

**OFFICIAL OPENING CERMEONY OF
IMU Advanced Microbiology Collaborative Research Laboratory**

Speech by Prof Abdul Aziz Baba
Vice-Chancellor, International Medical University
16 April 2019 | IMU, Bukit Jalil Campus, Kuala Lumpur

SALUTATION LIST

- 1. Tan Sri Dato' Dr Abu Bakar Suleiman**
Chairman of IMU Group
- 2. Prof Diana Eccles**
Dean of Medicine, University of Southampton
3. Deans and representatives from Partner Medical and Dental Schools
4. My fellow IMU colleagues and students
5. Distinguished guests
6. Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good evening to all.

1. First and foremost, I would like to thank the various departments involved in the planning, renovation, and setting up of the IMU-Advanced Microbiology Collaborative Research Laboratory (IMU-AMCRL). As mentioned by Datuk Lokman, the main objective of this research laboratory is to encourage cross-institutional research between the International Medical University (IMU) and our partner Universities, with specific focus in the broad area of microbiology and infectious diseases.
2. Situated near the equator, tropical infectious diseases are among the most prevalent health issues in Malaysia. Despite the advances in modern medicine, managing the periodic spike in diseases such as rabies, leptospirosis, tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases are major challenges of the country. There is an urgent need to research into better diagnostics, treatment and management of such diseases. In line

with this, the IMU had set the “tropical infectious diseases” as one of the core research focus areas for IMU.

3. On this note, I am pleased to announce that the University of Southampton will be the first official collaborative research partner of the IMU-AMCRL. The project that will kick start this collaboration is the study on “Carriage rate of upper respiratory tract pathobionts and their association with host metabolomics profiles and gut microbial composition in diabetic patients”. This study will be led by our Prof Victor Lim and members of IMU and UoS. As we all know, research starts from a small insight and we hope that this insight will lead to many more discoveries and advances in improving the medical and health needs of the masses.

Ladies and Gentleman,

4. The University of Southampton (UoS) has been a trusted partner of the IMU since 2002. Likewise, with many of our esteemed partner universities, UoS had seen the potential of IMU’s unique and innovative teaching and learning model and embarked on our unique partner school model. To date, a total of 156 IMU students had been transferred to UoS to complete their Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery programme through the IMU Partner Medical School Pathway.
5. IMU and UoS has also signed a MoU in 2014 that encompasses medical education, research and capacity building. Today, we are witnessing another milestone that commemorates the strong collaboration between the two universities. In a wider context, this is also a testimonial to the positive UK-Malaysia relationship in research and education.
6. It is in our vision and hope that more of our partner universities will embark on such joint collaborative research. It is my pleasure to note that the IMU-AMCRL will also spearhead the application of international funding to improve Malaysia’s capacity to combat infectious diseases. Through IMU’s extensive network with the Malaysian Ministry of Health, IMU-AMCRL also aims to facilitate stronger Government-University collaboration in microbiological research.
7. Before I conclude, I would like to thank all of you again for your participation in the opening ceremony of the IMU Advanced Microbiology Collaborative Research Laboratory. Thank you.