successfully position Malaysia as a global hub within the rapidly evolving and developing Halal market.

This is a huge undertaking that is effectively without precedent. Malaysia is the first country in the world to include the Halal issue in its Industrial Masterplan, and indeed, we are proud to say that the HDC is the only development corporation in the world to focus on the Halal industry.

In taking on this task, bearing in mind the overall directives from the Prime Minister, the HDC has made a point of talking to all the stakeholders, in both the public and private sectors, to fully understand the opportunities and the challenges that lie in front of us.

In addition to a comprehensive understanding of the domestic situation of the Halal industry here in Malaysia, it is also essential for us to gather extensive information and market intelligence on the global Halal market. If we are to successfully steer Malaysia into pole position globally, and to be an effective and functional Halal hub, it is imperative that we understand and develop strategic relationships with the key players throughout the world.

If we can identify the gaps and inefficiencies in the Halal industry – both at home and abroad – we will be in a position to recognise the opportunities to position Malaysian companies to take fullest advantage of the growth and potential in this exciting market arena.

And what better way to understand the trends, the players, the challenges and opportunities in the Halal industry than to host the World Halal Forum? This Forum is the most important gathering of the major players in the Halal market, and it is therefore the ideal platform on which to build.

Although only in its second year, we can all recognise that the WHF has already positioned itself as the premier event for the Halal industry, and it is the perfect

opportunity to learn from the best in the business, to make strategic networking connections, and to plan and navigate the route for Malaysia's Halal industry to take.

For 2007, positioning the World Halal Forum back-to-back with MIHAS 2007, the world's largest Halal trade expo, both to be held at the prestigious KL Convention Centre, is in itself an important strategic move. Putting both these world-class events under the banner of 'Halal Malaysia Week' reinforces the truth that for anyone who is a serious player in the Halal industry, you have to come to KL between May 7 to 13, 2007!

This move also shows the effective working collaboration between the public and private sectors, and also between different Ministries, and we would like to acknowledge in particular the tremendous work being done by Matrade to promote MIHAS and the WHF around the world.

For the HDC, in the development of our strategies for Malaysia, we have identified three main areas that require our focus: Halal Integrity; Capacity Building; and Marketing and Promotion.

By concentrating in these three areas, we will be able to ensure that Malaysia becomes the number one reference point for all matters relating to the Shariah parameters regarding Halal issues, as well as leaders in research and training. We will be able to assist in the development of genuine Malaysian Champions, corporations with the necessary market intelligence to compete in global markets. And we will lead the way in creating a deeper understanding and appreciation of Halal, in all its forms and applications, in order to increase demand both at home and abroad.

As we have seen from the outlining of the topics for WHF 2007 in Encik Khairy Jamaluddin's speech, the programme for the World Halal Forum 2007 creates an excellent arena to help us develop and drive forward HDC's three strategic thrusts.

The central theme of 'Harmonising the Global Halal Market' is perfectly suited to enable Malaysia's Halal players, and the HDC in particular, to gain valuable insights into the ways the Halal market will be developing in the coming years.

At HDC, we view this initiative of Halal Malaysia Week as a strong positive move that reinforces Malaysia's leadership role in the market, and we are confident that the World Halal Forum and MIHAS will create a formidable combination for years to come.

We are proud to host the World Halal Forum 2007 and will make our best efforts to ensure that in its second year, the WHF will build on last year's success to consolidate its position as the premier event for the global Halal industry.

As Salamu alaykum and thank you.

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