

**BISMILLAHIRAHMANIRRAHIM  
SELAWAT DAN SALAM KEPADA JUNJUNGAN BESAR  
NABI MUHAMMAD SAW**

**FOREWORD**

1. **Alhamdulillah.** I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to everyone in this august hall today. Thank you for your presence and for being willing to listen and open your hearts to my sharing of thoughts, ideas and hopes. The soul of this University is very much alive because you breathe life into it, but every living entity must have a purpose for its very existence.

2. Several months ago on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2014, we celebrated the 20th year of the establishment of Universiti Malaysia Sabah. This celebration was more than just a ceremonial event; indeed this milestone served as a reminder to each and every one of us to continuously re-affirm our resolve, drive and the commitment entrusted to us as members of this august institution. There is a need for us to reflect and evaluate what we have so far given or contributed to our university and indirectly to our nation.

Every institution, department or agency would have its own framework of vision and mission to ensure its establishment is justified and beneficial to society at large. This is the same for UMS when it was instituted that November day 20 years ago. To my colleagues in this hall today, ask yourselves: on what vision was UMS established? And what was the mission of UMS then? If you can give a definitive answer to these two questions, then it implies that you have understood the philosophy of how or why you are an integral part of this beautiful campus. At the most basic level, you have understood the forward thrust of this institution and its commitment towards the moulding of able and capable citizens of Malaysia. In principle, you are aware of your assigned role towards the realisation of this direction.

However, if in case some of you might have lost sight of this philosophy, allow me to re-visit with you the very foundations of the establishment of UMS. The vision of UMS is to be a world-class innovative university with a mission of achieving academic excellence in various disciplines by means of international recognition and acknowledgment in teaching, learning, research, publication and community service as well as through the attainment of a balance between knowledge acquisition and personal enhancement to ensure high standards of

quality and productivity. Far from it that we should treat UMS merely as our rice bowl. If we perceive our presence in UMS to be this way, then I believe this is a sad indication indeed for the university. As I had once stressed in my previous speech, the human element is important. When we place the UMS attainment of excellence as our main agenda, then it is only right and proper that we put it upon ourselves, our minds and our resolves to strive and constantly re- assess our roles and contributions towards the successful realisation of this aim. Everyday we should strive to give our maximum in our work and ensure that in everything that what we do, we do it well. As a Malay saying goes, “the tiger leaves its stripes when it dies; a man should also leave his good name when he goes.” Human capital is the lifeline of UMS. The body can only function according to the dictates of the human mind.

3. Time passes by without us realising it at times. I have been Vice Chancellor for close to 2 years and eight months and I feel there is still much work yet to be done and accomplished. The vision and mission of UMS is not a responsibility borne solely by the VC but is a shared commitment that must be understood and internalised by all members of this university. Now that we have reached the 20- year milestone, I am fully confident that the time is right for each and every one of us to embrace a paradigm shift that would effectively raise UMS to greater heights. It is with this in mind that the Universiti Malaysia Sabah Strategic Plan 2013- 2017 was conceptualised in 2013 as a move towards realising the stated vision and mission of the university. This strategic plan outlines 7 Key Result Areas (UMS-KRAs) to be achieved within a 5- year period based on the set Key Performance Index (KPI) of respective officers.

#### **TOGETHER WE STAND (ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2014)**

4. In January 2014, the UMS Board of Directors agreed on the restructuring of Schools into Faculties in the university. This was in line with current competitive education scenarios. In view of UMS being in operation for 20 years, it was a contingent and holistic step towards strengthening the undergraduate and postgraduate study ecosystem in our institution. In other words, UMS had to undergo this academic transformation to ensure that we stayed relevant, referred and respected. This move witnessed the restructuring and merging of 13 Schools into 10 Faculties. The new scenario aims to optimise human resources and reduce operational costs and use of facilities. While I do believe there are still issues and challenges at these initial stages of the restructuring, I would like to remind all of us here to adopt a

positive perspective towards this change. I can assure you all that any change initiative implemented is not for the short term but for the long haul with all aspects fully considered. Our ultimate aim is to ensure that UMS is always relevant, needs- driven and able to compete at the international stage.

5. The UMS flag stands proud at global level with its success in joining the *International Sustainable Campus Network* (ISCN) comprising reknown universities around the globe such as Harvard University, Yale University, Stanford University dan the University of Oxford. This proves that with proper planning, UMS has the capability to attain world- class standings and carve niche areas that can be nurtured and steered towards higher levels of achievements. We should take pride too in the appointment of UMS as a community member of the *Southeast and South Asia and Taiwan Universities* (SATU) representing Malaysia for the 2015-2016 session. The inclusion of our university within this community signifies recognition and trust at the international level.

6. UMS made history in writing and publication by winning two awards at National Book Award 2014. These awards were for Best General Book in the Technical Category and Science Category. This goes to show that our lecturers are capable of producing quality writing and research at national level. I would like to call on our lecturers not to use their administrative tasks as an excuse for not having time or space to write and publish articles, journals and books. If those with administrative posts are able to produce materials for journals or books, how about lecturers without any such responsibilities? Shouldn't it be that lecturers without these posts be the ones able to publish even more? The job scope of a lecturer comprises 7 key areas: Teaching and Learning, Writing, Publishing, Research, Presentation, and Supervision. These are without doubt the duties of any lecturer in a higher learning institution like UMS. At the same time that we mould and create a knowledgeable human capital base for our nation, we should also seek to transform how our society thinks and approaches issues and concerns. The writing and publishing of quality high- impact material which brings value and benefit to the community is one such way of initiating and sustaining this transformation.

7. Indeed UMS has from the very beginning of its establishment embarked on a mission to place itself among the ranks of excellence in academia regardless of its relatively young age. The past Vice Chancellors of UMS highlighted the university's vision and mission in

detailed and long- term planning in efforts to realise this aspiration. Innovative University, University for the People, Cheerful Campus University, and now EcoCampus University are the basis for the strength and agenda of the university's development management that is rooted on excellence. The EcoCampus concept promotes the incorporation of harmonious values not only in the environment but also among mankind. All these are focused towards the common aim of nurturing and fostering elements that can raise UMS into world- class standards. This, though not an easy task for us, is not impossible. We can attain this through the inter- twining of the strengths of our administration, academic excellence and student body.

8. Allow me to share with you all here several initiatives that were launched in 2013 and 2014. Among the programmes conducted in 2013 were:

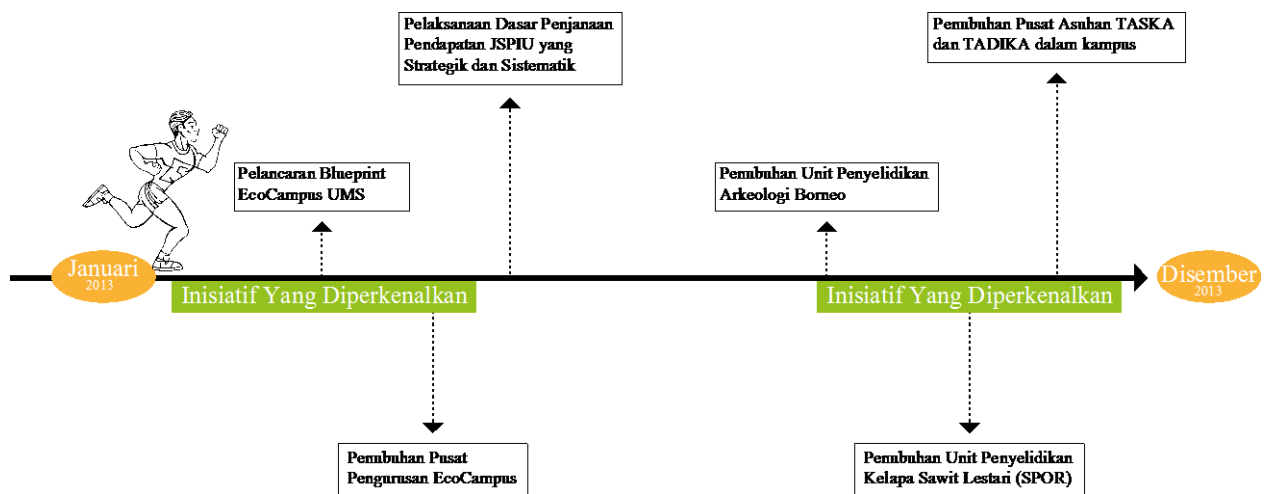
- a. the launching of the UMS EcoCampus Blueprint;
- b. the establishment of the Sustainable Palm Oil Research Unit (SPOR);
- c. the strategic and systematic implementation of the Income Generation policy for JFPIU;
- d. the establishment of the Borneo Archaeological Research Unit; and
- e. the establishment of pre- school and kindergarten facilities on campus.

Among the initiatives that were successfully implemented in 2014 were:

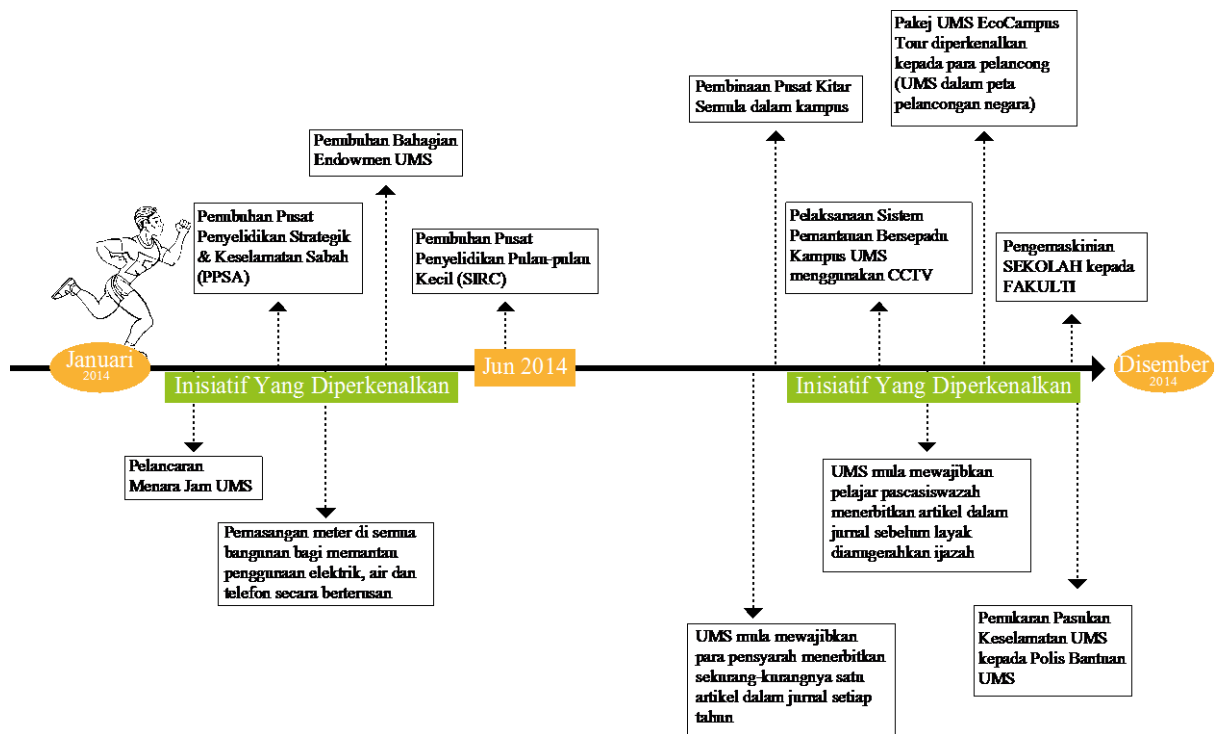
- a. the installation of meters in all buildings to monitor usage of electricity, water and telephone;
- b. the establishment of the Small Islands Research Centre (SIRC);
- c. the implementation of the UMS Integrated Monitoring System through CCTV;
- d. the restructuring of Schools into Faculties;
- e. the establishment of the Sabah Strategic and Security Research Centre;
- f. the establishment of the UMS Endowment Section;
- g. the launching of the UMS Clock Tower;
- h. the introduction of the UMS EcoCampus Tour Package to tourists (whereby UMS is now placed on the nation's tourist trail map);

- i. the introduction of the UMS requirement for every lecturer to publish at least one journal article annually;
- j. the introduction of the UMS requirement for every postgraduate student to publish one journal article as a pre- requisite to graduate; and
- k. the changing of the UMS Security Force to the UMS Auxiliary Police.

### New Initiatives Introduced in 2013



### New Initiatives Introduced in 2014



## **MOVING FORWARD**

9. In his recent New Year 2015 speech, the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Hj Mohd Yassin who is also the Malaysian Minister of Education announced that the Malaysian Education Development Plan (Higher Education) 2015- 2025 is to be launched in the first quarter of this year. He outlined three steps necessary to ensure the quality of our higher education sector is strengthened and upheld:

- i. To create a holistic curriculum through a re- evaluation of disciplines in institutions of higher learning;
- ii. To strengthen and develop research and commercialisation; and
- ii. To advance and establish our universities' position at the international level.

In this context then, the Centre for Strategic and Academic Management (PPSA) in UMS has to take proactive action to ensure the university's Strategic Plan 2013- 2017 is aligned with the direction of the Education Development Plan (Higher Education) 2015- 2025 and the transformation of our institution consistent with the aspired changes in our nation's higher education. We do not want a scenario whereby the UMS Strategic Plan 2013- 2017 becomes a mere paper plan. It is my hope that the PPSA UMS is able to conduct workshops involving Heads of Department, Faculty, Centre, Institute and Unit (JFPIU) in the very near future to present outputs of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for their respective sectors. This presentation is necessary in order that issues may be addressed and improvement measures prescribed for KPIs that do not achieve the stated aims. It is our deepest wish to see UMS progress forward and attain global standings, but this can only be made possible with the highest commitment and sheer hard work from each and everyone of us here.

10. My focus as the Vice Chancellor in 2015 is to lift higher the name of UMS at the international and global arena and make the theme of our Strategic Plan 2013- 2017 "Towards Excellence at the National and International Arena" a reality. It is a trust and heavy responsibility borne not only by the university's highest management level but also by every single member of UMS. We can no longer afford to stay within our comfort zones and be content being key players at the national level. UMS must rise and carve pathways towards global education for it is only through doing so that our University can claim presence on the world radar.

11. For the information of my esteemed colleagues here, UMS has established international links by being a member of bodies such as the International Association of Universities (IAU), Southeast and South Asia and Taiwan Universities, Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning, and International Sustainable Campus Network (ISCN). These links with international institutions are further consolidated with the signing of several Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in 2014 with Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Universitas Nasional Jakarta, Universiti Kebangsaan Timor-Leste dan the Timor-Leste Ministry of Education. Alhamdulillah, for the first time UMS enrolled 15 students from Timor-Leste into the Diploma of Oil and Gas programme in the Faculty of Engineering.

12. UMS currently has 125 international lecturers from 21 countries. This is indicative of the university's resolve to create an academic body from diverse backgrounds and enhance the institution's acceptability at the international level. UMS has also become a destination of choice for international students seeking tertiary education. The statistics for 2014 recorded 617 international students from 28 countries enrolled in UMS, a definite increase from the 101 registered in 2013. Insya-Allah, for 2015 the foreign student enrolment is targeted at 700.

13. UMS has to expand its wings further into the international arena. Several initiatives have been planned to ensure that the university is visible and recognised at this level; among these initiatives is the establishment of the first Satellite Office at the Heilongjiang Academy of Science China targeted in June 2015. This office will function as a centre for UMS China alumni and also utilised to source for prospective students to study in UMS. To facilitate the enrolment of China students into the university, UMS will appoint several schools in Harbin to serve as feeder schools since the majority of UMS China alumni originate from that region. To ensure the quality of China students enrolling in UMS is at the highest level, written interviews and psychometric tests are be conducted beforehand. Student selection will also be from institutions accredited by the China Ministry of Education as well as preparatory schools appointed by UMS.

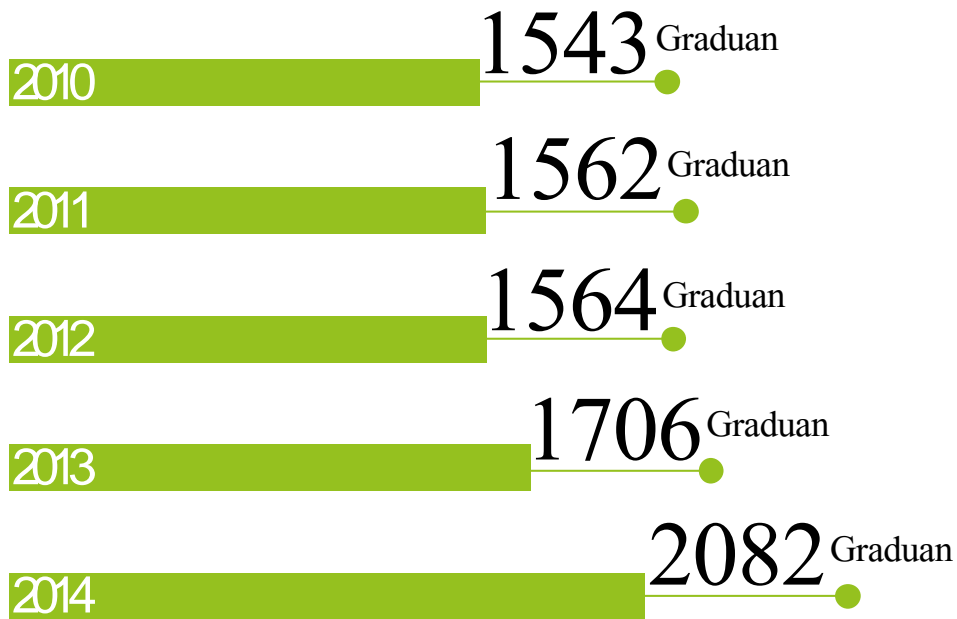
14. To attain international standards of quality, UMS has to strive for recognition in terms of institutional ranking. In 2013, UMS was placed at 301 in the QS University Ranking (Asia) and at 20<sup>th</sup> position in the QS University Ranking (Malaysia). Alhamdulillah, in 2014, UMS

progressed to the 201- 205 ranking in the QS University Ranking (Asia) and upwards at number 9 for the QS University Ranking (Malaysia). This is indeed a very big shift and a reflection of the quality in the UMS teaching and learning system at national and Asia levels. In the Webometrics (World) ranking, the University was at number 1538 in 2014 compared to 1858 in the previous year. For the Webometrics (Malaysia) ranking, we are at number 8 for 2014, an upwards progression from the number 9 recorded in 2013. Our combined efforts to steer UMS towards excellence manifested positive outcomes when the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) awarded UMS 5 stars in teaching and learning in SETARA 2013. This is again a significant improvement from the 4 stars awarded in SETARA 2011. Insha- Allah, we are on track towards achieving the 6 star accreditation in 2017.



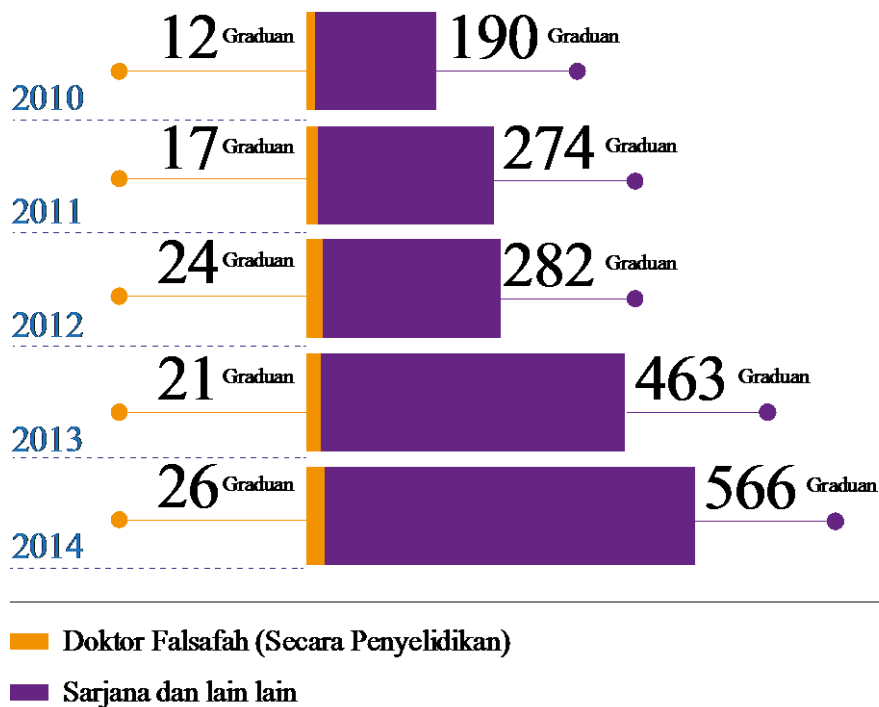
15. Every year approximately 4000 UMS students graduate. This figure includes those completing postgraduate studies. Alhamdulillah, in 2014, 2082 of our students graduated with a CGPA of 3.0 and above, a marked improvement from the 1706 in 2013. We also witnessed the successful completion of the postgraduate studies of 566 master students and 26 in the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme. The increasing number of postgraduate students successfully completing their studies and graduating every year is indicative of the quality of the teaching and learning in UMS with more people now making the university their institution of choice for postgraduate studies.





**Pencapaian Pelajar Prasiswazah UMS Bergraduan Dengan PNGK 3.00 Ke Atas Mengikut Tahun**

**STATISTIK PELAJAR PASCASISWAZAH UMS YANG TELAH BERGRADUAT**



## **RESEARCH AND INNOVATION**

16. The strength of a university lies in the research output of its lecturers. High quality research can be commercialised and at the same time bring benefit to the livelihood of the community. Constructing a building might take 2-3 years whereas a solid and high- quality research output may necessitate a longer period to complete. How honourable it is for the lecturer who, already burdened with multiple workloads, is still able to give time and space for research that might benefit his beloved country. I am confident that UMS academicians are continuously working towards high- impact research and that nobody will cite lack of research grants as their excuse for not being involved in any. Please do not give up; persevere and try new ideas or improve on existing ones so you can initiate some kind of research and afterwards apply for grants from the university, the Ministry of Education Malaysia or other private agencies. Only those who are laid back and lack the will and effort have all kinds of excuses; the ones who persist and work hard will eventually see the light and fruit of their accomplishments.

17. The economic constraints faced by the nation in 2014 did not deter UMS from acquiring government grants amounting to RM12,353,000. I am proud of the increasing acknowledgment extended to our researchers not only by our government but also from private and international agencies. This growing recognition is reflected in UMS receiving external grants to the amount of RM4 million compared to RM1.5 million awarded in 2013. I therefore implore our researchers to intensify their efforts to attract and acquire funding and grants from both government and external sources.

18. It is with this in view that UMS needs to strengthen its network of external engagements by way of extending our existing expertise in certain issues that are current or through the creation of high- innovative products. The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister in his New Year 2015 address announced the establishment of grant awards amounting to RM20 million for research into disaster management and flood mitigation. The UMS Centre for Research and Innovation must therefore be very proactive and put into action concise planning to enable our body of experts on disaster management and flood mitigation garner part of this research allocation by the government. Flood disasters have lately become a phenomenon in Sabah so it is pertinent that our researchers focus on providing possible solutions on minimising damage and financial loss for flood- prone areas.

19. As we progress in research and commercialisation, UMS must be prepared to overcome obstacles and challenges. The top management of the university places high hopes on the institution becoming champions in research. The quality and quantity of UMS research and commercialisation is evaluated once every two years through the Malaysia Research Assessment Instrument (MyRA). In 2011, UMS only managed a 2- star rating which then increased to 3 stars in 2013. The MyRA score here indicates a low level of quality and quantity in the research and innovation conducted by UMS. Research publication contributes a high percentage of marks in the scoring of research quality and quantity. Our present data shows that 31% of our academics have not produced or published any writing at all. I therefore call on every UMS academic to buck up and produce at least one publication either for journals or in the form of academic books in order that our MyRA score is increased this year.



20. Throughout 2014, UMS participated in several exhibitions and competitions both at national and international levels. Among these participation were at the Malaysia Technology Expo (MTE), the International Invention, Innovation and Technology Exhibition (ITEX), the Seoul International Invention Fair (SIIF) in Korea and the Invention, Innovation and Design on E-Learning (IIDEL) in Shah Alam with the total medals won at 12 gold, 10 silver and 14 bronze. The time is right for the Centre for Research and Innovation to send representatives to new areas of international research exhibitions and competitions such as the British Invention Show (BIS), the Taipei International Invention Show and Technomart (INST) and the International Exhibition of Invention Research and New Technologies (Brussels Innova). This can definitely help increase the visibility index of UMS at the international level.

21. My esteemed colleagues, the UMS Strategic Plan 2013- 2017 outlines an initiative in the UMS- KRA 2 to establish an Integrated Complex for Research and Innovation in the near future to enhance research and innovation excellence in the University. The Complex will house UMS research laboratories pertaining to marine, aquaculture, biodiversity, oil and gas, and tourism and hospitality. The provision of adequate facilities and sophisticated research tools will boost and expand the University's research outputs. Outside parties working in collaboration with or aided by UMS researchers will also have access to the research laboratories which can effectively become an income generating source for the university. In relation to this, the upgrading of the Water Research Unit (WRU) into the Centre for Water Research is under consideration. Once in operation, the Centre will function as the focus point for water- related research. The laboratories are in the process of obtaining accreditation and will be in position to undertake water sample analyses from Sabah at the prescribed service rates.

## **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

22. The progress and survival of any institution depends on its financial stability. As members of this august institution, we have to give due consideration to aspects of finance in our planning and use of UMS financial resources. In my maiden speech on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012 in my first week as VC, I made this promise:

“The management of subsidiaries must be restructured to align them with the development in our research output. As UMS VC, I view this as a very serious matter and will henceforth fully scrutinise these aspects and be ready to implement any action necessary to ensure that the subsidiaries achieve the targeted level of income generation and the annual income re- channelled into UMS.”

Thus was my promise then. Alhamdulillah, with support from my UMS colleagues here, UMSLink Holdings Sdn. Bhd. (now UMS Investment Holding Sdn. Bhd.) which was once posting financial losses over several consecutive years is now on the rebound and has started showing profits since 2013 with RM2.4 million posted in 2014, the highest profit margin recorded in the eight years since its inception. Such is the encouraging and welcomed recovery of the subsidiary that the Board of Directors of UMS Investment Holdings Sdn. Bhd. has approved a 2- month bonus in 2014 for all its members. The

restructuring and improvement measures incorporated in the management of the subsidiary are now starting to show very positive effects. With strategic and realistic planning augmented with solid commitment from staff, Insyah-Allah this company is on track towards achieving even greater success. Congratulations and well done to everyone in UMS Investment Holdings Sdn. Bhd.

**KEUNTUNGAN**  
**UMSLink Sdn. Bhd. (UMS Investment Sdn. Bhd.)**  
**BAGI TAHUN 2011-2014**

Tahun	Keuntungan (RM)
2011	-2,147,796
2012	-1,619,406
2013	1,008,006
2014	2,422,014

■ Rugi    ■ Untung

23. However there is a need for us to be vigilant and intensify efforts to stabilise the university's financial resources. The move by our government to control the fiscal deficit of the nation has led to the cutting down of part of the budget allocation for public institutions of higher learning. It is therefore vital that income generation and austerity measures are aggressively implemented and practised to ensure the financial sustainability of the university. The 2015 Estimate of Management Expenses for UMS stands at RM416 million which has been approved by the university's management authorities. However, the budget approval from the Ministry of Education Malaysia is only for the sum of RM379.9 million which effectively means that the remaining RM36 million is to be sourced internally by way of tuition fees, income generation within the university itself and from UMS subsidiaries, as well as austerity measures in all university activities.

24. On 29<sup>th</sup> January 2015 the Ministry of Finance, through the Makmal Kajian Semula Pemberian dan Geran kepada Badan Berkanun Persekutuan, fixed the warrant restriction rate for management expenses utilising government warrants in all public institutions of higher learning for 2015. This rate is 10.5% of the the balance of the Management Grant

after deducting the fixed emolument and salary of contract staff. This figure stands at RM18.26 million which is by no means an insignificant amount. We therefore have to implement austerity measures in our spending and re-structure our financial priorities for UMS itself will also introduce its own warrant restrictions once detailed information is obtained from the Ministry.

25. A very effective austerity measure is the use of the corporate credit card for flight ticket and hotel accommodation expenditure. Corporate credit card usage in every Responsibility Centre (RC) in 2014 helped UMS cut down on the cost of travel and daily expenses by 22% compared to the amount spent in 2013. The rate of savings could be further increased if every RC were to optimise the use of the corporate credit card. Expenditure on utilities however has increased by 4% from the amount spent in 2013 due perhaps to a rise in tariffs and the inclusion of new buildings. Nonetheless, austerity measures have been introduced by the Development and Maintenance Office and EcoCampus in terms of awareness campaigns, enforcement of centralised night classes to reduce the use of chillers, and the implementation of methods proposed by the Power Manager through the Power Audit Report. Among other austerity measures that have contributed towards a reduction in the university expenditure are:

- i. 5% reduction for food and beverages expenditure
- ii. 13% reduction for bunting and banner expenditure
- ii. 34% reduction for official event, conference and seminar expenditure by optimising instead usage of in- house facilities

26. In view of the current sluggish economy, it is only logical for the university to continue the practice of prudent spending. For example, although the flight ticket and hotel accommodation entitlement rates have increased, it is advisable for every JFPIU to operate within its means based on their allocated amount. No additional allocation for VOT29000 (Travel and Living Expenses) will be forthcoming in 2015. The Honourable Dato' Seri Ir. Zaini Ujang, Chief Secretary II in the Ministry of Education Malaysia, stressed that every allocation application under the MP11 has to be supported with solid justifications and requires the involvement of the top management of the universities concerned in the financial and budget review process. Enhancing the financial management of the university is not solely the responsibility of the Treasurer but has become an integral part of the university's overall KPI.

27. The financial management system in UMS is based on Treasury Directives, Financial and Accounting Procedures and the Work Procedure Manual MS-ISO 9001:2008 which have been approved for use by the university authorities. UMS through the Treasury Office has issued Treasury Circular No.2 2014 on Prudent Expenditure to assist the government reduce public sector spending with the introduction of 11 austerity measures and at the same time achieve the target of UMS- KRA 5: Enhancing Financial Sustainability through reduction of operational costs and capital and 'Value for Money' factor.

28. UMS through the Treasury Office has implemented the i-Asset, i-Acquisition and i-Claim systems to assist members of the university manage movable assets, acquisitions and claims based on transparent rules and current financial procedures. The implemented system serves to reduce annual expenditure on paper and toner in support of environmental conservation. In summary, audit findings have recorded 3 best practices and 11 re-affirmations. This is an indication of the university's ability to enhance the financial management system and wealth generation based on integrity and a transparent finance system. UMS is continuously striving to improve and update the system and procedures in its financial management based on current Directives and Regulations issued by the Ministry for the attainment of Autonomous University status.

29. As Vice Chancellor, it has not been an easy task for me to manage the 2778 UMS staff with 2778 personalities, 2778 habits, 2778 problems and 2778 attitudes. My biggest challenge is to steer a full ship towards 'One Direction, One Aim'. Nevertheless, I as the Chief Executive Office (CEO) am empowered to decide on the direction of the University based on existing regulations and policies. I have since come to observe three types of workers:

**those who get things done;  
those who watch things get done;  
and those who wonder how so much got done.**

I am disheartened and very much disappointed with those who take their responsibilities lightly, are lazy, non-productive and dictated by negative elements when discharging their duties. Statistics have revealed that in 2014, the emolument of 22 staff was cut, 8 had their salary stopped due to absence from work while disciplinary action was taken against 6 others. Based on the marks of the 2013 Annual Performance Review, 25 staff

were found unfit or ineligible for their annual salary increment. For this group of people, it is time that a drastic approach is taken, not to penalise them but rather to serve as a lesson for those who fail to show good work performance. A special meeting of the UMS Board of Directors (No.1/2014) had agreed for the Human Resources Division to propose suggestions for staff performance assessment and the giving of performance- based bonuses in 2015. I very much hope that every member of UMS pay attention to this important news: performance- based bonuses will be implemented in 2015. Let it not be said that there was no warning. I do not want any dissenting voice later on questioning why some staff did not receive any bonus.

Therefore, starting from now, ensure your work is in gear 5, your work performance set at 100%, your work productivity from 8am to 5pm not filled with unnecessary clutter, and you are willing to sacrifice time, effort and money to bring our university to the forefront. Believe me when I say that I demand your full commitment in this matter for without commitment, we are in no position at all to lead UMS to greater heights and garner respect at national and international levels.

30. Budget constraints and restrictions on post warrants have not made it possible for UMS to undertake staff expansion. We therefore have to take steps instead to optimise our existing human resources. I am inclined towards the Lean Management concept practised by the Toyota Production System whereby focus is given towards identifying and eradicating activities that do not offer added value to clients at any process. Two philosophies are incorporated as the basis for Lean Management: first, continuous improvement through systematic cooperation to eradicate wastage and second, respect for people. The 3M in thinking should be incorporated in our daily work: MUDA (wastage), MURA (unevenness), and MURI (overburdened). This concept was implemented in the Registrar Office in the Human Resources Division whereby 3 officers were re- assigned elsewhere and no replacement put in their place. The outcome of this was the reduction of manpower actually managed to optimise the use of existing human resources, eliminated overlaps in function and duty, reduced bureaucracy, increased speed of work and matched work to the appropriate ability. I do not want any staff becoming too focused on only one specific duty or task to the extent that his work productivity eventually decreases and boredom sets in.

Therefore, the Registrar as the Chief Operation Officer (COO) must expand the Lean Management concept to all JFPIU in stages with a detailed analysis study conducted to



determine the manpower needs of each JFPIU. It is my hope that the Lean Management concept will help launch a fast, effective and systematic work system within the university.

31. With the rapid advancement of ever- changing and sophisticated technology, information is now readily available at our fingertips. For example, the use of 'Whatsapp' has drastically changed the global communication landscape with instruction and monitoring now so easily implemented. I can deduce here that 'Whatsapp' has facilitated group communication and the storage of simple data for use when doing work. I therefore suggest that all members of UMS make use of this apps for ease of communication with each other.

32. My esteemed colleagues, there is an urgent need for UMS to establish a talent pool and a succession plan that is definitive and effective. These two aspects will enable us to prepare systematic and long- term projections on critical positions in the university, allow us to identify suitable people or ascertain qualities necessary for future leaders, and ensure that only those who are truly qualified and gifted are appointed to helm the institution. A succession plan provides space to train and groom potential leaders. To facilitate the identification of suitable candidates, a data base with complete information on every staff is necessary. This data base should include service records from the time that particular staff first reports for duty in UMS to the day he retires and details of work such as journal publications, articles, manuscripts and books (for promotion purposes). For example, e- LNPT can affect the evaluation of publication by putting high marks in the e- LNPT grading criteria if it is not attained.

If this is practised, it would greatly impact the overall e- LNPT evaluation of performance marks of the 31% of lecturers who have not published and be detrimental to their chances of promotion.

33. I understand that the issue of promotion is a sensitive one for many of you. At present, lecturers without PhDs have no chance of being promoted to DS54. However I have proposed that those without PhDs may be considered for promotion to DS54 on several conditions. For example, lecturers who publish in high- impact journals for three consecutive years with consistent h- index 12 for Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar, or produce 2 academic books every year for three consecutive years, or secure grants amounting to RM5 million for three consecutive years, or commercialise their research product for RM5 million a year for three consecutive years will be promoted to DS54. This is

still at the suggestion level and will be further scrutinised. For non- academic staff, the flexi staffing concept has been implemented whereby promotions for all positions in the service scheme will be subject to conditions and secure financial resources of the university without having to wait for warrants from PSD.

## **ECOCAMPUS INITIATIVE**

34. As I have mentioned earlier in my speech, UMS has successfully joined the International Sustainable Campus Network (ISCN). Alhamdulillah, the good news for UMS is it now stands at 244 in the world in the UI Greenmetric World University Ranking. For the South East Asia region, UMS is positioned at number 36, and at 7<sup>th</sup> place among institutions of higher learning (public and private) in Malaysia. This is indeed a great achievement for UMS in its maiden entry into the UI Greenmetric World University Ranking. For 2015, we are targeting a placing among the top 200 position at world level. Therefore, work and preparations to fulfil the ranking criteria must be duly planned and implemented by the Centre for EcoCampus Management.

35. To further enhance the EcoTourism @ Campus concept launched on 27th September 2014, the Centre for EcoCampus Management may initiate a networking relationship with the Sabah Tourist Guides Association. The EcoTourism @ Campus can be aggressively promoted by including this information in brochures and pamphlets for distribution in all branches of Tourism Malaysia in Sabah. I believe this information can be disseminated to local and overseas tourists who may be keen to experience a different kind of vacation set on campus. I would like to see our Tourism programme students given exposure in tourist guiding to fulfil the part of the requirements of their industrial training. With this I would like to announce that UMS will hold an Open Day for EcoTourism @ Campus for one day starting from this year.

36. Throughout 2013 and 2014, various activities to promote EcoCampus were conducted such as EcoCampus Awareness Week, Energy Management Training, Establishment of Green Community Committee, 1st Regional Conference on Campus Sustainability and various others. This year, the focus is on the incorporation of the six main EcoCampus transformation elements into every KRA listed in the UMS Strategic Plan 2013-2017. In his New Year 2015 speech, the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister cum Minister of Education Malaysia said, "I suggest that universities in the country focus on research on

environmental conservation and sustainable development. Universities with expertise in this field are encouraged to conduct high- impact research on environmental resources management, green technology output, creation of renewable energy, environmental-friendly architecture, hydrology and other related areas.” We are very fortunate because UMS is one step ahead in the field of environmental conservation and sustainable development in the EcoCampus Action Plan framework. This framework is very concise and requires the effort, endorsement and support of the entire university to realise the EcoCampus agenda. I call upon everyone in UMS to come together because in unity we will prevail, in disunity we will surely fail. The target has been identified, and all that is needed now is the correct means to achieve the EcoCampus transformation agenda!

### **STUDENTS AS THE BIGGEST STAKEHOLDERS IN UMS**

37. Students are the biggest stakeholders in the organisation of a university. With a student enrolment of 17,000, the hope of all UMS staff, whether directly or indirectly involved, is to be participatory in the molding of human capital that is solid in terms of academic learning and moral character. I believe all students are heirs to the future leadership of the country. Therefore it is only right that you equip yourselves with as much knowledge as possible, clothe yourselves with pure moral fibre, and always remember the words and advice of those who once taught you until you are the learned person that you are today. I believe that without students, a university has no meaning or reason for existence and the knowledge remains buried and hidden without body or soul.

38. Allow me to share with you all here the list of UMS student achievements from 2012-2014: 1<sup>st</sup> placing at the SIFE Malaysia National Exposition, 1 silver and 1 bronze in the Asean University Games (AUG), 1<sup>st</sup> place and representing Malaysia in the ASEAN level MIFT Seminar for Schools of Food Science and Nutrition, the selection of Ms. Emmy Ahkim as the MASUM Sportswoman 2013, 3<sup>rd</sup> placing at the opening of the ENACTUS World Cup 2013 di Cancun, Mexico, 2 gold medals in Fencing at the Shenzhen Open in China, dan 6<sup>th</sup> place out of 18 teams at the International Freescale Cup Intelligent Car Competition 2014 in Seoul, South Korea. As VC, I am very proud of our students’ achievements both at the national and international levels.

39. Student welfare is of paramount importance to the UMS management authorities. UMS. To ensure the safety and security of students while on campus, we have installed hundreds of CCTV at strategic and heavy- traffic locations around UMS including the

residential colleges. Repainting work was recently undertaken as part of the university's efforts to create a pleasant and conducive living and work environment in the residential colleges. Internet access in today's world of sophisticated technology is necessary to enable us obtain fast and varied information. Wi-Fi facilities have therefore been made available in the residential colleges to enable easy and unlimited access to the Internet. However I would like to remind students not to abuse this facility and use it for non- productive pursuits such as mindless Facebook activities and aimless internet surfing. Rental of buses from private companies hopefully will help solve the perennial issue of lack of student transportation in UMS.

40. With students' welfare well- taken care of and various facilities made available, it is hoped that our students can engage and focus on the acquisition of knowledge and learning in their 3 – 5 years with UMS. Do not be like the proverbial nut which forgets its skin and goes around condemning the university authorities with harsh and rash words on Facebook or the social media and demonstrating everywhere to seek attention. If you do not know how to be thankful, then sadly you are not fit to be part of this university.

41. My beloved students, as part of the university's efforts to ensure the marketability of our graduates, I would like to propose for the Centre for Industry Relations (PHI) in collaboration with the Entrepreneurship Research and Development Centre (ERDEC) to establish an incubator to train our students to become entrepreneurs. This incubator will become a training centre for potential future entrepreneurs and equip them with comprehensive knowledge and training prior to embarking on full- fledged participation in their chosen business areas.

## **NEW INITIATIVES**

42. For the information of everyone here, many high- impact new initiatives and special projects have been planned for UMS in 2015. These initiatives are focused on projects not listed in the 10<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan and will not involve any form of financial input or commitment from the university. I feel there is a need for us to practise creative and innovative methods and approaches to make every planned project a reality by involving agencies and outside parties especially from the private sector. By doing so, UMS would be able to not only excel in research and academic learning but also provide optimum facilities for aspects related to teaching and learning. Among the special projects are:

(i) the establishment of a Bridging Programme into the UMS Faculty of Sustainable Agriculture which will be offered to students from the Timbang Menggaris Agriculture Institute in Kota Belud and other similar institutes as feeders to the Faculty. The bridging duration is set at 6 months to enable students fulfil the basic requirements for entry into the Bachelor study programme. The subjects offered will include business elements to enhance the curriculum of the Faculty.

(ii) the construction of “Desa Harmoni” whereby accommodation facilities on campus will be made available to outside visitors. This is to enable visitors appreciate and enjoy the beauty of the campus environment and landscape. I believe accommodation based on a modern and environmental- friendly concept can generate income for the university through room rentals and various other activities such as meetings, workshops, and events. The construction and establishment of Desa Harmoni is expected to be on a joint- venture basis with the private sector without incurring any cost or additional budget funds from the university or the Federal Government.

(iii) the provision of accommodation facilities for international students. It is my hope for UMS to have its own facilities to house students from the many different countries around the globe. Currently, international students prefer to stay in more expensive off-campus private rented accommodation due to these houses being better equipped. The proposal now is for part of the Kingfisher Residential College block to be renovated and turned into fully- equipped accommodation for international students at affordable rates. Insyah- Allah, barring any obstacles, the residential block will be operational in time for the 2015/2016 student intake.

(iv) the establishment of the UMS Child Development Centre. Alhamdulillah, UMS now has its own proper nursery facilities on campus. Parents who are staff of the university need no longer place their children in nurseries outside the campus. I believe the long- term projection made by the Human Resources Division is for the UMS nursery to eventually offer comprehensive care and learning packages for children of UMS staff between the ages of 6 months to pre- school level. It is the vision of the university management that this centre become the best model in Borneo for child care. Another long- term planning is for this nursery to expand into providing primary school education and secondary school learning at a later stage. Insyah- Allah.

(v) the 'Sanjung Ilmu' programme as a platform for nurturing future intellectuals. UMS academics aged between 30-45 years are eligible to become fellows in this programme. UMS aspires to nurture a group of intellectuals capable of shaping and influencing progress and development in the world of education at the international level. The crux of this programme is on providing exposure and assistance to young academicians to upgrade their knowledge and expertise and eventually join the ranks of global academic elites. An international Advisory Panel comprising reknown universities will provide ideas and advice for this programme. The 'Sanjung Ilmu' programme will create pathways towards educational excellence and eventually Nobel Laureate levels of achievements in niche areas that are the foundation and strength of UMS and the island of Borneo.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

43. If 2014 was the year that UMS went full speed ahead with action to turn ideas into reality, 2015 will be the time where we go all out together to place UMS on the world map. In other words, UMS is looking at the bigger picture now whereby our minds have to go global. We cannot be the proverbial frog under the coconut shell and we have to step forward and further into the international arena. We need to take action on increasing the international student intake into UMS, the outbound and inbound mobility of both staff and students, world recognition in terms of UMS ranking, and the bringing together of UMS alumni from all parts of the world. We have the facilities and we have a body of experienced staff so there is every reason for us to achieve the 10% foreign students target by 2017. The Action Plan for this is ready and we need only follow up and commit ourselves to its full implementation. Nothing is impossible except when we think we cannot do it.

44. Allah proclaimed in Surah ar-Ra'd verse 11, "Verily Allah will not change the fate of any one until they themselves seek to change themselves". This Surah is very apt to the thrust of my speech today which is 'Transform Our Minds, Uplift the Performance of the University'. UMS has great need for people who are sincere in their work and willing to sacrifice time, effort and money to ensure the university become a catalyst for change in the societal mindset which can then lead our civilisation to greater heights. Remember that the university has no tangible wealth that can enrich you; in fact I am certain that UMS is really the wrong place for those who aspire to be rich. The greedy will always ask what's in it for me whereas the thinking person will look at what or how he can contribute to his religion, people and country.

45. The progress and success of the university lies on our shoulders. The moment we put on the mantel of UMS, we inevitably inherit the responsibility and trust placed upon us to always position the university agenda first and foremost. We are fortunate to be part of this august institution. The university is entrusted with the task of producing useful members of society and our role is to steer societal thinking towards new perspectives, be agents of knowledge dissemination wherever we may be, bring change and improve the livelihood of the society around us and study, research, write and so on for our own benefit and also for those around us. Granted that this will not bring you worldly riches and money by the sackloads but God is ever knowing and will take this into account in the afterlife.

46. It is only through sincerity, dedicated effort and sheer hard work that one's mind, attitude and self can be improved. The end- effect is not only on ourselves but will also extend to our family, friends, society and our beloved university. I pray to Allah Almighty that our hearts may be imbued with istiqamah in whatever work that we do and our souls filled with love for our fellow mankind so that a harmonious environment is created and we can be united in mind and purpose to lift UMS to glory. To you Allah Almighty we entrust our plans and hopes before you. Amin, amin Ya Rabbul Aalamin!

47. Earlier on I stressed on human resources as the pulse of UMS and how the body acts according to the thoughts. If the mind is right, then it follows that the action will be correct too. Useful human resources will bring benefits to the university and society. In conclusion, allow me to record my deepest appreciation to my colleagues who have given invaluable support, cooperation and commitment in my years as UMS Vice Chancellor. All that you do and all that you have done have been for the glory of our university. Only God can repay you for all your efforts.

Thank you.

**“He who learns but does not think is lost;  
He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger.”**

***Confucius (551BC – 479BC)***