

**SPEECH BY YB DATO' DR HOU KOK CHUNG
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AT THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY OF
THE PAM-TAN SRI Ar. CHAN SAU LAI ARCHITECTURE AWARD**

3rd December 2012

Foremost, I like to thank Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia (PAM) to accord me this honour to grace the inaugural Winners Announcement and Award Presentation of the PAM-Tan Sri Ar. Chan Sau Lai Architecture Award. It is a defining moment for me to be here among the winners and their families, eminent members of the architectural community and higher education fraternity to celebrate an event, which I must acknowledge, is most stirring and inspiring.

I reminded myself, to not miss this opportunity to give special mention to the personality who has made this award a reality. His desire to instill and inspire budding architects at an early stage; his selflessness to work together with an institution representing the profession; his gracious generosity to sponsor a quarter of a million Ringgit as prize-money; reflects his deep love and passion to the architectural profession and the industry. On this note, may I invite all present here to join me to celebrate that personality – Tan Sri Ar. Chan Sau Lai.

I have this to say, and that is young Malaysian architecture graduates, studying locally and abroad, are surely a fortunate lot. They have a successful senior like Tan Sri, who graciously shares his successes to drive and inspire excellence in them. I note with satisfaction that the awards, not only give recognition of a job well done and the hard work undertaken throughout their study days by these outstanding young architects, but also prepare them to the profession and industry.

This Award also bridges these future architects with PAM, the national professional institute representing architects in Malaysia. The Award's inclusivity approach, allowing entries from our students studying locally and abroad from Australia, China and United Kingdom, is also to be applauded. It is a clear message to students of the endeavour by PAM to engage with them, wherever they are. They are never forgotten by PAM or the Government. They are like investments, to bear interests, when the time comes.

We must believe to the maxim that an investment in knowledge always pays the best interest. Everyone here today has invested in their own pursuit of knowledge and the knowledge of others. The recipients have worked hard and invested time into their studies, their parents have invested love, time and never ending patience to give their loved ones the best opportunities and guidance they can. The generosity of Tan Sri Ar. Chan Sau Lai and together with PAM's support, have invested faith, trust, and money in the young people here today, all for the pursuit of excellence in the architecture profession.

I am hopeful that the invested sum of 250 thousand Ringgit, to be equally spent for the next 5 years to organise this Award, would bring to fore more outstanding Malaysian architecture talents, not only for PAM and Tan Sri to be proud of, but also the nation. I hope this Award will become an added incentive to push students to put in extra efforts in their final year projects. I look forward to hearing that this year's 32

entries are surpassed next year, as well as entries from more countries and also institutions.

Without doubt, the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) is appreciative for all efforts of continuous co-operation and support by institutions and individuals like PAM and Tan Sri in professional development through recognition and financial support. Every effort to recognise excellence in professionals in the building industry must be supported. These professionals are among those who are the fore-runners in the building of the nation. Innovation, design and sustainability are the key areas that give a nation the edge in the competitive global scenario.

The architectural profession is distinct, in that, this is the area that has the potential and opportunity to portray the nation in a cultural and physical sense. At the same time, depending on the success of its physicality, develops the well-being of the occupants. Cities with vibrant and avant-garde feel design has positive impact on the intellectual and social development for the city inhabitants. Architectural development today emphasises on the evolvement into an international reference point for urban design. It has set the standard as a model of urban regeneration with zero carbon foot print, retained cultural values and yet iconic construction.

A building with good spacing, own cultural representative identity, and green architectural with generous breathtaking walkway, is a nature creation for wellbeing, for the public. All this values that I mentioned should be the key emphasis criteria by upcoming architects for their future work. The awards and support from institutes and individuals, such as PAM and Tan Sri, is an opportunity available today for students to harness. I hope these efforts will see fruits in Malaysia becoming a developed nation in 2020 and further progress beyond 2020.

Malaysian students, and parents alike, must also revisit the over-emphasis towards certain courses of study and profession. The architectural profession has a vast employability potential, if what I am told is to be considered. Based on a study by the Union of International Architects (UIA), the ideal ratio for architect to population in Malaysia would be 1:8,000. In the last study released in 2010, the ratio is 1:16,000. Furthermore to this, it had been reported that by 2020, Malaysia needs 10,000 architects. Today, there are just about 2,000. However, there can never be success without challenges. I understand that the architecture profession is a very challenging one, yet satisfying.

In closing, Ladies and Gentlemen, I like to remind that each of you Young Architects has achieved this success through your hard work, dedication and passion, and this will continue throughout your lives. In your career, do continue your pursuit of excellence, innovation and creativity, and we look forward to your contribution towards a progressive nation building. Each of you here today has worked hard to get where you are. This is an occasion for celebration; it is also an opportunity for reflection. May this momentous celebration open new doors and opportunities. Congratulations to all of you.

Thank you.