



**WELCOMING SPEECH  
LUNCHEON HOSTED BY  
YM RAJA DATIN SERI DATO' HAJAH SALBIAH  
TENGGU NUJUMUDIN  
SPOUSE OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF MALAYSIA**

**KL TOWER, KUALA LUMPUR  
10 JULY 2025**

**Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.**

**Madam Pengiran Datin Hajah Salwana binti Pengiran Haji Ibrahim,  
Spouse of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam,**

**Madam Marlyn Maisarah,  
Spouse of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia,  
Madam Vadsana Phomvihane (Vad-sa-na Pom-vi-han)  
Spouse of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic  
Republic,**

**Madam Kokan Sangiampongsa,  
Spouse of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand,**

**Madam Vu Thi Bich Ngoc (Bik Ngok),  
Spouse of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the  
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam,**

**Madam Jahan Ara Siddique,  
Spouse of the Adviser for Foreign Affairs of the Interim Government of the  
People's Republic of Bangladesh,**

**Your Excellencies,  
Spouses of Foreign Ministers,**

**Ladies,  
Good afternoon and Selamat Datang.**

- 1. It's a pleasure to welcome all of you to Kuala Lumpur.**
- 2. Our last lunch together took place on the island of Langkawi in January, but some of you here are new attendees.**
- 3. To those of you who are joining us for the first time, welcome, and we are truly happy to have you with us.**
- 4. It is my pleasure, today, to host a room full of women from around the world. Women who represent their countries, their cultures, their families, and their communities, with grace and strength.**
- 5. All of us are different, but with the same visionary purpose of honouring the bonds that bring us together.**
- 6. In a world that is becoming increasingly divided, the women who represent ASEAN, and our Dialogue Partners, choose connection and togetherness. That is why our being here matters.**
- 7. You have been in Kuala Lumpur for a couple of days now, so you know what the city is like. It's an endless mix of the old and the new.**
- 8. And in the same way that KL honours its past while aspiring for the future, we are here in the name of keeping heritage alive in our efforts for a brighter tomorrow.**
- 9. We saw this, during our recent visit to the Royal Selangor Centre. Pewter might not seem like the obvious symbol of progress. But when we watch those artisans at work, when we hear their stories, we realise it's not just about the metal.**

- 10. What we saw was craft, and the continuation of a proud legacy. We saw women building something with their hands, and shaping their own futures, one beautiful creation at a time.**
- 11. The fact that Royal Selangor is empowering women, embracing sustainability, and keeping heritage alive, is what embodies the spirit of ASEAN, and especially of Malaysia's chairmanship of ASEAN, which grounds itself in the pursuit of inclusivity and sustainability.**
- 12. What we'd like to do is to bring everyone closer through these experiences.**
- 13. As the spouse of a Foreign Minister, I know how these trips go. We're always moving, squeezing in conversations between flights, receptions, and meetings.**
- 14. So I wanted to give us a moment to slow down, and take it all in. Where better to do this than the KL Tower, one of the tallest towers in the world?**
- 15. With a view like the one we've had here, it reminds us to be present in the moment, and to think about the societies we represent.**
- 16. And what better way to connect than over food? In every household, from Hanoi to Manila, from Dhaka to Jakarta, food is how we show love. It's how we welcome people in, and how we tell them the stories of our lives.**
- 17. Every woman in this room has her own story. So today, let this be our moment.**
- 18. Today's menu features a selection of Malaysian flavours and ingredients. Our Executive Sous Chef will share the stories behind each dish.**
- 19. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank BKTL, and the dedicated team from the Ministry of Defence, for the warm cooperation they have extended to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in organising this event.**

- 20.        So, ladies, I encourage you to relax, enjoy, and let the meal tell its own story.**

**Thank you.**