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MACEOS: EXHIBITIONS KEY TO JUMPSTART MALAYSIA'S ECONOMY

*Global Exhibitions Day highlights the important role of exhibitions
as a contributor to the local economy and stimulus for international trade*

Kuala Lumpur, Wednesday, 3 June 2020: As the world commemorates Global Exhibitions Day today, the Malaysian Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers (MACEOS) joins the celebrations in full support of exhibitions being the key to lifting economies out of the COVID-19 slump.

Its president, Dato' Vincent Lim says: "The exhibitions sector supports partnerships and business growth across all industries and economies. It is the fastest way for businesses to connect with each other on a global marketplace and rebuild the economy again."

Lim says: "At a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has put the brakes on national economies and international trading activities for several months, there is nothing quicker to get us out of this slump than by supporting domestic and international exhibitions and business events again."

Exhibitions and their positive impacts

Face-to-face exhibitions have the potential to connect, reconnect, start, and rebuild communities and economies. Globally last year, trade exhibitions recorded US\$325 billion in output (business sales), contributed US\$198 billion to the GDP, and provided 3.2 million people with jobs.

Lim says that the dynamic landscape of exhibitions make them effective platforms to revive the marketplace, give hope and optimism for businesses to rebuild themselves, and provide job opportunities as it sustains an entire ecosystem of business events support services.

Exhibitions, and the larger part of the business events industry, positively impact many industries, namely tourism, food and beverages, retail, venue and other rental services, accommodation, transportation, and more. Events such as these encourage innovation, boost productivity, attract talents, spark partnerships and collaborations, and create new opportunities for many businesses.

Advocating for business events SOPs in the new norm

Since the Movement Control Order (MCO) was imposed in Malaysia, MACEOS has been actively playing its role within larger discussions held among government ministries and agencies involved in the pandemic control.

It shared information regarding issues industry players were struggling with, and forwarded recommendations for the economic stimulus inputs. Support for industry players was also provided in the form of webinars and knowledge-sharing on how to cope during the pandemic.

MACEOS also made a recommendation to the government regarding best industry practices for the new norm.

Lim explains: "Led by the Malaysia Convention and Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB), MACEOS collaborated with the Business Events Council Malaysia (BECM), consulted with thought leaders in the industry, compiled global industry best practices, and developed a comprehensive framework addressing the standard operating procedures (SOP) for Malaysia's business events industry."

"We understand that we need to rebuild businesses and the industry in a safe way to regain public confidence. The business events SOP framework is a piece of document that our industry players can put into practice to strengthen business events safety, protect public health, and instil confidence in everyone," he adds.

The document has been well received by the respective government ministries, and Lim hopes that it will help facilitate the re-opening of the business events industry very soon.

"So many of our small and medium industry players have been affected by COVID-19. Exhibitions -- and business events -- need to re-open soon so we can all support the rebuilding of the local economy, the industry, and our national economy," Lim says.

Malaysia's business events industry has been growing strong in the past few years. In 2019, a total of 1,025 business events were organised compared to 1,014 business events reported in the previous year. These business events attracted over 540,000 international business travellers to Malaysia for the purpose of attending meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions. It contributed RM3.9 billion in direct expenditure to the country and generated RM9.2 billion in economic impact.

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ABOUT MACEOS - THE VOICE OF MALAYSIA'S BUSINESS EVENTS INDUSTRY

Back in 1990 when Business Tourism was merely recognised by many, the Malaysian Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers (MACEOS) was incepted with the objective of developing and raising the standards of the Business Events (BE) industry nationwide. The Association is the mandated representatives of its members who hail from various business establishments including professional exhibition and conference organisers, venue providers, destination management and event management companies to other affiliated members include stand contractors, AV, logistics, airlines, travel & tours and more.

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