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AMIC-WACC-WIF Consultation on Beyond  
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Dol Ramli.

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**Opening Remarks**

**By**

**Dol Ramli**

MR DOL RAMLI'S OPENING REMARKS AT THE  
CONSULTATION ON BEYOND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION ON  
NOVEMBER 18, 1986

development communication

(1431)

On behalf of AMIC, I have great pleasure in welcoming you all to Singapore for this Consultation on Beyond Development Communication. The planning for this meeting has taken almost a year and this whole review of the concept of development communication, I am sure, will turn out to be a milestone.

This Consultation is envisaged as a meeting of minds of theorists, both drawn from communication as well as development, journalists and media practitioners, heads of media institutions and selected devcom practitioners.

I think there can be no doubt that the modern mass media are, and can be, a catalyst to development. The vast potential of mass media further enlarged as a result of new technologies calls for constant review so that the mass media can be used as <sup>a</sup> tool of development.

In recent decades, vast investments are being made in mass media and it may well be asked in developing countries what has been the outcome of such huge resource allocations to mass media in resource scarce societies. Can we correlate investment in development communication to tangible results

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which could be measured in terms of development achieved. Would it be possible to arrive at some kind of a broad formulae which could be prescribed to national leaders and policy makers in as much as that ex <sup>amount</sup> ~~mind~~ of allocation of devcom could result in the amount of development on the ground.

I think the task before all of you assembled here is to reconceptualise the meaning of development and communication and their relationship with each other. Communication thinking, communication investment policies, and training programmes need to be brought more into alignment with each other with the changes that have occurred in our understanding of development.

In addition, development and communication theory had not generally been systematically linked with economic theory and patterns of cultural change, except on a superficial level. Theorists and practitioners alike have failed to identify these relationships, which are the hidden agenda in development communication. These relationships are always present though rarely acknowledged.

In this five-day path-breaking meeting, the task would be how devcom should be chartered for future action. As we attempt to do so, it would be useful to look at the experience of individual Asian countries. From the programme, I am happy to see that case studies pertaining to Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Philippines and Indonesia will be

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taken up for review. These are obviously success stories of devcom. We should try to find out how the successes can be multiplied and if some kind of formulae can be prescribed to national leaders and policy planners. As devcom proponents, our endeavour should be to secure as much investment outlay in devcom as possible. The need, therefore, is to forcefully establish that resource allocation to devcom pays rich dividends.

I would suggest that besides taking an overview of the whole gamut of devcom, besides considering success stories, you look at technology, strategy for future action, as also training which serves a very wide purpose.

It would be useful to consider what are the development trust and similarly look at the communication trust and try to merge these so that we could arrive at devcom trust.

This will bring us back to the question of what we mean by devcom today? Does it have a future?

I wish you well in your five-day deliberations and hope that you will be able to come up with suitable recommendations which could serve as guidelines for future action.

Thank you once again for your attention.