

**Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar**  
Chairman, Bursa Malaysia

**Board Members of the Malaysian Investor Relations Association (MIRA)**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. A very good afternoon to all. It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 11th Malaysian Investor Relations Awards 2021.
2. This year, we are granting 23 awards in eight categories. However, this event is beyond awards and trophies. More importantly, it gives us the opportunity to recognise and celebrate the achievements of the top performing PLCs for their significant contribution in investor relations.
3. On that note, I would like to commend MIRA for their steadfast dedication in continually enhancing best practices among IR professionals and companies listed on Bursa Malaysia.

*IR OFFICERS' ROLE ARE EVOLVING AND MORE CRITICAL THAN BEFORE*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. Considering how the COVID-19 pandemic has altered practically how companies operate, the theme of this year's awards is **"Reinvigorating Investor Relations in the New Normal"** is both apt and timely.
5. The theme brings to the forefront the need for a shift in the investor relations narrative post-pandemic. There must be a greater focus on stakeholder communication and engagement. There is also a need for PLCs to continuously work at restoring investor confidence, at this time of market uncertainty.
6. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift in the role of IR Officers. They are now expected to have a broader understanding of

the market and their respective industries, rather than focusing solely on communicating financial disclosures.

7. As the lockdown eases, investors will be interested to know about companies' recovery plans. IR Officers must therefore thoroughly understand, and be able to clearly articulate to investors, how their company plans to cope with the impact of COVID-19.
8. Additionally, investors will be eager to know how companies plan to adapt to the new normal. IR Officers must be prepared to share their companies' plans on the acceleration of digitalization, as well as potential business model changes that include ESG practises.

### *ESG CONSIDERATIONS IN THE NEW NORMAL*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. Speaking of ESG practices, there will be a greater emphasis on sustainability, as the pandemic has demonstrated the viability of the ESG agenda for both stakeholders and investors as we enter the new normal.
10. Over the years, investors and fund managers have become more aware of the value proposition of incorporating ESG considerations in asset allocation and recognised the potential in the growing client demand for value-based investing.
11. According to a recent Deutsche Bank and Global Sustainable Investment Alliance analysis, ESG-mandated assets are expected to reach USD160 trillion by 2036.
12. This would imply nearly 100 percent ESG integration into fund management. Most of these fund managers, institutional managers and asset owners are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment that have committed to invest in companies that embrace ESG or sustainability in their business activities.

13. Given these developments, we can expect that the ESG consideration will continue to move up the corporate agenda with stakeholders expecting effective management of ESG practices.
14. Therefore, IR practitioners must leverage this opportunity to convey to their management team the importance of a clear and well-defined ESG strategy, from an investor standpoint.
15. Rather than simply “box ticking” to meet ESG requirements, developing and implementing a comprehensive ESG strategy will keep the company well-positioned in times of crisis, reduce sustainability risk, and therefore increase a company's value over the long run.
16. As an exchange, Bursa Malaysia strongly encourages PLCs to embrace the underlying spirit of good corporate governance and sustainability.
17. We have devoted significant efforts to improve PLCs’ ESG-related practices and disclosures to realise this ambition.
18. First, we established a range of corporate governance and sustainability-related listing requirements.
19. Second, we issued the Sustainability Reporting as well as Corporate Governance Guides and Toolkits.
20. Finally, we conduct a broad range of advocacy programmes.
21. Ultimately, we hope these efforts lay the groundwork for PLCs to develop a strong ESG culture, elevating their status to regional leaders in this space.

## *ADOPTION OF LATEST TECHNOLOGY TRENDS IS A “MUST”*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

22. The use of digital distribution channels for company communications has become inevitable, and the IR industry is seeing an increase in demand for webcasts, podcasts and virtual events in place of the traditional shareholders' meeting.
23. In the coming years, IR Officers will be expected to understand how to use Big Data Analytics (Big Data) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to identify trends in investor behaviour and shape investor-targeting strategies.
24. Further, the use of Big Data and AI can assist IR Officers in understanding investor sentiment and trends, thereby allowing their management team to make more informed decisions and implement a strategy based on data, rather than intuitions.
25. Technology and digital adoption in IR practices is critical. Companies and IR officers that do not capitalise on this digital-first communication trend will risk falling behind their competitors.

## *APPLAUDING MIRA’S EFFORTS IN THE IR SPACE*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

26. MIRA was founded in 2007 by Bursa Malaysia as a professional association dedicated to developing and advancing the status and integrity of Investor Relations among our PLCs.
27. Over the years, MIRA has made great strides in cultivating and promoting corporate governance, transparency and enhancing greater shareholder value through stronger Investor Relations practices.
28. Despite physical restrictions imposed by the lockdowns, MIRA continues to provide timely education and engagement to meet the growing demand for investor relations. This has been accomplished by hosting

MIRA's own virtual dialogues and seminars, as well as through supporting forums and conferences hosted by its partners.

29. While I applaud MIRA's efforts thus far, I believe there is still room for improvement. I therefore urge MIRA to intensify its activities and engagement programmes to broaden its reach and membership numbers.
30. You will not be alone in this endeavour, as Bursa Malaysia stands firmly behind you and will lend our full support by providing a visible platform for IR practitioners to explore new initiatives and continue the exchange of knowledge, skills, and experience in investor relations.
31. And to all PLCs out there, I strongly encourage you to continue to support, engage and collaborate with MIRA – for the betterment of the IR profession and your respective industry.

## **CLOSING**

32. In closing, allow me to congratulate all the nominees and the winners of this year's MIRA Awards 2021.
33. To the winners, these awards are both an honour and a responsibility. Winners must uphold and respect the essence of these awards, which are more than just trophies.
34. To those who did not win, I look forward to honouring your accomplishments next year.
35. While we are here to celebrate the winners, today's awards ceremony also recognises the efforts and commitments of all CEOs, senior management, and IR Professionals for their unwavering dedication in bringing the IR industry into new heights and increasing value for our capital market.
36. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our supporting partner **KPMG Management & Risk Consulting Sdn Bhd** for their role in

validating the results. I would also like to thank MIRA for making today's Awards ceremony possible.

Thank you.