



**SPEECH BY  
YANG BERTAMBAH  
PEHIN ORANG KAYA PEKERMA LAILA DIRAJA  
DATO PADUKA AWANG HAJI HAZAIR BIN HAJI ABDULLAH  
MINISTER OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORTS**

**AT**

**THE GET TOGETHER DINNER OF THE FRENCH BRUNEI  
BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN**

**11 JUNE 2011**

---

His Excellency

Mr. Patrick Louis Le Vert

Ambassador of France in Brunei Darussalam and Patron of  
the French-Bruneian Business Association (FBBA);

Mr. Pierre Imhof

President of the FBBA and General Manager of the Baiduri Bank;

Members of the Diplomatic Corp;

Executive Committee members of the FBBA;

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatulahi Wabarakatuh, and a very good evening.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Louis Le Vert and to the FBBA for inviting me to this Annual Dinner and Get-Together 2011, with the theme “Rock the World!” .

I received a call from the French Embassy and then a long distance SMS from Pierre Imhof in Paris inviting me to be the guest of honour. How could I say NO to such eagerness and commitment.

In fact, I am as eager to attend this evening’s event. With fondness, I recall being given the opportunity to associate myself and working together with prominent French colleagues while I was a member of the Board of Directors with the Baiduri Bank and working very closely for 3 to 4 years with Mr Camularaya and Mr Kaze to name a few, and of course not forgetting my good friend, Mr Imhof.

Indeed, it was an enriching and rewarding experience. And by accepting the invitation, I feel that the event is bringing me back to the company of French colleagues.

I am also most delighted to be among the distinguished business personalities in this auspicious event in celebration of your proud achievements.

Over the years since its inception, the FBBA had been very active in bringing together our business community and in developing economic opportunities and goodwill between Brunei Darussalam and France.

My congratulations to the members of the Executive Committee of the FBBA as well as its corporate members for their untiring efforts towards this end.

I am fascinated to learn of the long list of prominent local companies that have become corporate or associate members of the FBBA. This is an encouraging trend. I am confident with the involvement of such prominent local companies with their French connections, the FBBA's mission in Brunei Darussalam would be further enhanced and would mutually benefit our two countries and peoples, not just in the area of trade and commerce but also transcending into the socio-cultural spheres.

FBBA has organized talks such as 'The ease of doing business with MIPR' and 'Seeking transparency in government-business relations'. These talks undoubtedly help to provide the basis of dialogues between private and public sectors to enhance cooperation and understanding.

Not to mention, our international relations and trade development department is like a microcosm of international organizations in matters regarding APEC, ASEM, AFTA, ASEAN, and ASEAN-EU. And having the synergy of bi-lateral trade associations would further add to greater co-operation and network among the various organizations.

Although the FBBA's main aim is to promote and develop trade, commerce and industry, it can also serve as a cultural bridge between East and West. Of course, France is very notable for their culture and arts as well as preservation of heritage, on this count, there areas and experiences which can be shared with Brunei.

I am glad to note that through companies with French connection, we see various charitable activities which cover community service, cultural heritage and environmental protection.

For example, we had Total BV Borneo, a French petroleum company, working together with us in a joint project to recover a sunken shipwreck containing valuable pieces of ceramics and other artifacts discovered off the coast of Brunei Darussalam. We also benefit from working together with a group of French experts in the areas of archaeology and museum, again with the support from Total BV Borneo. And we are glad to see a local bank with a French partnership, Baiduri Bank, to undertake charitable work to help the poor and the disadvantaged.

These are some of the collaborative efforts we at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports very much welcome and would like to see more and more of. We hope through the FBBA's network, we can bring forward more companies to put together initiatives that will benefit the community.

Another potential area of interest is in the youth development. Through the Youth Development Centre, for instance, we hope to address the issue of unemployment especially amongst our youths. The private sector can

certainly contribute and we welcome FBBA-linked businesses to extend a helping hand.

The Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, in this regard, is planning to set up another Youth Development Centre at Kampong Bukit Pasir, in the Tutong District. As our youth is the future of the country, we hope that FBBA through its member companies can help in training our youth especially in the field of oil and gas related industries, which will be the main focus for this new center. These are just some of the examples where we can explore together, but there are certainly more.

To conclude, let me once again thank the French-Bruneian Business Association for this opportunity for me to share my thoughts on potential areas of cooperation. In saying that, I would like to thank you all for the many contributions you have made thus far in not just bringing businesses together, but also to bring our two communities closer.

I wish the FBBA the very best in your endeavors in the years to come.

Thank you.

Wabillahitaufik      Walhidayah      Wassalamualaikum      Warahmatullahi  
Wabarakatuh.

