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## 60th ANNIVERSARY AND WITH MANY MORE YEARS TO COME



PENANG, 8 May 2017 – This year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and Japan. Since then, bilateral relations have been strengthened through the implementation of the 'Look East Policy' then and now, it is the 'Look West Policy' for the Japanese to turn its attention to Malaysia.

“With the events in history kept in mind, this relationship between the two nations will continue to be strengthened further, because I believe Malaysia-Japan relationship has already moved from practising diversity to unity and from having tolerance to one of acceptance,” said the Consul-General of Japan in Penang, Kiyoshi Itoi during the opening ceremony of “Towards the Future – Tribute to Diplomatic Relations: Malaysia & Japan 60 years Anniversary” programme held today at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM).

He added, similarly collaborations between Japan and USM in academic and cultural exchange programmes have also achieved remarkable development over the past decades.

“USM has always been an important partner for Japan as both share the same values on the international stage. We see many ongoing mutual visits and cooperation in the field of academic, research, cultural and people-to-people exchange,” he said.





Kiyoshi named several collaborations between Japan and USM over the years, namely the establishment of the Toyohashi University of Technology – USM Technology Collaboration Centre in Penang, and strategic collaborations with Nagoya City Board of Education, Hiroshima University, Akita International University, Nanzan University, Ritsumeikan University, Nagaoka University of Technology, and the RIKEN Research Institute in Tokyo.

Furthermore, Toray, the main strategic partner of USM contributed RM4 million for the construction of the Toray-USM Knowledge Transfer Centre at USM as well as with Kyoto University of Foreign Studies (KUFS) on the setting up of the KUFS-USM Japanese Culture Centre in USM in 2015.

According to the USM Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Industry and Community Network), Professor Dr. Abdul Rahman Mohamed, the objectives of this programme are noble, in that it is hoped to further strengthen ties between both countries and also to allow the practice of active learning of cultures by offering alternative ways of exploring the world through different perspectives.

“The establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Malaysia was forged on 31st August 1957, the very same day the Federation of Malaya declared its independence. Since then, bilateral relations between both countries have been strengthened and more recently, this relationship has been extended to include strategic partnership in security and defence,” added Abdul Rahman.





During this two-day programme, there are lots of activities lined-up such as Washoku demonstration, wearing of yukata and traditional costumes workshop, Malaysian and Japanese performances, and an array of Malaysian and Japanese food being sold at the Permatang Pelajar, USM.



Also present at the opening ceremony was the Director of Japanese Cultural Centre, Kyoto University Foreign Studies (KUFS – USM), Masatoshi Soeda.



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