



## MEDIA RELEASE

### MALAYSIAN DELEGATION PROMOTES VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR 2014 AT ITB BERLIN

**BERLIN, 6 March 2013:** Malaysian delegation led by the Director General of Tourism Malaysia Dato' Mirza Mohammad Taiyab strongly promoted the country's fourth Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) and its comprehensive promotional activities at the 47<sup>th</sup> ITB Berlin, which started today at Messe Berlin, Germany.

The 5-day annual travel trade show offers Malaysia an excellent platform to market and create awareness of VMY 2014 and its promotional campaign this year to the travel trade fraternity and media in Germany and Europe.

The VMY 2014 promotional campaign was launched last month by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, which officially kicked off a series of year-long special events and activities leading to Visit Malaysia Year 2014, with the theme "Celebrating 1Malaysia Truly Asia".

Malaysia's presence at ITB 2013 marks the country's 39<sup>th</sup> year of participation in the event, which clearly shows its continued interest and focus on the German and European markets.

The Malaysian delegation comprises 91 participants from 48 organisations that include 24 hotels and resorts, 17 tour operators, the country's national carrier Malaysia Airlines (MAS), the Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA), as well as representatives from the state governments namely the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA), the State Economic Planning Unit Perlis, the Johor Tourism Department, Sabah Tourism Board and Sarawak Tourism Board.

The Malaysia Pavilion (Booth No. 121, Hall 26) was officially opened today by the Malaysian Ambassador to Germany H.E. Dato' Ibrahim Abdullah. It is set to showcase the best of travel products, destinations and services in Malaysia.

Dato' Ibrahim will also be hosting a Malaysia Evening on 7 March at Steingenberg Hotel, Berlin. The dinner aims to show Malaysia's appreciation to the German and international travel trade fraternity, as well as members of the media, for their continued support to the country's tourism promotional efforts. In addition, it also intends to give all the guests a glimpse of what awaits them in Malaysia.

During ITB, Dato' Mirza is scheduled to attend several travel trade meetings with tour operators, as well as media interviews.

As in previous years, ITB offers Malaysian delegation the opportunity to network and explore areas of cooperation with industry players in Germany and Europe. It also provides the country a great platform to promote the diversity of its tourism attractions and services, as well as to share its latest tourism development, products and services.

With the presence of international media, ITB also helps generate more publicity for Malaysia and further strengthen the presence of the country as a top-of-mind holiday destination.

In addition, Tourism Malaysia also seeks to promote Malaysia as a business tourism destination, in line with the Malaysia Tourism Transformation Plan 2020, where the country aims to attract a larger share of high yield travellers to achieve its target of 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion (about 40 billion EURO) in receipts by the year 2020.

Malaysia is a nation of endless possibilities. The country is richly rooted in multi-cultural heritage and authenticity yet it is able to offer visitors the best of contemporary and cosmopolitan experiences. It has progressive urban offerings of any global cosmopolitan city, besides charming small towns and stunning natural beauty.

Malaysia is where the best of Asia comes alive, providing compelling advantages for tourism industry businesses. The country provides tax incentives and up to 100 percent foreign ownership for tourism projects including ecotourism, agro-tourism, hotel businesses, and theme parks. To date, Malaysia has welcomed many international tourism projects such as Legoland, Hard Rock Café Melaka, and Grand Hyatt Kuala Lumpur.

A string of accolades and international recognitions showered on Malaysia by the global tourism fraternity over the past couple of months bear testimony to the outstanding achievements of the country's tourism industry.

Last year, Malaysia's capital city Kuala Lumpur was listed as the fourth best shopping city in the world by CNN and the second best in Asia Pacific by Globe Shopper Index. The country was also rated as the 10<sup>th</sup> world's friendliest nation by Forbes Online and third among the top retirement havens in the world, based on Internationalliving.com's annual global retirement index 2013.

Last year, tourist arrivals to Malaysia continued to enjoy an upward trend, reaching 25 million, which was an increase of 1.3% compared to the previous year.

A total of 131,277 German tourists visited Malaysia in 2012, registering a 5.3% growth compared to 2011. Correspondingly, receipts from German tourists had also increased last year by 7.7% to the tune of RM397 million (about 95 million EURO).

This year, Malaysia has set a target to attract 145,000 German tourists to the country.

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