

**SPEECH BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF MUIS HJ ABDUL RAZAK MARICAR
AT THE MOSQUE MANAGEMENT BOARD MEMBER INVESTITURE AT
MUIS AUDITORIUM ON SATURDAY, 7 JANUARY 2017**

Sohibusamahah Mufti, Dr Muhammad Fatris Bakaram

Muis Council Members, Mosque Veteran Leaders

Mosque Management Boards

Ladies and Gentlemen

Assalamualaikum Wr Wb

Alhamdulillah, with the grace of Allah SWT, 87 volunteers from 8 mosques of the North East Mosque Cluster will receive their appointment letters as members of the Mosque Management Boards today. I would like to express my appreciation to all of you who have come forward to volunteer your services as Mosque Management Board Members.

OUR MOSQUE MANAGEMENT BOARD (MMB) – OUR ASSETS

Dear Mosque leaders

1. Our mosque is an important institution. It is the “soul” of our community. While we are building more mosques and upgrading existing mosques to benefit the community, it is actually the mosque leaders, staff and volunteers who will make our mosques become transformational touch-points for our community. You are the pillars of our mosques and you play an important role to make our mosques vibrant nodes in the community.

BUILDING OUR HUMAN CAPITAL CAPABILITIES

2. It is for this reason Muis has since 2013 been investing heavily in capabilities development of our mosques leaders, volunteers and officers. Four years on and now in the second year of our fifth Muis 3 Year Plan (2016-2018), we will continue to further develop our mosque officers as well as build the capabilities of our mosque leaders and volunteers. This is to ensure that all our mosque staff and volunteers are equipped with the skills and competencies needed for them to work effectively with our community. Beyond skills and competencies our mosque leaders and staff must also take cognisance of the realities of our plural society.

3. Under the Muis' Mosque Capabilities Development Framework all members will be required to undergo the Administration of Mosque and Leadership Programme, or, in short, AMAL, to be equipped with the skills and knowledge for you to perform your responsibilities and work as a team as Mosque Management Board members. I understand in 2016, two batches totalling 100 mosque leaders from SEMC and NEMC completed their AMAL training, Alhamdulillah, all of you will also be attending this programme upon your appointment.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PROGRAM (SLP) – GRADUATION

4. Under the Strategic Leadership Programme, today we will also witness the graduation of 43 mosque leaders including 11 mosque officers who participated in the Strategic Leadership Programme (or SLP). This

programme is for Mosque Key Appointment Holders (or KAH) and key mosque staff to lead the mosque sector. They have gone through an intensive 7-and-half days of training including planning on a project utilising their knowledge in programme management and design thinking. I understand that a few projects have been piloted successfully and have tremendous potential. I look forward to the full implementation of these projects at the mosque clusters.

5. I would also like to encourage our graduates of SLP to reach out to as many families for them to be connected to the mosque. This will help us understand and assess their needs better and refer them to the resources available in the community and at national level. This will also ensure that no families are left behind. It is really painful to learn from news reports of families falling through the cracks and not knowing of the help that is available in the community. I believe I can count on a total of 68 of our mosque leaders who have benefitted from the SLP Programme since 2012, to think through this important aspect of our outreach work so that we can cast our net even wider and Insya Allah with that, more families can be assisted.

6. Allow me now to talk a little bit about the future – one which we are going to build together. We have had two mosque conventions in the past – Mosque Convention 2005 and Mosque Convention 2011 from which we developed and implemented many key strategies to better serve the community

7. Resulting from the two conventions, we have seen immense benefits from the implementation of the Enhanced Mosque Cluster. Moving forward,

the next phase will be to think and move as a sector for all our 70 mosques. Can our mosques work more closely for common growth and sustainability especially in the areas of human capital development, key programmes development and management, as well as long-term financial sustainability? Can there be more pooling of resources and deployment of integrated and resilient systems to serve the community more effectively. Can there be a one mosque sector to contribute more effectively to the development of the Muslim community.

COLLABORATIVE LEADERS AND ACTIVE PARTNER IN COMMUNITY BUILDING

8. Key to the success of the above idea is leadership. We hope to develop more collaborative leaders who are spiritualised and able to create the spirit of community conscientiousness.

9. We would also want each mosque to consider how it can be an active partner in community building. A mosque is a part of a local community that is unique with its own set of needs, issues, concerns and challenges. How can mosques play a more active role and leveraged on the networks established with community partners to better serve the Muslim community?

10. As we plan for all of these we must continue to ensure that our mosques programmes such ADIL, aLIVE remain relevant, contemporary and contextualised, we also must ensure that our teaching staff, including our asatizah who delivers our Islamic Learning programmes in our mosques are also competent and qualified.

MANDATORY ASATIZAH RECOGNITION SCHEME (MARS)

11. This is one of the core aims of the Asatizah Recognition Scheme, which has been made mandatory from 1 January 2017. The asatizah's abilities to guide the community amidst new and more complex challenges will be further enhanced through the Continuous Professional Development (CPE) courses which they are required to attend. This is not new. They have been attending such programmes for several years and have reaped the benefits of continuous upgrading in teaching Islam to the community. They have given their support to the ARS because the scheme contributes to their professionalism as religious teachers.

12. As mosque leaders, you need to ensure that anyone teaching Islam in any mosque programme must be registered under the ARS. This will provide our community with the continued assurance in the quality and credibility of religious teachers in mosques which are the main sources of Islamic knowledge in Singapore.

13. Beyond this, I would also like to urge our mosque leaders to support the asatizah's needs to attend the CPE training courses. This, I believe, would stand to benefit not only the mosque sector, but also the community by having asatizah who can effectively conduct quality and meaningful programmes for all.

CONCLUSION – STRENGTHENING OUR MOSQUE THROUGH COMPETENT AND ABLE LEADERS

14. As you can see, the road ahead is long and challenging. I am truly grateful to you for joining us in this journey to serve the community. It leaves me now to once again express my heartiest congratulations and my heartfelt thanks to the mosque leaders for your tireless contributions and sharing our vision to make our mosques transformational touch-points our community. Also, my congratulations also to the mosque leaders who will be receiving their Certificate of Achievement for the Strategic Leadership Programme.

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me now to say a few words in Malay.

Sidang pemimpin masjid sekalian,

1. Sebentar lagi kita akan menyaksikan perlantikan seramai 87 relawan yang bakal memimpin 8 buah masjid di Kelompok Timur Laut sebagai anggota Lembaga Pentadbir Masjid (LPM). Saya ucapkan tahniah kepada semua yang tampil secara rela hati berkhidmat kepada masyarakat Islam Singapura selama tempoh tiga tahun yang akan datang. Ia suatu tanggungjawab yang besar dan mulia. Dan anda semua telah memberikan komitmen untuk memikul tanggungjawab tersebut sekaligus memakmurkan Rumah Allah.

2. Hari ini juga seramai 43 pemimpin masjid akan menerima sijil tamat kursus Program Kepimpinan Strategik (atau SLP). Mereka merupakan dari kumpulan 2 and 3 dalam program ini. Alhamdulillah, beberapa projek berpotensi tinggi untuk dilaksanakan telah dikenal pasti. Saya teruja untuk melihat projek ini berjalan, Insya Allah.

Sidang hadirin,

3. Program SLP ini merupakan sebahagian dari usaha Muis untuk mempertingkatkan kemahiran warga masjid. Ia merupakan salah sebuah bidang yang dikenal pasti oleh Konvensyen Masjid 2005 dan juga 2011. Tumpuan ini akan diteruskan di tahun-tahun akan datang. Namun kita juga akan bertemu lagi di Konvensyen Masjid 2018, untuk berbincang dan mencoret langkah-langkah yang perlu diorak demi terus membawa masyarakat maju ke hadapan di tengah cabaran yang pasti mendatang.

4. Untuk ini kita akan memerlukan pimpinan masjid yang penuh berwawasan. Kita juga membayangkan masjid yang bukan sahaja bergerak sebagai sebuah kelompok, malah sebuah sebuah sektor. Untuk ini kita pasti akan membentuk masjid yang ramah mesra bekerjasama dan bergotong royong dengan masyarakat dan juga rakan-rakan kerja seperti badan-badan akar umbi, pertubuhan-pertubuhan kebajikan serta kumpulan-kumpulan belia. Begitulah sedikit bayangan tentang apa yang kita mungkin bincangkan di MC18 kelak.

5. Izinkan saya kini menyebut sedikit tentang sebuah perkara yang amat penting di masa kini. Masjid merupakan institusi yang amat penting untuk menyampaikan ilmu yang tepat dan sesuai kepada masyarakat. Maka dengan itu, baru-baru ini Muis telah menyemak dan memperhalusi Skim Pengiktirahan Asatizah (ARS). Bermula 1 Jan 2017 ini, skim in akan dijadikan mandatori kepada semua asatizah yang berkhidmat atau menyampaikan program di masjid-masjid kita. Ini termasuk kuliah harian, aLIVE, ADIL dan sebagainya. Saya berharap para pemimpin masjid serta asatizah dapat bekerjasama dalam isu ini bagi memastikan jemaah serta anak anak kita mendapat ilmu yang tepat dan sesuai dengan konteks masa kini.

6. Akhir sekali saya menyeru kepada semua terus berkhidmat dengan penuh kesungguhan serta iltizam yang tinggi serta semangat ikhlas demi menjadikan masjid sebagai pusat mendapatkan khidmat dan rujukan kepada masyarakat kita. Saya yakin kita mampu melakukannya, Insya Allah!

Wabillahitaufiq Walhidayah, Wassalamualaikm Wr Wbt.