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<td>Tan Sri Kamarul Ariffin</td>
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OPENING REMARKS
BY TAN SRI KAMARUL ARIFIN
EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN KUMPULAN UTUSAN

AT THE 6TH AMIC CONFERENCE
KUALA LUMPUR 19 JUNE 1997

YANG AMAT BERHORMAT
DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM
PEMANGKU PERDANA MENTERI MALAYSIA

ENCIK ROBERT IAU
PENGERUSI KEHORMAT
PUSAT KOMUNIKASI MASSA DAN MAKLUMAT BAGI ASIA

ENCIK VIJAY MENON
SETIAUSAHA AGONG
PUSAT KOMUNIKASI MASSA DAN MAKLUMAT BAGI ASIA

PARA PENCERAMAH YANG DIHORMATI

PARA PESERTA PERSIDANGAN AMIC KE-6

TUAN-TUAN DAN PUAN-PUAN YANG SAYA MULIAKAN

MARILAH KITA PANJATKAN PUJI DAN LAFAZKAN SYUKUR KE HADRAT ALLAH SUBHANAWATAALA KERANA DENGAN LIMPAH KURNIANYA MAKA KITA DAPAT BERKUMPUL MENGHADIRI KONFERENSI KE-6 PUSAT KOMUNIKASI MASSA DAN MAKLUMAT BAGI ASIA. SEBAGAI PENGANJUR BERSAMA, SAYA BAGI PIHAK KUMPULAN UTUSAN MENGALU-ALUKAN
KEHADIRAN TUAN-TUAN DAN PUAN-PUAN KE PEMBUKAAN RASMI YANG AKAN DILAKUKAN SEBENTAR LAGI OLEH PEMANGKU PERDANA MENTERI MALAYSIA, YANG AMAT BERHORMAT DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS MONTH, I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF LISTENING TO GENERAL ALEXANDRE LEBED, THE PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLICAN PARTY WHEN HE ADDRESSED DELEGATES ATTENDING THE 50TH CONGRESS OF THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF NEWSPAPERS IN AMSTERDAM. IN HIS SPEECH, INTER ALIA, GENERAL LEBED PLEADED FOR CAREFULLY CRAFTED GEO-POLITICAL STRUCTURES WHICH WOULD ALLOW RUSSIA TO PLAY A FULL ROLE IN THE PROCESS OF EURO-ASIAN INTERGRATION. HE PREDICTED THE WORLD WOULD BE CHARACTERISED BY COOPERATION AND NOT CONFLICT IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

AT THE SAME CONFERENCE, DELEGATES WERE TOLD OF THE WORLD PRESS TRENDS. THE CIRCULATION OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS IN 1996 CONTINUED TO DECLINE IN MOST INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES, ACCORDING TO THE ANNUAL SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF NEWSPAPERS.

IN SOME ASIAN AND LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES THERE WAS CIRCULATION GROWTH THOUGH THE RATE OF INCREASE SLOWED SIGNIFICANTLY.

IN THE EUROPEAN UNION, OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, NEWSPAPER SALES HAVE FALLEN 4.2% MEANING THAT THERE WERE 3.5 MILLION LESS NEWSPAPER BUYERS IN 1996 THAN IN 1992. THE CIRCULATION OF
DAILIES IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CONTINUED ITS RELENTLESS DECLINE IN 1996 - DOWN BY 2.1%. TRANSLATED INTO SALES, IT MEANT THAT 1.2 MILLION LESS AMERICANS PURCHASED A NEWSPAPER EACH DAY LAST YEAR.

IN JAPAN SALES PICKED UP BY 0.9% AND COMPARING THE SIZE OF TOTAL CIRCULATION IN THE NATIONAL MARKETS, JAPAN REMAINS A LONG WAY IN FRONT, WITH 72.7 MILLION COPIES SOLD DAILY, WITH USA IN SECOND PLACE WITH 56.9 MILLION COPIES, Whilst CHINA WITH SOME 2,202 DAILY NEWSPAPERS WITH ITS TOP TEN COMMANDING SALES OF 28.5 MILLION COPIES DAILY IS BELIEVED TO BE IN THIRD PLACE, INDIA IN FOURTH PLACE WITH 29.4 MILLION AND GERMANY IN THE FIFTH PLACE WITH 25.2 MILLION COPIES.

AS FOR SOME ASIAN COUNTRIES, SRI LANKA WAS UP 2.9%; MALAYSIA ROSE TO 1.6% (OR 24.7% SINCE 1992) AND IN INDONESIA THE CIRCULATION FIGURE STAYED UNCHANGED.

THE NORWEGIANS AND JAPANESE REMAINED THE WORLD'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER BUYERS WITH, RESPECTIVELY, 592 AND 582 SALES PER THOUSAND POPULATION EACH DAY. FINLAND WAS IN THIRD PLACE WITH 456 BUYERS PER THOUSAND, SWEDEN IN FOURTH PLACE WITH 438 AND SWITZERLAND IN FIFTH PLACE WITH 357. THE USA IS IN 14TH PLACE WITH 216 PEOPLE IN A THOUSAND BUYING A NEWSPAPER EACH DAY.

AS FOR ASIA, THE COUNTRIES WHERE SALES PER THOUSAND POPULATION IS LESS THAN 35 COPIES DAILY, THE COUNTRIES AND FIGURES ARE AS FOLLOWS: SRI LANKA 30, INDIA 27, INDONESIA 24...
(THOUGH 43% OF ALL ADULTS WERE REPORTED TO READ ONE) AND MONGOLIA 7.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

LET ME NOW SHARE WITH YOU SOME FIGURES ON ADVERTISING IN OUR REGION

JAPAN HAD A GOOD ADVERTISING YEAR, WITH NEWSPAPER REVENUES INCREASING BY 3.8% IN 1995 OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR ALTHOUGH FOR THE PERIOD 1992/95 IT WAS - 60.8% DUE TO RECESSION.


EXPENDITURE ON ADVERTISING IN SOUTH KOREAN NEWSPAPERS DECLINED BY 4.9% LAST YEAR AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF GROWTH, WHICH STILL SHOW A 51.1% INCREASE SINCE 1992.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

THIS WEEK IN OUR PART OF THE WORLD, WE WILL BE LOOKING AT VARIOUS TOPICS THAT ARE PERTINENT NOT ONLY TO THE PRACTITIONERS OF THE FOURTH ESTATE BUT ALSO TO THE MEDIA INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE INCLUDING THE NEW MEDIA.
SOME OF THE TOPICS WE WILL EXAMINE AT THIS CONFERENCE INCLUDE COMMUNICATION IN EDUCATION AND CULTURE, DEVELOPMENT OF MULTIMEDIA IN A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT, TRANSNATIONAL EXCHANGES AND GLOBAL CINEMAS, BROADCASTING BY SATELLITES AND MEDIA FUTURE IN ASIA, NARROWCASTING AND NET NARRATIVITY, ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN REACHING RURAL MASSES IN ASIA, MULTIMEDIA SUPER CORRIDOR, INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY, BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN FOREIGN AND LOCAL PROGRAMMING, THE FACE OF PRINT INDUSTRY IN THE NEXT MILLENNIUM, ASIAN ADVERTISING, ASIAN PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MANY MORE. A DISTINGUISHED PANEL OF SPEAKERS, PAPER WRITERS, ACADEMICIANS, PRACTITIONERS AND BUREAUCRATS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO GIVE THEIR VIEWS AND WE ALL CAN LOOK FORWARD TO A REWARDING AND INTERESTING CONFERENCE.

MAY I ON BEHALF OF THE CONFERENCE ORGANISER HUMBLY THANK MOST SINCERELY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM, ACTING PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA, FOR GRACIOUSLY AGREEING TO DELIVER A KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND FORMALLY OPEN THE CONFERENCE, TO ALL OUR DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS AND PAPER WRITERS FOR THEIR EXCELLENT CONTRIBUTION, TO ALL DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS FOR THEIR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION, TO THE EVER EFFICIENT SECRETARY-GENERAL OF AMIC, MR. VIJAY MENON AND ALL THE BACKROOM STAFF WHO HAVE MADE THIS CONFERENCE A REALITY AND HOPEFULLY A GREAT SUCCESS, AND FINALLY TO ALL THE SPONSORS WHOSE SUPPORT IN KIND AND IN FINANCIAL TERM HAVE GREATLY EASED THE BURDEN OF HOSTING THIS GATHERING. MAY THIS 6TH AMIC CONFERENCE BE BLESSED AND I THANK YOU ALL.