

**OPENING REMARKS BY CO-CHAIR (BRUNEI DARUSSALAM)**  
**THE 12<sup>TH</sup> BRUNEI-SINGAPORE ANNUAL EXCHANGE VISITS (BSAEV)**  
**10 May 2018, Bandar Seri Begawan, Negara Brunei Darussalam**

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Bismillah Hir Rahman Nir Rahim.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, Salam Sejahtera and a very Good Morning.

Your Excellency, Mr Masagos Zulkifli bin Masagos Mohamad, the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, Republic of Singapore.

The BSJCE Co-Chairs, Dr Nor Imtihan binti Haji Abdul Razak, Acting Permanent Secretary (Administration and Finance), Ministry of Development, Brunei Darussalam and Mr Albert Chua, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Water Resources, Republic of Singapore.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Government of Negara Brunei Darussalam, let me begin with saying Selamat Datang and a very warm welcome to Your Excellency, Mr Masagos Zulkifli, and your delegation to Negara Brunei Darussalam and to the 12<sup>th</sup> Brunei-Singapore Annual Exchange of Visits (BSAEV).

I hope you and your delegation had a good rest after the dinner last night and perhaps managed to take a stroll around the Gadong area to enjoy the nightlife, which I believe has a different set of atmosphere compared to the Empire Hotel in Jerudong (because the hotel is near the night market).

I would also like to congratulate Your Excellency Mr Masagos Zulkifli, for your re-appointment as the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources.

Before we begin the meeting, I would like to take this opportunity to convey our congratulations to the Government of Singapore for taking the chairmanship of ASEAN this year. We look forward to working with Singapore and all ASEAN Member States (AMS) in supporting Singapore's ASEAN Chairmanship in strengthening ASEAN's Community- building efforts towards improved well-being, livelihood and welfare of the peoples of ASEAN in the challenges and rapidly changing world. Brunei Darussalam is also pleased to support the ASEAN Smart City Network (ASCN) Initiative for which it will provide opportunity for growth, innovation, capacity building and development.

As this is my first engagement in this bilateral cooperation, I look forward to forge a close working relationship with Your Excellency and your team in this bilateral partnership. I was informed that our officials of Brunei and Singapore have enjoyed the long-standing and substantive relations. I am sure that this partnership will continue and strengthen under your leadership.

The bilateral framework provides a solid foundation and an avenue for Brunei Darussalam and Singapore, to exchange information and experiences, particularly best practices and expertise in addressing the current and emerging environmental issues, that are common to both countries. I was made to understand that there have been many advances in the areas of cooperation through regular exchanges under the working group between Brunei Darussalam and Singapore, ranging from solid waste management, air quality management, water resource management, and environmental youth

exchange programme. These issues are of mutual interests and benefits to both Brunei Darussalam and Singapore.

We therefore recognised the importance of this bilateral cooperation, as it is also instrumental in our strive to enhance our environmental protection and conservation, and sustainable development, towards providing a high quality of life for our citizens, in line with our vision *Wawasan Brunei 2035*.

Brunei Darussalam will continue to face many challenges in doing so. Therefore, we would be delighted to learn from the experiences of Singapore on how we can continuously improve our strategies in managing these challenges into the future together towards a meaningful contribution to the protection and conservation of our environment, and the well-being of our people, be it at the domestic level, or at the regional and international fora.

In the same manner, we are also posed with the challenge of balancing between environmental considerations and the rapid pace of development. While we are increasing our efforts to integrate environmental aspects into the infrastructural development, the participation of the public and private sectors through various stakeholders' involvement like the PPP are equally important. This is where we see the bilateral cooperation as a means to further enhance the participation, not only at a G-to-G level, but also amongst the private sectors of both countries.

I therefore look forward to hear the adopted report discussed at 12<sup>th</sup> BSWG and 12<sup>th</sup> BSJCE to be presented later. On that note, with this remark, I look forward to a fruitful and positive discussion today and I am pleased to invite His Excellency, Mr Masagos Zulkifli to deliver your opening remarks.

Wabillahi Taufik Wal Hidayah Wassalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.