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## DATUK PROFESSOR DR. ASMA ISMAIL, USM'S NEW VICE-CHANCELLOR



PENANG, 30 September 2016 - The Director-General of Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, Datuk Professor Dr. Asma Ismail has been appointed as the new Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) effective from Tuesday, 4 October 2016 for three years, taking over from Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman, who had been in office since 27 September 2011.

The announcement was made by the Minister of Higher Education, Dato' Seri Idris Jusoh yesterday. Chairman of the USM Board of Directors, Tan Sri Datuk Dr. Zulkefli A. Hassan welcomed the announcement and hoped that Asma would continue in driving ahead the USM APEX agenda and in pursuing excellence of the university.

"All members of the Board of Governors and I welcomed the appointment and would continue to extend support and cooperation in ensuring that she would lead and push for USM to become a leading university, locally and also globally," said Zulkefli.

He added that, all members of the Board of Governors including him also extended their deepest appreciation to Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman, who had worked tirelessly in continuing the pursuit of excellence of the university and driving the Accelerated Programme for Excellence (APEX) and in initiating the development of APEX 2020.

Omar is a Professor in the field of Sustainability and Project Management at the USM School of Housing, Building and Planning.

Asma's expertise is in the field of Medical Microbiology and "Medical Biotechnology and Rapid Diagnostics of Infectious Diseases", and she headed the Higher Education Department, Ministry of Higher Education from 1 June 2014. Previously, she served as the Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) since December 2012.

Asma was also the USM Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) in 2008, when she put forth many major achievements by USM in the field of research and innovation.

Her major interest is in research, what more when she founded and became the Director of the Institute for Research in Molecular Medicine (INFORMM), a Research Centre of Excellence under the Ministry of Higher Education and located at USM since 2003.

She began her career as a lecturer at the Medical Microbiology Department, USM School of Medical Sciences in 1986, and then became a visiting professor and visiting fellow at various world-renowned universities such as the University of Tokyo in Japan and St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London.

She obtained her higher education from the University of Nevada, Reno, USA with an honours degree in the field of biology, her Master's degree in Microbiology at Indiana University, Bloomington, USA and her Ph.D in Cellular and Molecular Biology at the University of Nevada, Reno, USA.

Asma is also well-known for her various research products, which have been successfully commercialised with grants valued at more than RM19 million within the last five years, had presented more than 340 papers in conferences and keynote speeches on various scientific discoveries around the world.

Translation: Mazlan Hanafi Basharudin



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