

A very good morning to Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Dato' Sri Haji Azam bin Baki, Your Excellencies, Dato' Seri- Dato' Seri, Dato' Dato', esteemed speakers, distinguished guests, delegates, ladies and gentlemen who are present with us here in this event to discuss a very important yet stubbornly resistant issue of corruption.

I would like to first thank Tan Sri Dato' Sri Haji Azam bin Baki, Chief Commissioner of MACC, to spare his valuable time with us today. Welcome to the 3rd Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum. It is never a better time for us to address the issue of corruption in Malaysia as the country has from 57th place in 2020 in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), dropped to 62nd place in 2021. It is very sad to note that Malaysia continues to slide down this dangerous slope and it may take us a long time to fix it. However, I believe our corruption is still under control.

I would also like to thank our international speakers, Mr. Nattachak, NACC Commissioner of Thailand, YTH Bapak Saut Situmorang, the Former Deputy Head, Indonesia Anti-Corruption Commission (KPK) and other international delegates. Thank you for joining us today. Please give them a big round of applause.

Ever since I first took over the International Strategy Institute in 2018, we have hosted numerous forums and summits, with the goal of stimulating intellectual discourse, promoting knowledge sharing and becoming a think tank for government. ISI is a non-for-profit platform for all. We are apolitical, as proven through the previous events.

We are now at the tail-end, hopefully, of the Covid-19 pandemic. If we are not careful, corruption will bloom in this desperate environment. Therefore policymakers and every member of society must remain vigilant to circumvent this problem. Education is always a must, and it is the onus of every parent to educate their children on the dangers of corruption. Only when we educate our children at a very young age, that is where we stand a chance to change the perception of millions of people in the next generation. So, it is the joint responsibility of the public and the enforcers to help curb the corruption rate in our country.

As such, it is important for us to work together in different sectors to find the most efficient way to deal with this deep-rooted problem to save our lovely country from further damage.

Corruption exists in environments where clear rules are absent, but even when those rules are in place, the lack of political willingness to implement such rules is the biggest contributing factor to the existence of corruption. Therefore, in order for us to stand a chance to fight against the corruption, all sectors of society need to work together, and most importantly, the agencies dedicated to fight against the corruption must be impartial and free from any political interference at any cost.

Only when those measures are put in place can we envision a more progressive country, in line with our bid to become a developed nation in years to come.

The 3rd Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum organised by ISI today is one such effort in bringing all these issues to light, and once and for all allow us to find the most efficient means of moving forward against corruption. I would like to wish the best of luck to all speakers and participants in ensuing the discussions and hope that at the end of the day, we will be able to find some important gems of ideas that can spur our fight against corruption.

Thank you.