

PROGRAM FOR HANDOVER CEREMONY OF COVID-19
PREVENTION EQUIPMENT FROM UNODC TO MALAYSIAN
PRISON DEPARTMENT

Hon. Dato' Haji Nordin bin Haji Muhamad, Commissioner General
of Malaysian Prison,

Mrs. Asma Sainkoudje, Head of the United Nations Office on
Drugs and Crime in Malaysia,

Distinguished guests,

Tuan Tuan dan Puan Puan,

Good morning everyone.

I would like to begin by extending my heartfelt congratulations for today's handover ceremony of Covid-19 prevention equipment to the Malaysian Prison Department. I would like to take the opportunity to commend the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Malaysian Prison Department for their hard work and untiring efforts in bringing the project to this stage.

Japan has continuously contributed to UNODC's activities to support and assist various countries including Southeast Asian countries. Today's handover of Covid-19 prevention equipment is part of Japan's grant amounting to approximately 6.4 million [6,404,545] US dollars which was contributed in 2021 for

Southeast Asian countries.

In Malaysia, overcrowding in prisons has been a key challenge for many years. This has resulted in the emergence of Covid-19 clusters in the prisons thus affecting a number of prison inmates and staff. Therefore, we recognise the importance of preventing Covid-19 infections inside Malaysian prisons.

I sincerely hope that the equipment handed over today will contribute to solving this problem.

Due to the strong ties between Japan and Malaysia, Japan has supported various counter measures implemented by the Government of Malaysia against the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, Japan has donated approximately one million doses of AZ vaccines to Malaysia in July last year to boost the country's vaccination rate. In addition to the bilateral assistance, Japan has also provided support to Malaysia via international organisations such as the UNODC.

We wish to further support and cooperate with Malaysia to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, which is still very much a threat to the world after more than 2 years since the beginning of the pandemic.

Today's handover of the Covid-19 prevention equipment to Malaysia signals a new level of cooperation between Japan and the criminal and judicial authorities of Malaysia including the Prison Department.

So far, Japan has conducted training courses on criminal and judicial matters in the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, or UNAFEI, which is a UN regional institute established in Japan by agreement between the UN and the Government of Japan. We have welcomed more than 180 trainees from Malaysia for training at the institute so far.

Additionally, we have strengthened our relationship via mutual visits of senior officials to each country.

We hope to continue our cooperation in criminal and judicial matters with the relevant Malaysian agencies including the Prison Department.

I am pleased to say that UNODC is one of Japan's most important partners in countering terrorism and transnational organised crimes. The Government of Japan has supported Southeast Asian countries through UNODC, not only on issues related to prisons but also in other areas such as criminal and judicial matters, preventing and countering drug offenses, terrorism and violent extremism as well as maritime law enforcement.

We are willing to continue contributing and assisting countries in the region in various areas such as health, security and maritime safety, including contributions via UNODC and other international organisations.

This year marks the 65th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Malaysia diplomatic relations and the 40th anniversary of the Look East Policy. I hope the relationship between Japan and Malaysia will continue to develop further through our joint efforts to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic, with the help of international organisations such as UNODC.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my sincere hope for everyone to stay safe and in good health during this difficult time. Let us work hand in hand to contain and recover from the Covid-19 pandemic together.

Thank you very much, Arigato, terima kasih.