



OPENING SPEECH

**YB DATO SRI ALEXANDER NANTA LINGGI
MINISTER OF WORKS**

FOR

**1ST MALAYSIAN REGIONAL GEOTECHNICAL
ENGINEERING CONFERENCE
(MRGEC 2026)**

THEME

"RESILIENT GROUND, SUSTAINABLE FUTURE"

17 JUNE 2026 | WEDNESDAY | 10.00 A.M.

IMPERIAL HOTEL, KUCHING, SARAWAK

SALUTATION

<<<<< *Disediakan berasingan oleh Urus Setia* >>>>>

INTRODUCTION

A very good morning and a warm *Selamat Datang* to all of you,

Salam Malaysia MADANI, Salam Segulai Sejalai.

1. First and foremost, I am delighted to be here in the beautiful city of Kuching for the **1st Malaysian Regional Geotechnical Engineering Conference (MRGEC 2026)**.
2. I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to the organizers, Public Works Department (PWD) Malaysia, PWD Sabah and PWD Sarawak for their strategic synergy in initiating this inaugural regional platform.
3. The presence of approximately 500 participants today is a clear testament to our collective commitment in elevating the standards of geotechnical engineering in Malaysia.

GEOTECHNICAL IMPORTANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY

4. The theme “*Resilient Ground, Sustainable Future*” profoundly reflects our responsibility to ensure that every aspect of our national infrastructure development is built upon a foundation that is both solid and enduring.
5. In Malaysia and across Southeast Asia, we face unique geological challenges, from the complexities of weathered tropical soil to the increasing frequency of extreme weather events driven by climate change.
6. Geotechnical failures, such as landslides, not only incur massive restoration costs but, more importantly, jeopardise public safety. The well-being of the *Rakyat* remains the top priority of the Ministry of Works.

EMPOWERING TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. We have witnessed the successful application of advanced techniques in major national projects. For instance, the West Coast

Expressway (WCE) successfully implemented Prefabricated Vertical Drains (PVDs), while the Pan Borneo Highway in Sarawak adopted innovative solutions such as Lightweight Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) fills and pile-supported embankments to overcome challenges posed by deep peat deposits.

8. In line with the Construction 4.0 Strategic Plan and the MyDIGITAL initiative, JKR is pioneering the use of drone surveys, Building Information Modelling (BIM) and digital-twin model for real-time monitoring. These tools are essential for smarter decision-making and ensuring infrastructure resilience against emerging risks as climate change and regional seismic activities.
9. I am pleased to note that this conference features robust Technical Workshops and Parallel Sessions covering critical areas such as Slope Stability, Foundation and Ground Improvement. I encourage all delegates to take full advantage of this opportunity to exchange expertise, also explore "green" and innovative engineering solutions.

STRATEGIC COLLABORATION AND INDUSTRY PARTNERS

10. I would also like to place on record my deepest appreciation to the organizing committee for their tireless efforts in bringing this inaugural edition to life. To our strategic partners and exhibitors who have contributed to the success of the 50 exhibition booths, thank you for your commitment and investment in the future of Malaysian engineering.

11. The active involvement of the private sector and professional bodies such as **Technological Association Malaysia (TAM)**, the **Board of Technologists Malaysia (MBOT)** and the **Institution of Engineers Malaysia (IEM)** remains a vital component of our national infrastructure development ecosystem.

12. In the spirit of "*Segulai Sejalai*" let us continue to move forward in unison to ensure that the quality of our technical service delivery consistently meets the highest standards for the well-being of the *Rakyat*.

CLOSING AND OFFICIATING

Ladies and gentlemen,

13. In closing, I would once again like to congratulate the organizing committee, as well as participants. Your presence here confirms that our industry is ready to evolve and embrace future challenges. May the knowledge and insights shared over these three days translate into meaningful and effective actions on the ground.

14. On that note, it gives me great pleasure to **OFFICIALLY DECLARE THE 1ST MALAYSIAN REGIONAL GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERING CONFERENCE (MRGEC 2026) OPEN.**

Thank you.