



2nd ASIA-PACIFIC RAINFOREST SUMMIT 2016

CLOSING REMARKS

BY

**YANG BERHORMAT DATO SERI SETIA AWANG HAJI ALI BIN APONG
MINISTER OF PRIMARY RESOURCES AND TOURISM
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

**Thursday, 4 August 2016
International Convention Centre
Bandar Seri Begawan,
Brunei Darussalam**

Distinguished Guests, My fellow Government Leaders, Delegates, Colleagues, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen

Assalamualaikum Warramattullahi Wabarakatuh, and a very good afternoon to all of you.

It is my pleasure to provide the closing comments of this successful 2016 Asia-Pacific Rainforest Summit. I am glad that despite our limited time, we are able to discuss and accomplish the objectives of this Summit. As such, I would like to congratulate everybody for a very job well done!

This gathering is not just a learning-experience but also a confirmation of commitments that support the sustainable management of the Asia-Pacific rainforests. I would say that this Summit is a venue of finding solutions and an offer of support that will strengthens our positions in responding to the global issue of climate change and rainforest degradation. What had happened during the last two days would further our knowledge and information to further our national forestry goals and at the same time in working out our Nationally Determined Contribution commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Our role as a Government institution is very important in promoting an effective governance of our rainforests. We need to develop the appropriate policies and strategies in creating a favorable environment to practice sustainable forest management. There is a need to provide the appropriate incentives to forestry players in support to the national forestry programs and initiatives. There is a need to integrate the economic, social,

and environmental concerns in our policies and strategies. I hope that we were able to influence policy makers and forest managers in developing these strategies back in our home countries.

Forest industries play an essential role in the sustainable management of our rainforest ecosystem. A sound forest industry is capable of bringing back investments into the forestry sector and finance forestry programs that enhance forest growth and sustainable production of goods and services. The presented industry-led portfolios confirmed the huge potentials of forest-based industries in contributing to economic development and its capabilities to self-finance sustainable forest management.

Along with our internal forestry development, we have to take into account the important regional and international initiatives that cater forest conservation and climate change mitigation. In this Summit, we explored relevant legal and workable frameworks that would facilitate forestry sector assistance through REDD+ and other multilateral funds. We definitely need these interventions. The sharing of information, financial, and technical assistance provided will definitely further our capabilities and would facilitate the attainment of our national goals and commitments.

However, with all these information, initiatives, and resources available, let's keep in mind of the plight of our forest communities. As this Summit has emphasized, we need to "put people first" in our initiatives. They are the forefront of forest management and among the key drivers of change that would lead us to sustainable forest management. We need to

strike the balance between conservation and economic portfolios to protect the interests of our forest dependent communities. We have champions in community-based forestry in the Asia-Pacific region, as we recognize their important contribution to local economy, to sustainable forest management, and to sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Rainforest restoration is not the sole responsibility of the government. Everybody in the society has a stake in forest conservation and protection. There is a need to promote more partnerships for there is strength in pooling resources together. The government, the private sectors, non-government organizations, and support groups shall share their expertise and act as a whole in the conservation of our rainforest ecosystems. I hope that this Summit gave us that opportunity to widen our networks and met new partners, not only from the government sectors but with our able private counterparts.

I would also like to emphasize that I am pleased to hear the commitments from participating countries. The conservation of the Asia-Pacific rainforests would definitely make a difference and would have a global impact on climate change. And as we put together these commitments, it will definitely define the future of the Asia-Pacific region.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased with the outcome of this Summit. I believe that the output of this Summit is for the common good and will respond to our aspirations of sustainably managing our rainforest ecosystems. I support the shared responsibility in protecting rainforests, the integration of resources and climate responses, the facilitation of funds for action, the conservation of forests to support business operations, the participation from all stakeholders, and the proper valuation of forest and forests resources reflecting our concerted efforts.

At this note, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of you in making this Summit a success. Again, I would like to thank the Australian Government for their valuable assistance. I hope that our countries will be in partnership again in our future endeavors. Special mention to the Centre of International Forestry Research, we really appreciate the support provided for this Summit.

To the staff of the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism and to our generous sponsors, I share with you the success of this Summit. I hope that we learned a lot from the discussions as we apply the same to ensure the conservation of our rainforests.

And to everybody, thank you very much for your active participation. Let's bring home the mutual trusts and friendship that we have established in this Summit. Let's capitalize with the shared information provided by this Summit and implement it in our home countries. By the time we meet

again, we will be sharing more success stories in some other fora of in our future undertakings.

Before I finally conclude my remarks, I would like to invite you to join the pre-arranged tours tomorrow to understand Brunei more. It will be a unique experience that you can share to your family, friends, and colleagues in your home country.

In conclusion, I am officially closing the 2016 Asia-Pacific Rainforest Summit. Thank you again and I wish you all safe travel back to your home country.

Wabillahit Taufiq Walhidayah, Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi
Wabarakatuh