



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **MALAYSIA TOURISM MINISTER RECEIVES PATA HONORARY LIFE MEMBER AWARD 2012**

**KUALA LUMPUR, 21 April 2012:** The Tourism Minister of Malaysia, the Hon. Dato' Sri Dr. Ng Yen Yen, received the PATA Honorary Life Member Award today for her outstanding achievements and contributions to the tourism industry.

The award was presented to her by PATA Chairman, Hiran Cooray, witnessed by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Hon. Tan Sri Dato' Hj. Muhyiddin Mohd. Yassin, during the Opening Ceremony of the 2012 PATA Annual Conference at the Royale Chulan Hotel, Kuala Lumpur.

Indeed, Dato' Sri Dr. Ng is no stranger to the tourism industry. Her entrance into tourism began as the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Malaysia, from 1999 to 2003, and later as the Minister of Tourism from 2009 until today.

Throughout her combined seven years of leadership in tourism, she has led the industry with great passion and commitment, injecting innovative ideas and creativity as well as her own brand of infectious enthusiasm to gain the partnership of members to drive the industry forward.

During her stewardship as Tourism Minister, Malaysia's tourism performance reached great heights. It saw an increase of tourist arrivals from 23.6 million tourists in 2009 to 24.7 million in 2011, and correspondingly, receipts surged from RM53.4 billion (USD17.8 billion) in 2009 to RM58.3 billion (USD19.4 billion).

It was also during her time at the tourism helm that Malaysia secured the 9<sup>th</sup> spot as most visited country in the world by UNWTO for three years in a row, from 2009 to 2011, an achievement that was made even more significant due to the challenges plaguing the global tourism industry during those years.

A medical officer by profession, her determination, affable character and boundless energy have resulted in many significant milestones in tourism. She initiated the "1Malaysia Green, 1Malaysia Clean" campaign to promote conservation awareness; advocated for the abolishment of import duties to brand Malaysia as a duty free destination; re-invigorated the homestay programme to encourage tourism participation and bring benefit to rural communities; encouraged the creation and development of luxury tourism; explored new geographical tourism markets and niche tourism products.

She was instrumental in leveraging Malaysia as a luxury tourism destination, which included a focus on parks and gardens tourism, an initiative that saw Malaysia receiving the gold awards for its garden concept at the prestigious RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London for two years in a row (2010 and 2011).

Much respected among her peers in the tourism industry, both locally and internationally, Dato' Sri Dr. Ng feels that her best work is yet to come. Through the Malaysian Tourism Transformation Plan she created, she has much grand plans for Malaysia's tourism industry, that is to achieve 36 million tourists and RM168 billion (USD56 billion) in receipts by 2020.

For her great achievements and accomplishments in tourism, today and the future, the Hon. Dato' Sri Dr. Ng Yen Yen truly deserves to receive this year's PATA Honorary Life Member Award.

At the 2012 PATA Annual Conference, Malaysia also received three PATA Gold Awards, which is a recognition of excellence, innovation, and the best tourism standards in Asia Pacific's travel and tourism industry.

Two of the awards were won by Tourism Malaysia in the categories of Marketing - Primary Government Destination for its 'A Million Experiences to Share' campaign, and Marketing Media - Travel Poster for its posters depicting the Orang Utan, Diving, Mount Kinabalu, Homestay and Siti Khadijah Market.

The third award was won by the Frangipani Langkawi Resort & Spa in the category 'Environment - Educational Programme' for the management of its waste water system.

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