



**Key Note Text**

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DEPUTY MINISTER OF WOMEN, FAMILY  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ASEAN WOMEN  
GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND PUBLIC POLICY (ICAW201**

**PROMENADE HOTEL, KOTA KINABALU**

**13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2016 (WEDNESDAY), 9.30 AM**

ssalamualaikum WBT, Salam Sejahtera and Salam 1Malaysia

**ALUTATION**

It is a great honour for me to deliver the keynote speech, behalf of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development at this very important conference. I would to first congratulate the Northern Corridor Research Centre (NCRC) of Universiti Utara Malaysia, for the organizing conference and for their hospitality. I trust all the participants

On behalf of the ministry, I would like to extend our gratitude to Universitas Islam Bandung (UNISBA), Universiti Malay Sabah (UMS), and University College Sabah Foundation (UCSF) for supporting the organization of this conference and all those involved in making this conference a reality.

I will begin with a Brief Concept on Gender Mainstreaming in Malaysia and then to the purpose of gender mainstreaming introduced in Malaysia. Later on, I would like to discuss how gender mainstreaming has impacted public policies in Malaysia. Lastly, I will share the constraints and issues in implementing the process of Gender Mainstreaming in Malaysia.

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adies and Gentlemen,

## **BRIEF CONCEPT ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN MALAYSIA**

Gender discourse, in a historical perspective, has moved through various phases during the past two decades from women in development (WID) to gender and development (GAD). Women's movements developed in the 1970s demanded political, economical and social equality

adoption of The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by the General Assembly in 1979. The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, became a landmark event in the history of women's rights. More than 40,000 participants from 189 countries attended this historic global conference. The Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Conference, clearly recognized that gender equality and women's empowerment are essential for addressing the central development concerns of poverty and insecurity and for achieving sustainable, people-centered development.

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During the Platform for Action, the world mutually agreed that gender equality is a goal to be achieved by all. Here in Malaysia has also agreed to adopt gender mainstreaming as a vehicle to achieve gender equality. Gender Mainstreaming is a strategy that seeks to ensure that both women and men have equitable access to development resources and opportunities. It advocates the participation of women and men in every stage of the development process from planning to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It is development for and by people in the truest sense of the word. The implementation

In order to achieve gender equality, the standard achievement must be clearly outlined so that the path gender-related progress in Malaysia can be monitored. Hence, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD) in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has created a gender-related development index, referred to as Malaysia Gender Gap Index (MGGI). MGGI has been designed to measure and monitor the extent of gender inequality in Malaysia. The index comprises four sub-dimensions covering the areas of health, education, economic activity and the empowerment of women.

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Gender Mainstreaming has been obligated to be used at all levels of decision making. I strongly believe a gender perspective should be a focus starting in agenda setting to ensure that decision making process will consider the outcome (policy) which in turn will support the objective of achieving gender equality. Malaysia has utilized a gender mainstreaming approach for quite some time to fulfil the needs of women. Two major operations in Gender Mainstreaming involved are the role of Institutions and policies whereby both actions are interrelated in addressing the needs of women.

## ROLES OF INSTITUTIONS

Malaysia has integrated women in all aspects of mainstream development through the formation of special institutions. The National Advisory Council on Integration of Women in Development (NACIWID) was set up within the Prime Minister's Department in 1976 to redefine the development of women in the national context. Continuously, the Secretariat for Women's Affairs (HAWA) was developed in 1983 for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating services provided to women by public and private sectors. HAWA also plays a role as the primary information center on women's affairs and as secretariat to NACIWID.

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In addition, there are also services such as the Community Development Department (KEMAS), Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA), Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority (RISDA) and several Regional Development Authorities that cater the needs of women. There is also non-government organization involvement in gender mainstreaming such as the Aman Ikhtiar Malaysia Trust Fund (AIM) which aims to assist and increase the number of women participation, especially in the rural areas in the non-agricultural economic sectors.

and Community Development (MWFCDD) was formed. MWFCDD is committed to undertake the task of promoting and realizing GM in Malaysia in accordance to the 1995 Beijing Declaration.

1. On 6 December 2004, Cabinet Committee on Gender Equality was formed. The main objective of the committee is to place gender equality as one of the key agendas for the government to remain receptive to the affairs and development of women and to ensure that all regulations and policies are more insightful regarding the equality between men and women.

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2. One such steps taken to achieve gender mainstreaming is to establish an effective cooperation among ministries. MWFCDD has requested that each ministry or government agency appoint a Gender Focal Point (GFP) to ensure that gender mainstreaming approach can be implemented more effectively at every level of decision making in the public sectors.
3. Relatively, the main purpose of GFPs appointment in every government organizations is to promote Gender Mainstreaming and be attentive to issues in gender and p

4. The Ministry has consequently prepared a list of tasks for the GFPs with the main role of assisting the government in implementing the National Policy on Women (NPW), Plan of Action on the Advancement of Women and other government policies on the development of women. GFPs are also required to assist the officials in charge of general budget or the Gender Responsive Budget (GRB) and ensure a smooth implementation in the organization.
5. Likewise, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) also play important roles in implementing Gender Mainstreaming approach to increase women involvement in economic and social activities. NGOs such as the National Council

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Women's Organization (NCWO), Women Institution (WID), Islamic Women Action Organization (PERTIWI), Women's Aid Organization and the Islamic Women's Welfare Board have endlessly contributed to the development of women in the country by provide trainings and conduct programs to enhance women self-sufficient ability and advancement. Their tireless efforts are commendable and proven to always be significant.

adies and Gentlemen,

6. To ensure the full development and advancement of women and for the purpose of guaranteeing them to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men, the Government of Malaysia has taken various measures including the following:

7. Formulation of the National Policy on Women in 1998 with the objectives of ensuring equitable sharing in the acquisition of resources and information as well as access to opportunities and benefits of development, for men and women; and to integrate women into all sectors of national development in line with their abilities and needs in order to improve the quality of life, eradicate poverty, abolish

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ignorance and illiteracy and ensure a peaceful and prosperous nation.

8. Incorporation of the principle of non-discrimination on a basis of gender into the Federal Constitution of Malaysia by amending Article 8(2) of the Federal Constitution on August 1, 2001. The provision clearly stated that "Except expressly authorized by this Constitution, there shall be no discrimination against citizens on the ground only of religion, race, descent, place of birth or gender in any law or in the appointment to any office or employment under a public

establishing or carrying on of any trade, business, profession, vocation or employment.”

9. Among the laws that have been amended to take account the perspective of gender equality include Pensions Act, 1980, Land (Group Settlement Areas) / Immigration Regulations, 1980, Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code, Employment Act, 1955, Occupational Safety and Health Act, 1994 and Domestic Violence Act, 1994, with a view to expand the definition of “domestic violence” and to provide greater protection to the victims.
10. In a move to further empower Women in Public Sector, government has adopted the policy of at least 30 per cent

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women in decision-making level in the public sector since August 2004. As of December 2015, there are several women appointed to the position of Secretary General in their respective ministries. At the same time, there is an increase of 37.1 percent of women in decision-making groups (JUSA Grade C and above) in 2015 compared to 26.7 percent a year before.

adies and Gentlemen,

## **HALLENGES OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

affecting the gender mainstreaming process involving political goodwill from the government. The issue of gender continues to struggle to become a priority by government in protecting the right of society. Some political thinking still put glass ceiling for women especially in politics at the top. Institutional barriers also show the slow pace of developing gender policies by various ministries. While the output of the GRB is yet to be measured, the role of GFPs have also been questioned when some GFPs have not been playing their roles in supporting gender issues. Therefore, as a result, there have been lack of awareness on gender related issues, lack of adequate budget and technical staff, and lack of proper training on gender related issues.

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2. In addition, socio-cultural factors have also affected gender mainstreaming process in Malaysia. Factors like patriarchal gender stereotyping, socialization and lack of social awareness on issues pertaining to gender have been seen as the major barriers in implementing gender mainstreaming. Others include the literacy disparity between men and women and the belief by many people that gender mainstreaming is all about women.
3. Hence, we need to take all the necessary steps

gender mainstreaming. We also need to support government in taking the necessary steps to ensure that ministries have working policies that support Gender Mainstreaming and that all the objectives of these policies are achieved. The government also needs to ensure integration of gender perspective in the budgetary process and focus on the provision of funding for specific programs that will address the challenges facing gender mainstreaming.

adies and Gentlemen,

4. As I come to the end of my keynote, I hope I've shed some lights regarding gender mainstreaming issues and public

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policies in Malaysia. Indeed the challenges are big but we move towards Developed Country we can't afford to procrastinate in implementing gender mainstreaming supporting public policies related to gender. I do hope that the conference today and tomorrow will provide especially the government with more useful insights into development and success of gender achievement.

Thank you very much for your kind attention and I hope the conference will be a success.

