



## **SPEECH TEXT**

**YB DATO' SRI HAJAH NANCY BINTI SHUKRI  
MINISTER OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

## **PROGRAM**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN'S  
INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP (ICEWIL)**

## **LOCATION / DATE / TIME**

**ZENITH HOTEL, PUTRAJAYA  
24 APRIL 2025 (THURSDAY)  
4.00PM**

*Updated 23 April 2025*

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

**(SALUTATION LIST)**  
**TO BE ATTACHED**

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,  
Salam Sejahtera, Salam Malaysia Madani.

1. It is truly an honour to be here with all of you today, at a gathering that celebrates not just women—but the boundless power of inclusive leadership. We are here not just to speak of change, but to be the change. This is our moment—to chart new horizons for leadership that leaves no woman behind.

2. In the spirit of Malaysia MADANI, we are building a nation rooted in compassion, inclusivity, and sustainability. This vision demands that women are not only included, but placed at the centre of progress—empowered to lead, shape, and transform.
3. That is why, on March 8th this year—International Women’s Day—we launched the National Women Policy (NWP) and the Women Development Action Plan (WDAP) 2025–2030.

With the theme "*Empowering Women, Strengthening the Nation*", this policy maps out a clear, ambitious path forward: through four pillars—economy, leadership, security, and wellbeing.

4. In leadership alone, we are implementing 5 strategies, 11 programmes and 27 activities aimed at growing the number of women in decision-making roles. Our target is clear: **30% representation** across all sectors. Not as a ceiling, but as a floor for progress.

5. We've made important progress—**39.3% of top public sector roles are now held by women**, and **women's representation on the boards of the top 100 Public Listed Companies has surpassed the 30% target**, reaching 32.2%. These are milestones worth celebrating. But despite making up 49% of the population, women still account for only 13.36% of Members of Parliament. This gap reminds us that while we're moving in the right direction, there is still much more to be done—and we must do it together.

## **THE CASE FOR INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP**

6. Why inclusive leadership? Because diversity is not a buzzword—it is a strength. When we bring women's perspectives to the table, we improve decisions, we inspire innovation, and we make institutions stronger and more resilient.
7. And the data backs this up—when women lead, the whole world flourishes. Studies from the UN, World Bank and

McKinsey have shown that female leadership contributes to better outcomes in healthcare, education, corporate governance, and even climate action. **Countries with higher women's representation in parliament tend to allocate more resources to public health and education.** In the private sector, companies with more women in leadership roles are more profitable and more innovative. Simply put—when women thrive, societies thrive.

8. An inclusive leader values people for who they are—not just what they can do. It's about removing barriers, creating space for diverse voices, and leading with empathy and equity. But inclusion must also begin with us. As women, we must lift as we climb—opening doors, sharing knowledge, and championing one another. Because progress that is not shared, cannot be sustained.

9. True leadership is not about being the only woman at the table—it is about creating more seats, building longer tables, and ensuring every woman has a voice that's heard and respected.

## **NEXT STEPS IN PROGRESSIVE AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP**

10. Ladies and gentlemen, we know the challenges. But we also know the solutions. Equal pay for equal work. Flexible workplaces. Fair parental leave. Career pipelines for women in STEM, governance, entrepreneurship. We need to put policies into practice—and practice them with heart.

11. But policy alone is not enough. We must change mindsets. Challenge the stereotypes. Celebrate women not just in NGOs or civil service—but in boardrooms, labs, town halls, and even the digital space.
12. Mentorship, networking, and visible role models are key. When girls see women lead, they learn they can too. So let us be intentional in creating a culture of confidence, solidarity, and sisterhood.

13. That is why our Ministry introduced ***PERANTIS***, a **leadership and mentorship programme launched in 2024 to bridge the gap between aspiring young women leaders and established role models**. In its first year, PERANTIS successfully matched 1,247 participants with 25 prominent women leaders across ten critical fields—including leadership, politics, economics, social development, technology, law, safety, wellbeing, education, and health.

14. **For 2025**, we are expanding the programme significantly, with a **RM5 million investment, 100 mentors, and 5,000 participants**. PERANTIS is not just about training—it is about building networks, confidence, and real opportunities for Malaysia's future women leaders.

## **ICEWIL – A PLATFORM FOR ACTION**

15. Today's International Conference on Empowering Women's Inclusive Leadership—ICEWIL—is more than a conference. It is a call to action.

16. Here, we explore what it really means to empower women—not as a concept, but as a process of giving women the tools, the voice, and the agency to shape their own destinies. Empowering women is a verb. It's what we do—together.
17. This is why ICEWIL's sub-themes are so vital—covering the care economy, safety, media representation, digital literacy, intersectionality, and solidarity. These are not side issues. They are the very foundation of women's empowerment.

18. Let us also not forget that unpaid care work is not just a personal issue—it's an economic one. If we want women to thrive in leadership, we must also support them at home and in society.
19. And in this digital era, how women are portrayed in the media matters. Representation shapes perception. We must flood the public space with real, diverse, and empowering narratives of women leading change.

20. From grassroots movements to global institutions, women have always been change-makers. We lead with empathy. We lead with strength. And above all, we lead with purpose.
21. Whether in tech innovation, public service, entrepreneurship or advocacy—women are making bold moves. Not just to change the narrative, but to write new ones.

## **A CALL TO ACTION**

22. As we stand at this turning point, I urge each of us—leaders, policymakers, changemakers—to be bold. Let us empower women not just to participate, but to lead. By empowering women, we empower entire communities, economies, and nations. The time for action is now.

23. Let us invest in our girls, support our women, and redesign systems that empower all of us. Most importantly, let us create communities of women who cheer each other on, and lift each other up. Together, we can chart new horizons. And together, we will ensure that no woman is left behind.

Thank you.

Wabillahi taufiq walhidayah

Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

**YB DATO' SRI HAJAH NANCY BINTI SHUKRI**  
**Minister of Women, Family & Community Development**  
**24 April 2025**