

SPEECH BY YANG BERHORMAT DATUK SERI AZMI KHALID  
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AT THE LAUNCH OF THE BOOK  
"PROTECTING THE OZONE LAYER – MALAYSIA IMPLEMENTING THE MONTREAL  
PROTOCOL"

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Dr. Richard Leete, UNDP Resident Representative for Malaysia

Yang Bahagia, Dato' Subuh, Director General, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Yang Bahagia, Dato' Hajjah Rosnani Ibrahim, Ketua Pengarah, Department of Environment

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Selamat Petang,

Let me begin by thanking UNDP for organising the launch of this book, and for inviting me to be part of this significant event. It is always a pleasure for me and my department to work with UNDP.

Ozone is a gas which occurs naturally. Like most gasses, it is colourless and odourless, and because of its characteristics, we forget of its existence and its importance. The ozone layer is located in the stratosphere and acts as a protective shield by absorbing potentially harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation that can cause skin cancer and damage vegetation.

This publication is timely as we have implemented the Montreal Protocol for 20 years. Yet very few are aware of its impact on our lives and what is the 'Ozone'. This book tries to 'demystify' the ozone by providing information not only about the Ozone, but also the role played by our governments in phasing out the use of ozone depleting substances.

We should be proud because among the developing countries, Malaysia leads the way in phasing out use of ozone depleting substances. Many have asked, how did we do it? The answer is, we did it with sound policy, legislation and building smart partnerships with other government agencies, like the customs, fire department and

also, and most importantly with industries. When implementing the phase-out, the government ensures that national policy does not impact on the livelihood and the economy of industries. When negotiating at the international level, the government ensures that the commitment we make do not 'back-fire' on the people. In most cases industries that have participated in the phase out plan have benefited from the technical advice and transfer of knowledge. In the era of globalisation, industries need to be in the forefront of current issues be able to 'jump-in the bandwagon' in marketing their product. Labelling their product as 'CFC-free' is a good marketing strategy to sell products globally.

Ladies and gentlemen, considering our success in implementing the Montreal Protocol, we should not be complacent as this is not the end of the road. There are many challenges for the future. Scientists are still searching and experimenting on suitable alternatives to CFCs and methyl bromide, we still have a long way to go before we find the right alternatives.

UNDP, as the Executing Agency for the Montreal Protocol programme, works closely with the Ozone Unit, Department of Environment and the Department of Crop Protection, Ministry of Agriculture. The programme looks to build capacity of government staff, to build awareness of the public on matters related to the ozone and to find alternatives to use of methyl bromide in timber and soil treatment. The programme has disbursed more than USD\$1million from the period 1997 - 2006.

The investment programme disbursed more than USD26million to SMEs throughout Malaysia. These disbursement figures only cover those funds managed by UNDP. The world bank programme on halons and mobile air-condition has a much higher disbursement. Funding from the Multilateral Fund through the various executing agencies like UNDP, World Bank, UNEP and to a small extent UNIDO has facilitated the phase-out plan. These funds assisted the small industries comply with the Montreal Protocol, because without this assistance small industries would not be able to change their production and manufacturing ways as new equipment are very expensive, but with a little bit of help the small industries are able to make the change over and help Malaysia meet its schedule date. We thank the Multilateral

Fund for Implementation of the Montreal Protocol and UNDP, for your generosity. Malaysia is indeed grateful for your financial and technical assistance and support.

At this point, I would like to extend my most sincere gratitude to the key agencies and the industry people for their contribution and support in making the Montreal Protocol Programme a success in Malaysia and internationally.

Terima kasih.