

**CLOSING SPEECH BY  
PROFESSOR DR MOHAMED IBRAHIM ABDUL MUTALIB  
VICE CHANCELLOR OF UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI PETRONAS**

**5<sup>TH</sup> NORTHERN MALAYSIA MANDARIN DEBATE TOURNAMENT 2019**

**12 May 2019  
2.00 pm at Multipurpose Hall, CETaL, UTP**

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Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

Yang Berhormat Howard Lee Chuan How  
Perak Youth, Sports and Human Development EXCO

Yang Berhormat Teoh Yee Chern  
State Assemblyman of Astaka

Associate Professor Dr Nor Hisham Hamid  
Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS Deputy Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs  
and Alumni

Ho Jia Wei  
Project Director of the 5th Northern Malaysia Mandarin Debate Tournament  
2019

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, Selamat Sejahtera and a  
very good afternoon.

First and foremost, on behalf of the university, let me extend my warmest  
welcome to all our distinguished guests; Yang Berhormat Howard Lee  
Chuan How and Yang Berhormat Teoh Yee Chern for coming to support  
UTP's annual event, the 5th Northern Malaysia Mandarin Debate  
Tournament 2019. We truly appreciate all of your presence here. I am happy  
to note that this is our second year collaborating with Yang Berhormat

Howard Lee, Perak State Exco for Youth, Sports and Human Development, and for that, I thank you YB. I am sure that our students have enjoyed working alongside an inspiring leader and your dedicated team.

I am delighted to witness such a large turnout today! And I was informed that the participation throughout the five-days tournament was outstanding – 134 participants from 24 teams which comprises of 19 local universities and 4 international universities! Well done to the organising committee especially to the UTP Mandarin Debate Unit. Since 2013, the club has been spurring robust and inclusive discussion amongst its members and actively serves as a catalyst for reasoned public dialogue on both local and international key issues. This is an integral part of a rich, well-rounded student experience here in UTP, in line with our mission to produce well-rounded graduates who are creative and innovative with the potential to become leaders of industry and the nation.

Yang Berhormat, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Higher education plays a critical role in creating opportunities for individuals – it enriches their lives and impacts their wellbeing. It therefore, is imperative for universities to provide access to quality educational and learning experience for our students. We owe it to ourselves and to the nation to ensure that the education we provide will impact the lives of our students. A university is a place that promotes intellectual inquiry, and is home to academic freedom in thought, teaching and research.

We continue with our emphasis on strategies leading towards academic leadership, research stewardship, students' experience and operational excellence in our quest to become globally prominent. Just recently, UTP ranks 98th in the Times Higher Education (THE) Asia University Rankings 2019, climbed up 16 ranks from 114 places in 2018. UTP is ranked second in the nation after Universiti Malaya and we are also the first among private universities in Malaysia.

The establishment of UTP Centre for Excellence in Teaching & Learning (CETaL) is proof that UTP is serious in ensuring our graduates can overcome the 21st-century challenges, solve issues and problems relating to sustainable development as well as become agile and adaptable for the forthcoming Industry 4.0. The university has also maintained high employment rate of 90 per cent as our graduates are employed within six months of graduation. In UTP, we create and craft opportunities and experiences that will put our students' head and shoulders above their peers. More than a degree, our students graduate with confidence, a range of communication and behavioural skills, and abilities that will set them up for the rest of their life.

Yang Berhormat, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I end my speech, I like to promote on another major signature UTP event happening on 6 to 8 September – The Red Sonata Fiesta (RSF). UTP in collaboration with the Federation of Chinese Associations Malaysia or HuaZong, will organise this cultural event at Alor Setar, Kedah. I like to extend this invitation to all of you especially to Yang Berhormat Howard Lee,

Yang Berhormat Teoh Yee Chern to come and witness the appreciation of Chinese arts and cultures. There will be Chinese Orchestra Ensemble Competition, Dance Competition, Choir Competition and Chinese Cultural Concert Night. Just last year, RSF officially entered The Malaysia Book of Records for the 'Largest Participation in a Chinese Art and Music Championship' with 5,018 participants! Perhaps this year, we can make or break another record!

Before I end my speech, allow me to express my sincere gratitude to all the sponsors for making this tournament a reality. Thank you and well done to the organising committee for this year's amazing tournament. In closing, let me again, on behalf of UTP graciously thank our distinguished guests today; Yang Berhormat Howard Lee Chuan How and Yang Berhormat Teoh Yee Chern for all of your continued support towards the university. Your presence is indeed a great encouragement to us at the university, and we look forward to Yang Berhormat's support in our efforts to bring UTP to achieve global prominence.

Xiè xie and Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.