

**SPEECH BY:**

**YANG BERHORMAT DATUK SERI SAIFUDDIN NASUTION BIN  
ISMAIL  
MINISTER OF DOMESTIC TRADE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

**SUB-REGIONAL MEETING OF THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY  
OFFICE OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MADRID SYSTEM**

**4 FEBRUARY 2020**

**IP ACADEMY OF MyIPO**

**Yang Berbahagia Datuk Seri Hasnol Zam Zam bin Haji Ahmad**

Secretary-General

Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs

**Yang Berusaha Dr. Rozhan Othman**

Chairman of the Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia (MyIPO)

**Yang Berbahagia Dato' Mohd Roslan Mahayudin**

Director-General of the Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia (MyIPO)

Learned Speakers

Distinguished delegates and participants

Ladies and gentlemen

*Assalamu`alaikum and good morning*

1. It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to the **Sub-Regional Meeting of the Intellectual Property Office Officials Responsible for the Madrid System**.
2. It is an honor for Malaysia to host this very important meeting, and I would like to convey my sincere thanks to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and Japan Patent Office (JPO) for selecting MyIPO as the host.
3. To our foreign delegates and attendees, – *Selamat Datang* to Malaysia. Please enjoy your stay here, and do take the opportunity to experience our wonderful country and the rich diversity it has to offer.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

4. Following the passing of the Trademarks Act 2019 by the Malaysian Parliament and Malaysia's accession to the Madrid System, the new procedures and rules on trademark filings came into force on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2019. This enables Malaysian businesses to file their trademarks in multiple countries via a single registration while also enabling Malaysia as an option for other countries in the Madrid Protocol.
5. Malaysia is the 106<sup>th</sup> member of the Madrid Protocol, which has been ratified and adopted by 122 countries. With this, Malaysia has also fulfilled its commitment to the ASEAN Working Group on Intellectual Property Cooperation (AWGIPC) to become a member of the Madrid Protocol.

6. The accession to the Madrid Protocol by nine ASEAN countries affirms ASEAN's commitment to creating a regional business-friendly environment in the pursuit of shared prosperity. It will help make the ASEAN region a more attractive investment destination as a strong IP infrastructure will help improve trade, create a fairer competitive environment, and help build an innovation-driven economy.
7. The 2019 Global Competitiveness Report published by the World Economic Forum ranks Malaysia in the 27th position in terms of competitiveness. This is great news. However, as a country that aspires to become a high-income economy, we are not resting on our laurels. The Malaysian Government will continue to ensure that Malaysia remains an attractive business destination for investments. We are doubling our efforts to attract investments and strengthen our innovation ecosystem. The Madrid System is a significant step in this effort.
8. The Madrid Protocol is indeed an important catalyst to engender collaboration between the intellectual property offices of participating countries and also to speed up cross-border trademark filing and registration. We believe this serves as a key enabler in boosting international trade and, consequently, economic growth.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

9. Despite all our recent successes, I believe there is more that can be done to improve collaboration on IP matters. I am sure most of you are familiar with Moore's Law, which states that the processing speed of computers will double every two years.

10. This improvement in processing speed, as well as improvements in computer memory, has enabled us to use more powerful software that would not have been possible 30 years ago. Likewise, improvements in software have democratized the use of the internet. Before the invention of browsers, the internet was used mainly by scientists and researchers. After the invention of the browser, it became possible for ordinary people to connect to and use the internet.
11. A concomitant development with these improvements was that it made information flow across boundaries easier and financial transactions much faster and at a lower cost. We've seen substantial improvements in the time taken for processing loans and even passport applications.
12. Yet, improvements in IP filings and registration lags behind the rate of improvement in other areas. Intellectual property is a key asset in innovation. A paradox is that most intellectual property offices are not known for being innovative. In most situations, the time taken for filing IP applications takes time and the improvements in processing time are nothing close to Moore's Law. The pendency period for patent filings, for instance, continues to be long.
13. IP management and protection continues to be constrained by the old paradigm that it is a territorial matter. However, if countries can have open sky policies in air travel and custom agreements that open up their borders while still maintaining their sovereignty, why not have a more open process in the filing and registration of intellectual property?

14. Perhaps it is time to relook at the current paradigm in intellectual property filings and registration. While the Madrid System enables substantial improvements in trademark filing, I believe that we can do more. History is not created by those who are always constrained by the impossible. History is created by those who consider the impossible as just a challenge to be overcome.
15. With the many advancements in Artificial Intelligence and data analytics, perhaps there are opportunities to innovate in Intellectual Property filings and registrations. Likewise, we also need innovations at the policy level. Perhaps we need to think of new models of collaboration in intellectual property. For example, I am aware that some countries have forged bilateral agreements for the re-registration of patents filed in both countries.
16. I am happy to mention that MyIPO is starting some initiatives of our own to rethink our processes and scope of work. We are in the process of establishing a Data Analytics and Decision Support Unit. The role of this unit is to look deeper at the data MyIPO has to improve our services and serve our stakeholders better.
17. MyIPO is also looking at the commercialization of patents in Malaysia. It is in the process of developing a Patent Harvesting Program to improve the rate of commercialization of patents amongst Malaysian researchers. It will be working with researchers and the business community to develop a methodology to do this. To support these new initiatives, MyIPO will be developing a talent management program to develop a pool of leaders to take us into the future.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

18. This meeting is an important avenue for participants who represent various countries in the region to enhance their knowledge of the Madrid System. Participants will benefit from the sharing of experiences by Contracting Parties with Non-contracting Parties.
19. I am pleased to note that the agenda of this three-day sub-regional meeting covers a wide range of topics on the operational aspects related to the Office of Origin and the Office of Designated Contracting Party (DCP) as well as on the strategies to promote the Madrid System.
20. While none of us alone might have the answers to resolve all the challenges in forging a truly integrated Intellectual Property protection system, I trust that if we pool our best intellectual property minds together, it will someday become a possibility. Do consider these issues in your discussions and deliberations.
21. I believe that the fruits of your deliberations will be invaluable, and I would like to once again thank WIPO and JPO for your support and guidance. With a *Bismillah Irrahman Irrahim*, I hereby declare the **Sub-Regional Meeting of the Intellectual Property Office Officials Responsible for the Madrid System** open.

Thank you.