

**International Capacity Development Program: Seminar & Proposal-Writing
Workshop for Marine-Related Institutions
Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah
10th December 2008, 8.55 am, Gallery**

**Y.Bhg. Col. Prof. Datuk Dr. Kamaruzaman Ampon
Vice-Chancellor, Universiti Malaysia Sabah**

Bismillahir Rahmannir Rahim

Assalammualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh

And Salam Sejahtera

Thank you to our Master of Ceremony,

Yang Berbahagia Prof. Datin Paduka Dr. Khatijah Mohd. Yusoff
Deputy Secretary General (Science Services), MOSTI

Mr. Mika Odido

(Representative of Dr. Erlich Desa, Head of Capacity Development Section,
UNESCO/IOC)

UNESCO/IOC Nairobi, Kenya

Dr. Martin Le Tissier

Workshop Consultant

His Honourable Excellency Mr. Masashi KONO

Consulate-General of Japan, Kota Kinabalu

Konsul Abas Bosuri

Representative of The Consulate-General of Indonesia, Kota Kinabalu

Deputies Vice-Chancellor

Head of Departments

Senior Management of UMS

Distinguished speakers;

Prof. Dr. Nor Aieni Hj. Mokhtar

Director National Oceanography Directorate

Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation

Dr. Nick D'Adamo
Officer-in-charge, UNESCO/IOC Australia

Prof. Dr. Saleem Mustafa
Director Borneo Marine Research Institute

Dr. Mabel Manjaji Matsumoto
Deputy Director (Academic and International)
and Chairman of the Organizing Committee

Participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,

1. Welcome to this Seminar and Proposal Writing Workshop for Marine related Institutions. On behalf of Universiti Malaysia Sabah, I would like to extend my appreciation to YBhg Prof. Datin Paduka Dr Khatijah Mohd Yusoff, who took time off time from her busy schedule for this opening ceremony.

2. The focus of discussion in this “Seminar on marine resources conservation in a changing world” and the workshop on ‘**Mangroves and coral reefs and their sustainable uses for livelihood and in hazard mitigation**’ are relevant in Malaysia and also the whole world.

3. I am glad that the Capacity Development Department of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO decided to organize this program here jointly with the Borneo Marine Research Institute of Universiti Malaysia Sabah and The

National Oceanography Directorate of Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Malaysia.

4. Malaysia always lends a powerful voice in the conservation of mangroves and coral reefs, and as such, is ideally suited to host such programs. I hope this symposium-workshop will achieve the objectives and provide the opportunities for sharing information and perspectives, identifying issues of concern, and making recommendations in favor of adaptations required to ensure that the levels of threats posed by the changing marine environment remain within manageable limits.

Ladies and gentlemen,

5. The sea is a global resource and its status and problems are matters of global concern, and must be recognized by the global community. It is a challenging task, because sea

covers 70% of the earth surface, and no single country can manage it, and no country can leave it to be managed by other countries without its own share of responsibility.

6. There is no doubt, oceans are in CRISIS, caused by climate change. They can no longer absorb the impact of human activities, without undergoing a change. Their resilience has a limit - and this has been breached. We need international cooperation and capacity building to acquire knowledge to understand the oceans, to understand response of oceans to climate change, to understand the impact of ocean change on marine life and to mitigate the adverse impacts. This is a limit to the abuse it has been subjected to.

7. The fact is that issues related to oceans have received world attention. It is important to strengthen marine research institutions in order to further expand their capacity for research and human resource development.

8. In UMS, the Borneo Marine Research Institute is a center of excellence, that contributes to conservation and sustainable development of marine resources.

9. I am pleased that the Capacity Development Department of UNESCO decided to jointly hold this Seminar-Workshop at the Borneo Marine Research Institute. I hope to see more links being developed with oceanography institutions and international institutions, recognizing UMS as an international seat of training and research.

10. The world environment is changing with global warming, and the role of oceans is crucial. Our R & D priorities should be focused on research on oceans and climate change, and develop an appropriate approach to knowledge-based management of coastal marine resources, restoration of degraded marine critical habitats, replenishment of depleted marine populations, and innovative methods to arrest decline in seafood supplies by sustainable fisheries management.

11. Borneo Marine Research Institute is formulating strategies to improve the resilience of coastal ecosystems and marine critical habitats such as coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses. We are sparing no efforts to help vulnerable communities to adapt to sea level rise and oceanic processes that pose threats to the security of coastal zone.

12. Sabah has a long coastline measuring more than 1,800 km, and our economic and social interests are rooted deep in the coastal zone, and obviously the health of marine ecosystem deserves a great deal of our attention. I am sure, other coastal countries also face such problems. It is important that all the maritime states work towards capacity building, exchange knowledge and ideas, to better deal with the issues of common concern.

13. We support this Seminar- Workshop involving scientists from Pacific and Indian Oceans, and focused on protecting the marine critical habitats, especially when faced with the challenge posed by climate change. I wish you all successful deliberations in the Symposium-Workshop and productive outcomes at the end of this program. I am pleased that the National Oceanography Directorate of MOSTI has been a very active partner of UMS in our ocean-related initiatives and programs. The cooperation and

support of such a national body is important in implementing our marine conservation and sustainable development programs.

Ladies and gentlemen,

14. I invite you all to explore beautiful city of Kota Kinabalu, and enjoy the hospitality and cultural diversity of Sabah, the Land below the wind.

I have been informed that Borneo Marine Research Institute has made arrangements for you to visit our Marine Aquarium and Museum, and marine hatchery. Please enjoy your stay here in Kota Kinabalu.

Thank you very much.