SALUTATION

My colleagues from UMP:

Yang Hormat Professor Dato’ Dr. Rosli Mohd Yunus,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academik & International);

Professor Dr. Zulkefli Yaacob,
Director, Industry & Community Linkages Division;

Encik Abd Rahman Haji Safie,
Acting Registrar;

Senior officials and representatives from government agencies and departments;
Senior officials and representatives from the private sector;

Professors, Deans, Directors and Heads of Departments;

Media representatives;

Ladies and gentlemen.

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh,
Salam Sejahtera and Salam 1Malaysia.

1. *Alhamdulillah*, it is with great pleasure that I have the honour to welcome all of you to this inaugural Industry – Academia Collaborative Forum or IACF 2015 which is organized by the Industry & Community Linkages Division of Universiti Malaysia Pahang.
2. I am very delighted indeed with the presence of representatives from various government agencies, industries and companies this morning, a positive indication of actualizing the true collaborative spirit between the academia, the public sector and the private sector as far as national development is concerned.

3. Talking about actualizing this collaborative spirit, it is not only commitment that matters, but beyond commitment, we also need a strategic direction to drive the collaboration, practical initiatives which are beneficial to all parties and the target group, and constructive measures to maintain the collaboration.

4. The present economic realities, both national and global, as well as existing socio-political challenges demand a more pro-active collective participation between the policy-making and –implementing machinery, i.e. the government; the research and technical experts from universities and the economic propeller, i.e. the private sector.
5. As recommended by the World Bank in 2013, it is useful to examine the experience of developed countries to better understand the different types of university-industry collaboration, motivations to form these agreements and barriers to cooperation, as well as the role of public policy in fostering such linkages. Developing countries face even greater barriers to such alliances, calling for a differentiated approach to promoting university-industry collaboration.

6. These realities have gradually changed the global landscape over the years, and being part of this innovative ecosystem, UMP realizes that the academia and the industry must be strategically linked within a constructive framework, thus prompting our Industrial & Community Linkages Division or BJIM to organize this inaugural forum.

7. IACF 2015 is actually a continuation of the CEO Roundtable Meeting which was held last year. The success of that Roundtable Meeting has inspired us to go further and with a more directed and focused set of agendas, IACF is initiated as a strategic platform for a more comprehensive deliberation between the representatives from the university, government and industry.
8. Ladies and gentlemen,

Through the implementation of the Malaysian Education Blueprint (Higher Education) 2015-2025 which was launched on April 7, 2015 by the Prime Minister, the Government aspires to widen the access to higher education in this country. This means that there will be more graduates competing in the job market and certainly, we need the involvement from the industry to collaborate with the universities to ensure the graduates produced are not only outstanding, but also able to meet the market requirement and expectations.

9. Not only that, this National Education Blueprint (Higher Education) 2015-2025 or PPPM (PT) also calls for the transformation of our higher education system. Being one of the Public Universities, UMP is challenged to be more pro-active in driving its growth particularly in the aspects of commercialization, technology transfer and income-generation without totally depending on government resources.
10. Taxing and difficult that might be, but the management of UMP is confident that this challenged could be turned into lucrative opportunities if the right strategies are applied and the right initiatives are undertaken. To soar upwards, we know that the industry is one of our major stakeholders, thus a constructive ecosystem for effective linkages between the academia and the industry must be in place.

11. Looking forward, UMP will continue to enhance its human capital capabilities which consist of our staff and students. With 668 academic staff, 324 of which are PhD holders, nine academic faculties and five Centres of Excellence, I believe that there are many prospects that could be explored and thereafter connected through our engagement in IACF 2015.
12. UMP also has been actively engaged in strategic collaborations and smart partnerships with the industries in various domains, both at locally and internationally. The portfolios of these linkages are numerous, from consultation and technical services provision to companies such as BASF-Petronas, MTBE-Petronas, Carston & Ranico and Perwaja Steel to technology commercialization with Johor Corporation and Evolva SA.

13. **Ladies and gentlemen,**

When just now I spoke about mutual benefits to both the university and the industry from a healthy collaborative ecosystem, UMP is also concern about the need to support the industry in term of knowledge and competency enhancements.

14. Our PhD Industry and part-time education programmes are the examples of the opportunities that are available for the industries, which I believe will encourage their employees to enrich their academic and practical experience without the need to forego their jobs.
15. While scholarships and financial assistance are available, it is up for us to connect ourselves together and collaborate to work on the related initiatives in this regard, which could also be customized according to our clients’ needs. The UMP PhD Industry programme for example allocates RM50,000 scholarship for each eligible student, thus making it an attractive programme, that combines doctoral studies and practical business and industrial experiences.

16. Ladies and gentlemen,

Talking about holistic involvement from our stakeholders, one of which is the industry in supporting the continuous growth and sustainable existence of this university, UMP has also moved another step forward in expanding the concept of external endowments for a general or specific purpose through the introduction of a special initiative which is known as MyGift.
17. *MyGift* is a special fund that is created by the management of UMP to raise funds for education sponsorship and enhancing the current quality of education in this university and donations from the industry and corporate sectors, in kinds or coins, regular or one-off will be channeled for providing infrastructures and facilities to enhance the standard of student’s academic experience and well-being at UMP.

18. This mechanism for this initiative operates for five types of funding namely, scholarship for undergraduates and for outstanding prize; university programmes; repair works and improving infrastructures in the university; Professor’s Chair; and high-impact programmes to cultivate the culture for knowledge in UMP.

19. This initiative is also one of the primary domains that is encompassed by academia-industry collaboration, and I believe that we could propel this together in the name of Corporate-Social Responsibility or CSR. UMP is ever willing to welcome any potential benevolent contributor from the private sector to participate in this initiative.
20. Ladies and gentlemen,

Honouring the effort to organize this forum, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the team from the Industrial Partnership & Community Linkages Division and other departments for their commitment and dedication.

21. I wish you all a fruitful deliberation and exciting experience throughout IACF 2015 and let us pray to Allah Ta’ala that this inaugural Industry-Academia Collaborative Forum will achieve its noble objectives and targets.

Thank you, wabillahitaufiqwalhidayah,

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahiwbarakatuh.