

Yang Berusaha, Datin Dr. Faridah Aryani Binti Md Yusof National Pharmacy Regulatory Agency and representing Dr Ramli Bin Zainal, the Senior Director Pharmacy Services Division.

Presidents and representatives of various professional and trade associations, MMA, MPS, APHM, MCPG, MOPI and PhAMA.

CEO's and staff of member companies.

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Directors and Organising Committee of the Malaysian Association of Pharmaceutical Suppliers (MAPS), welcome to MAPS 8th Anniversary Dinner tonight.

We are pleased to have Yang Berusaha Datin Dr. Faridah as our guest tonight, because it reminds us how MAPS was mooted. Several years ago many of us were overwhelmed by the pace of change on the regulatory front. For this reason a number of companies came together and MAPS was registered as an Association on the 17th November 2011. I could even say that regulatory matters were, at that time our only reason for forming MAPS. Since then, we have had a steep learning curve to climb, facilitated by the able leadership of our first President, the late En Radzmi Rahmat, to whom we are deeply indebted and miss.

As expected, in our earlier years, most of our engagements were driven by the need to meet the regulatory challenges developing then. For this we are fortunate that our Regulatory chair, Mr Yeo Ann Chin has been the strength of our regulatory team from the beginning and he still shows remarkable stamina to this day. Not forgetting that he is enabled by a very capable team working along with him.

However, as the years moved on, we find that more needs have emerged, while we have gained experience and knowledge to manage the regulatory challenges besetting us. We started addressing, apart from registration, matters such as procurement, competition, ethical marketing, alignment with national interests, etc. We continue to be counted in making our contribution to the vision of attaining Universal Health Care as we “Move Ahead” in managing a better tomorrow for a better Malaysia.

Malaysia is on the cusp of health systems reform, and MAPS would be party to the reforms. It is indeed heartening to know that the Ministry of Health has recognised the private sector as a partner as one of the guiding principles in reforming the healthcare sector.

As with all reforms, there will be some new learning curve to climb. As an association, we can be just a little more assured that we will not be on this journey alone, as we can rely on our shared learnings.

It is common knowledge that NCD's are on the rise, and we will be an aging population in just over 15 years from now. While changing one's lifestyle is the key to managing NCD's, the role of affordable medicines remains. For this just about every member of MAPS has made accessibility to affordable NCD related medicines, thereby contributing to the productive life of our nation.

We remain committed to helping the nation by making our prices affordable, in working with suppliers that provide the best prices. With the keen regulating role by the NPRA, the quality of the products available here is assured. Hence when the factors of Quality, safety and efficacy intersect with affordability, MAPS hopes to deliver value to our health care system. This is a step closer to equity for all.

As responsible corporate citizens, MAPS and her members share the goals that Malaysia endorses in the WHO Astana declaration.

Malaysia is right in wanting access to medicine for all. One of the aspects for access to medicine is affordability. Malaysia is also right in showing concern for prices of medicine. We continue to believe that the best method of achieving affordability is to facilitate competition. Competition challenges us to be most efficient.

Not only do our members strive to make products affordable, but our members also continually work towards making orphan drugs and non-commercially viable drugs available.

Many of our members have brought medicines which were once out of reach, now very affordable, with the Ministry of Health as one of the main drivers of its usage. In 2018 Malaysia became the first country in the World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific Region to be certified as having eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis. I would not be misplaced to say that the efforts of our members in bringing affordable anti-retroviral drugs played a supporting role alongside world class care for HIV patients by our physicians in this achievement.

We continue to be a main contact point for suppliers from various countries wishing to gain access to Malaysia. We have received delegations ranging from the West to the East, stretching from Belarus to South Korea. Members should take advantage of the opportunities that are presented by these delegations, as it is an efficient form of engagement with potential to grow your business while meeting the needs of our country for affordable and good medicines.

We are also looking forward to the pharmacy PRP liberalisation that enables pharmacy graduates to complete their registration requirements in an industrial setting. This enables us to get pharmacists who are industry-ready, by the time they achieve full registration. With this we can contribute to the growth of pharmacy manpower in a more varied job scope.

As we Move Ahead, there are many more activities that MAPS can participate in for the benefit of its members, and for the general benefit of the nation. I urge our members to continue lending us the support that you have given to us. However, we call on our members to give us more support by way of participation, as there are many talents within MAPS members that are required to help our nation achieve the health system reforms.

I would like to thank all of you for being together with us here tonight in celebrating our 8th anniversary Dinner. The Organising Committee has prepared an evening program of entertainment, so please, sit back, relax, and enjoy.

Some final words, I thank Mr Mathew John, Organising Chairman of this dinner and his small committee, as well as Dr Choe, the advisor.

I thank all companies that have contributed to the gifts for tonight. Many companies also contributed to the lucky draw gifts you see gifts at that corner on this stage. I will spare you the details of what they are. Don't be in a hurry to leave since the prize draws will be progressively more valuable toward the close of the evening.

A special thanks to Medispec who has been our gracious host for the MAPS secretariat since its inception.

I must also thank my company Chairman Mr Daniel Howe, who has been very generous in allowing me to take company time while attending to MAPS matters.

In closing, I am pleased to extend warm regards to Yang Berusaha Datin Dr. Faridah Aryani Binti Md Yusof and all the guests in celebrating with us tonight.

Thank you.

