WELCOMING SPEECH

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HILTON KUCHING,
SARAWAK
Thank you master of ceremony,

1. Yang Berhormat,  
   Dato Sri Michael Manyin Ak Jawong  
   Minister of Infrastructure Development and Communication  
   Sarawak

2. Yang Berbahagia,  
   Datuk Haji Mohlis bin Jaafar  
   Director-General, Polytechnic Studies Department  
   Ministry of Education Malaysia

3. Yang Berbahagia,  
   Prof. Dato’ Abang Abdullah Abang Ali  
   President, Malaysian Society for Engineering & Technology (MySET)

4. Yang Berbahagia,  
   Dato Haji Omar Osman  
   President of CUEPACS

5. Heads of Federal Government agencies  
   Heads Sarawak State Government agencies

6. Representatives from the corporate agencies and industries

7. Distinguished speakers and guests

8. Lecturers and students from Polytechnics & technical institutions  
   Members of the media,  
   Ladies and Gentlemen
Salam Sejahtera, Salam 1Malaysia and a very good morning to all of you.

*Yang Berhormat Dato Sri*, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the inaugural National Conference for Technicians & TVET semi-professionals, **SwakCREATE 2013**.

“Nurturing Professional Technicians”

That is the theme for today’s conference. The objectives of this conference are firstly, to provide a platform for discussion on professionalism amongst technicians. Secondly, to share information and experiences in innovation and professional developments at the international level. And finally, to create awareness on the vast career opportunities for technicians as professionals.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

For your information, there are two events being held simultaneously today. One is this conference and the other is the Innovation Fest exhibition at Politeknik Kuching Sarawak. The main objective of the Innovation Fest exhibition is to inculcate the innovative spirit among students to create innovative products in engineering. We have also brought in exhibition items from Majlis Rekabentuk Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur for the benefits of the local community.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Politeknik Kuching Sarawak or PKS, as an institution of higher learning has been nurturing technicians since producing its first batch of graduates in 1993. PKS provides technical vocational education and training in the areas of engineering, informational and communication technology, business studies and accountancy. PKS niche area is in the petrochemical engineering and industry. PKS has contributed to the workforce in the oil and gas industry in Sarawak and throughout Malaysia
by producing competent technical manpower in that particular industry.

Polytechnic Kuching Sarawak does not only produce semi-professional with academic knowledge but also nurtures them with the relevant technical skills and life-long learning skills in order to better equipped themselves in the challenging global marketplace. Among the strategies employed by PKS to create qualified technicians are the ongoing collaborations with government agencies and the corporate sectors especially in the field of engineering and accountancy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

PKS and Sunway College Kuching have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the 19th of March 2013 in Putrajaya. Through this collaboration, polytechnic students have the opportunity of completing the ACCA course in a shorter period of time.
PKS has conducted several collaboration initiatives with Swinburne Sarawak. Among the agreed collaboration is the POLY-Swinburne project. Under this arrangement, 20 students per year are offered to undergo the diploma-degree programme funded by Yayasan Sarawak. Students will do their diploma at PKS and degree at Swinburne Sarawak. Scholarship loan is given to qualified Bumiputera rural students in Sarawak. It is hoped that graduates from this project will contribute to meet the manpower requirements for the SCORE industries in Sarawak.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Polytechnic Kuching Sarawak has maintained good relationships with industry players that are related to the courses being offered at the polytechnic. For example, in the Diploma in Land Surveying programme, PKS has worked very closely together with the Sarawak Land Surveyor Board, Sarawak Land and Survey Department, and also the Mapping and Survey Department, Sarawak branch. This ensures that polytechnic students receive quality technical education and nurtures them to become professional technicians in the
workforce.

With the assistance from the three mentioned agencies, PKS has successfully set up a centre of excellence called GEOCAT. GEOCAT provides research and training in the areas of land surveying as well as providing services to the general public in related areas.

PKS has also partnered with Institute of Materials Malaysia (IMM). IMM is a professional body in the field of engineering and science material. The members consist of experts from the oil and gas industry. PKS together with IMM has successfully set up the PKS-IMM KUCHING CHAPTER at the polytechnic. IMM has given career talks to students in the field of oil and gas every semester since 2009.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Through technical education and training, PKS students have made significant achievements in their engineering fields. For instance, the PKS team won the Gold Medal in the 24th International Invention Innovation and Tech Exhibition (ITEX
2013) for GPS Pontoon product and ‘Highest Early Strength Concrete Cube Competition’ (HESCCC 2013) at UTHM, Johor.

For the ‘Build and Break’ Competition during the Innovation Festival 2012, at Politeknik Ungku Omar, Perak, PKS became the champion.

PKS also obtained first place for the best innovation project in the recent Sarawak Youth Day celebration 2013. The best innovation project is the Portable Painting Machine created by a group of mechanical engineering students and their lecturers. The project champion will participate in the World Innovation Forum, organized by ‘Yayasan Inovasi Malaysia’ which will be held at KLCC on 12 to 14 November 2013.

In short, through nurturing and collaborative efforts, technical students are able to apply their technical knowledge and skills to real world engineering situations. This in turn will shape themselves into professional technicians. The visit by Petronas staff and officials from INSTEP last week to discuss on possible
collaborations between Petronas and Politeknik Kuching Sarawak is itself a testimony of the much sought-after graduates from PKS.

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the organizing committee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors and partners for this conference especially, the Right Honourable Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, Chief Minister of Sarawak, the Sarawak State Secretary, The Malaysian Society for Engineering & Technology (MySET), the Workforce Development Unit of the Sarawak Chief Minister’s Office, Institute of Materials Malaysia (IMM), Majlis Rekabentuk Malaysia (MRM), University College of Technology Sarawak, Sarawak Land & Survey Department, Sacofa Sdn. Bhd. Sarawak, NAIM Holdings Berhad and Prestariang Berhad.

Finally, my sincere thanks to our guest of honour, the honourable Dato Sri Michael Manyin Ak Jawong for gracing the opening ceremony of this conference on behalf of the Chief Minister of Sarawak.
Special thanks to Yang Berbahagia Datuk Haji Mohlis bin Jaafar, Director-General of the Polytechnic Education Department and Prof. Dato’ Abang Abdullah Abang Ali, President of MySET for giving total support to PKS in organizing this conference. And not forgetting the Director of Politeknik Port Dickson, Mejar (K) Haji Mohd Kharir Bin Mohd Ibrahim and his staff for their contributions.

Thank you to our distinguished speakers, invited guests from the government and corporate sectors, all participants, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen for attending and participating in this inaugural National Conference for Technicians & TVET Semi-Professionals.

THANK YOU