MINISTRY OF NATIONAL UNITY

OPENING CEREMONY
SPEECH BY

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THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON
DIGITAL RECORDS AND LEGAL ADMISSIBILITY 2024

10 JULY 2022 (WEDNESDAY)

EVERLY HOTEL PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA

SALUTATION

Salam Perpaduan dan Salam Malaysia MADANI.

OPENING

1. It's an honour to inaugurate the **International Seminar on Digital Records and Legal Admissibility 2024** organise by National Archives of Malaysia.

2. I understand this international seminar coincides with the **6th International Archives Week Celebrations 2024,** themed **#CyberArchives**. It is never too late to extend my best wishes for a **Happy International Archives Week 2024** (3 – 9 June 2024) to all archivists, especially those at the National Archives of Malaysia, as well as archivists from ASEAN countries.

3. The theme **#CyberArchives**, chosen by the **International Council on Archives (ICA)**, invites professionals in archival and records management, organizations, and related sectors to engage in a virtual discourse on the impact of technological advances on archives and records. By harnessing data's power and embracing emerging technologies, archives empower societies to make informed decisions, promote transparency, and preserve cultural heritage.

4. In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, archives play a multifaceted role in securing a future that promotes democracy, protects citizens' rights, and enhances quality of life. **The archival sector not only adapts to digitization but also addresses challenges and opportunities presented by AI, machine learning, blockchain, cloud computing, and other advanced technologies.**

ROLE OF ARCHIVES - THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF MALAYSIA

Ladies, Gentlemen and Esteemed Delegates,

5. The National Archives of Malaysia (ANM), established in 1957, and as **an agency that serves as a repository of data, information and government records**, is **responsible for the collection, preservation and preparation of public records in various types and forms** as references for researchers as well as the public.

6. **The National Archives of Malaysia has been at the forefront of preserving Malaysia's diverse tapestry of records both official and private effectively transitioning into the digital age**. Archival values are crucial not only in preserving cultural heritage but also in ensuring the legal validity of digital records. Approximately 80% of the National Archives' initiatives over the past decade focused on digitization and electronic record preservation, reflecting our steadfast commitment to staying ahead.

7. Preserving this heritage while embracing the future is a delicate balance, especially in the rapid evolution of digital landscapes. The transition from traditional to digital records signifies more than just a technological upgrade; it signifies a profound transformation in how we perceive, manage, and interact with our collective memories and legal frameworks.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION – GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Ladies, Gentlemen and Esteemed Delegates,

8. Internationally, digital transformation reshapes how records are perceived, stored, and utilized. **In Malaysia, the digital economy stands as a key pillar, currently contributing 22.6% to the country's GDP, projected to rise to 25.5% by 2025**, driven by significant growth in e-commerce and digital adoption rates.

9. **Malaysia Government launched Malaysia Digital Initiative to encourage companies, talents, and investments while positioning Malaysians as leaders in the global digital revolution**. The Malaysia's national digital transformation is guided by the Malaysian Digital Economy Blueprint which outlining efforts and initiatives up to 2030. Malaysia Digital is the engine that accelerates the growth of our ecosystem within the nine (9) promoted sectors; and drive digital adoption and opportunities in digital economy via the Malaysia Digital Catalytic Programmes **(PeMangkinMD)** and other competitive offerings. The 9 promoted sectors are :

I.   Digital Agriculture

II.   Digital Services

III.   Digital Cities

IV.   Digital Health

V.   Digital Finance

VI.   Digital Trade

VII.   Digital Content

VIII.   Digital Tourism

IX.   Islamic Digital Economy

10.   Malaysia Digital's inclusive approach aims to harmonise the growing Demand of digital solutions with a steady Supply of products and services, whilst continuing to strengthen the Enablers such as talents, infrastructure and regulations. For example, one of initiative under PeMangkinMD is **The National E-Invoicing Initiative** which aims to drive interoperable E-Invoicing by digitalising how businesses send invoices to other businesses, allowing different accounting software and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to send and receive e-invoices in a system-to-system manner.

DIGITAL DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (DDMS)

Ladies, Gentlemen and Esteemed Delegates,

11. The National Archives of Malaysia has taken a proactive stance in navigating complexities of digital records management and supporting government's digital transformation.

12. **In 2012, through a visionary partnership with MAMPU (Malaysian Administrative Modernization and Planning Unit, now National Digital Department), we developed the Digital Document Management System (DDMS 1.0), now DDMS 2.0.**

13. More than just making records accessible in an online storage system, the implementation of records management using **DDMS 2.0 transforms the whole record management process, to one where physical records are centrally managed, eliminating the need of excessive copies.** Moreover, DDMS 2.0 helps improve communication by allowing any digital record to be instantly directed within the organisation together with meeting minutes and directives to the respective recipient.

14. **DDMS 2.0 was selected as a 'Top 5 Champion' at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2020 in Geneva, obtaining the highest votes under Category C6 - "Enabling Environment".** WSIS is an annual ICT-based conference which recognises government or organisation initiatives that utilise ICT to promote sustainable development.

15. This cutting-edge system sets a new benchmark for consistency, reliability, and transparency in government records management. Currently used by **370 government agencies, with plans to expand to 500 agencies by 2025, DDMS 2.0 hosts 12.3 million records, serving nearly 60,000 active users (civil servants).** By establishing such a robust framework, DDMS 2.0 offers a model for other sectors, reinforcing transparency as the bedrock of trust.

16. However, responsibility for digital records does not solely rest with the National Archives of Malaysia. Technology innovators and legal professionals play critical roles in shaping the future of digital record-keeping. Technologists must develop robust, secure, and user-friendly platforms capable of preserving digital records indefinitely.

17. As we navigate this digital landscape together, it is crucial not to lose sight of the human element. Moral responsibility, transparency, and unity must guide our technology use. Guidelines developed here should empower institutions globally, ensuring digital records' sanctity and unequivocal legal standing.

CLOSING

Ladies, Gentlemen and Esteemed Delegates,

18. In closing, I invite each of you from archivists to technologists, legal experts to government officials to reflect on your role in this shared journey. Let us forge a future where digital records are not merely data bits but recognized as the cornerstone of our legal systems, the soul of our cultural heritage, and the beacon of our unified endeavours.

19. Together, we can ensure the digital age becomes a golden era of accessibility, transparency, and unity.

    With great pleasure, **I officially inaugurate the International Seminar on Digital Records and Legal Admissibility 2024.**