

KEYNOTE SPEECH BY EN. AMIR HAMZAH AZIZAN, PRESIDENT/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY OF MISC REGIONAL OFFICE (MIDDLE EAST) DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - 8 FEBRUARY 2010

Salutations

His Excellency Datuk Yahaya Abdul Jabar
Malaysian Ambassador to United Arab Emirates

Yang Berbahagia Dato' Dzulkifli Mahmud
Senior Trade Commissioner, MATRADE

Mr. Jamal Majid bin Thaniah
CEO, Dubai World Group

Distinguished Guests,

Members of the media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu'alaikum wbt

It is my great pleasure to be here with you today to celebrate the opening of the MISC Regional Office (Middle East), here in Dubai. First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to offer my congratulations to the city, on the recent opening of Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest tower.

It is certainly a monument to Dubai's rapid growth and development and its opening will no doubt; seal Dubai's status as a strong emerging market.

On the back of this landmark event signifying Dubai's growth, we are very honoured and happy to celebrate our own milestone in MISC's journey, the opening of our new regional office.

Before I proceed, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome representatives from the Embassy of Malaysia, Abu Dhabi, Consulate General of Malaysia, Dubai and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), all of whom have strongly supported our efforts to establish our presence here in the Middle East.

We are also very honoured that we have with us today distinguished guests from Dubai World and Dubai Ports World, who joins us on this special occasion. This day would not have been made possible if not for the strong cooperation that has been rendered to us by Dubai Ports World and members of the Dubai Government.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

MISC started out modestly. In 1968, the company was launched as Malaysia's international shipping line and we only had two ships to our name.

In the 40 years of our operation, we have grown into a fully integrated maritime, heavy engineering and logistics services provider and one of the leading shipping companies in the world with an operating fleet of more than 170 vessels.

As a player in the global arena, it is important for MISC to establish a strong presence in key market areas, and one of our strategies in regards to this is the placement of our people in strategic locations around the globe. Thus, today we are here to celebrate the opening of the MISC Regional Office (Middle East), or ROM for short.

There are three main reasons why we have chosen the Middle East as the new location for our regional office. The first and probably most obvious one is simply geography. The Middle East is fortunate in many ways. First, it is rich in resources that are close to high-value markets, namely oil and gas. Second, its governments have wisely taken a long-term strategic view of these sovereign assets.

As a result, this region now has a leadership role in the global oil and gas market and is seeing a strong and growing economy. Being one of the world's leading energy transporters, it makes sense for MISC to be closely associated with the leading producers of oil and gas.

As such, not only do we place the Middle East as a permanent fixture in our tanker trade routes, we have formulated strong partnerships with several key players in the region, in a variety of business.

Currently, our vessels Seri Balhaf and Seri Balqis are servicing the Yemen LNG project, delivering LNG to the USA and Mexico.

Our VLCCs, Aframaxes and Chemical Tankers are also regular features here in the Gulf calling at main oil terminals and petrochemical terminals in the region. We continue to be very positive about the prospects of energy transportation in this region.

The second reason, ladies and gentlemen, ties back to MISC's long term business plan for our Liner services. In a move to mitigate the effects of the global economic downturn, which has severely impacted the global liner industry, we have restructured our liner business portfolio, and are now focused on becoming the leading Intra-Asia liner operator, with the Middle-East/India Subcontinent to Asia/Oceania trade being one of our core trade services.

We recognise this regions' massive growth potential and are optimistic about the growing trade movements between the Middle East and other parts of Asia.

The third reason has to do with MISC's strategy in becoming a leading provider of safe and trusted Halal transportation.

The Halal food industry in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries is estimated to be worth more than US 43 billion, and the Emirate's food processing sector is expected to rise by 11% annually, owing to its growth as the world's third largest re-exporter, with 72% of its exports being shipped to Asia, Africa and Gulf countries.

Recognising the high potential of Halal logistics here and in line with the Malaysian Government's plan to turn Malaysia into a regional Halal Centre for Asia, MISC has launched several key initiatives to become a leading Halal player in the region. We introduced the Halal Express Service 1 and 2, which continues to increase in demand throughout the years. HES 1 is currently seeing 100% slot utilisation and HES 2 is seeing 90% slot utilisation.

Our subsidiary, MISC Integrated Logistics (MILS), is in a joint-venture with Rais Hassan Saadi, a partnership that links the MILS Logistics Hub (MLH) in Port Klang with the Air Cargo Hub in Dubai, creating an exclusive Halal Hub Facility in the region.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As you can see, this region plays a significant role in the growth plans and strategy of MISC and we have put in place key strategies to strengthen our presence and position within the region.

With the opening of the new Middle East Regional Office, we intend to reaffirm our commitment to this region and further enhance our role as a leading transportation partner for the region.

It is our hope that by having direct presence in the region, it will further enhance the experience of our Middle East customers in transporting with MISC.

Let's face it, while the advances of ICT, to a certain extent, help us communicate across boundaries, we understand fully that nothing beats having people on the ground, attending first hand to your needs and requirements.

At this juncture, I would like to record our appreciation to all our customers for their kind presence here today. It truly signifies the strong partnership that we have developed and I would like to take this opportunity to give my personal assurance that MISC will continue to strive to live up to our reputation of providing safe and reliable transportation services to the Middle East.

Aside from improved customer services, our presence here will also further enhance our ability to further understand the ever growing and ever changing cultural and socio-economical needs of the region, allowing us to further innovate and improve our services to our partners and customers here.

Finally, I believe that our presence here will also greatly support PETRONAS' continued growth and expansion in the Middle East, especially PETRONAS' foray into Iraq's oil and gas industry with the recent success of obtaining development rights to four of Iraq's oilfields.

Before I take my leave, I would like to once again thank all of you present here today for joining us in celebrating the opening of MISC's Regional Office(Middle East). We look forward to developing a strong and lasting partnership with all of you.

Thank you.