



SPEECH TEXT

**YB DATO' SRI HAJAH NANCY BINTI SHUKRI
MINISTER OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

PROGRAM

ROTARY DISTRICT CONFERENCE 2026

LOCATION / DATE / TIME

**THE VERTICAL, CONNEXION CONFERENCE & EVENT CENTRE (CCEC)
23 MAY 2026 (SATURDAY)
9.00AM**

Updated 22 May 2026

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

(SALUTASI)

SALUTATIONS TO BE ATTACHED

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,

- 1. It is truly an honour to be here today at DisCon26, a conference that brings together leaders, professionals, volunteers and changemakers united by a common purpose: to serve humanity and strengthen communities. Your theme, “Unite for Good,” is more than a slogan. It is a call to action. Because the challenges we face today are becoming increasingly complex, interconnected and deeply human.**

- 2. Behind every statistic is a real person. A mother trying to rebuild her life after abandonment. A child silently struggling with autism while parents search for support they cannot afford. These are not distant stories. These are realities faced by many Malaysians every single day. At the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, we witness these realities closely.**

- 3. As of recent national records, Malaysia has close to one million single mothers and single women who serve as heads of their households, many carrying the immense “double burden” of being both primary caregivers and sole breadwinners for their families. Yet, only a fraction are formally registered within support systems. Many continue to struggle quietly, unseen and unsupported.**

- 4. This is why community-driven empowerment initiatives are so important. I am encouraged to see programmes such as SuperMum by the Rotary Club of Petaling Jaya, which has been running consistently for the past 13 years and has benefited hundreds of single mothers through skills training, entrepreneurship exposure and community support.**

- 5. At the Ministry, we complement this through the KasihNITa Programme — designed to build the capacity of single mothers through legal skills, financial and management literacy, and psychosocial development. In 2025 alone, nearly 1,900 single mothers participated across six zones nationwide, and 90 legal aid cases were successfully managed, helping women claim and defend their rights.**

6. At the same time, our Department of Social Welfare continues to record rising demand for psychosocial support, child protection interventions, elderly care services, and assistance for persons with disabilities. The Ministry currently supports over 839,535 registered persons with disabilities nationwide, with autism among the fastest-growing developmental conditions being identified among children. And this is where society must evolve — not merely in sympathy, but in systems, accessibility and inclusion.

- 7. Not long ago, I met a mother during a community engagement programme who shared her journey raising a child with autism. She told me something I will never forget. She said: “Minister, the hardest part is not the diagnosis. The hardest part is feeling alone.”**

- 8. She felt alone not because she lacked love for her child. But alone because she lacked support, understanding, accessible facilities, trained educators, and a community prepared to embrace her family without judgment. That single conversation reminded me that inclusion is not built through policy documents alone. Inclusion is built when communities decide that no family should struggle in isolation.**

9. **This is why partnerships with organisations such as Rotary are so important. I am deeply encouraged by Rotary’s work through the District Action Group on Autism — including multisensory therapy classrooms, specialised teacher training, awareness initiatives and community outreach programmes that have already impacted thousands of families and educators. These efforts go beyond charity. They restore dignity, confidence and hope.**

10. Likewise, Rotary's initiatives in women's empowerment resonate strongly with the Ministry's aspirations. We know that empowering women is not simply about economics. It is about restoring confidence, strengthening resilience and creating pathways for independence. When a single mother gains digital skills, financial literacy or entrepreneurial support, we are not only helping one woman. We are transforming an entire household and changing the future trajectory of her children.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- 11. One example of meaningful collaboration that deserves recognition is the partnership between Yayasan Kebajikan Negara and the Rotary Club of Kuching Central in supporting Anjung Kasih. For many families travelling from rural Sarawak and distant parts of Malaysia for medical treatment, Anjung Kasih is more than temporary accommodation. It is a sanctuary during moments of fear and uncertainty.**

12. Imagine a parent accompanying a sick child for treatment in an unfamiliar city. The emotional burden alone is overwhelming. Yet through compassionate collaboration between government agencies, NGOs and volunteers, these families are given not just shelter, but humanity, comfort and reassurance that they are not forgotten.

13. This is the true meaning of community partnership. Government provides structure, policy direction and institutional support. But civil society provides something equally powerful: human connection, volunteerism, trust and compassion at the grassroots.

14. Rotary's strength lies precisely in this ability to mobilise people of expertise and goodwill into meaningful action. With over 130 clubs and more than 3,800 Rotarians in Malaysia alone, Rotary has demonstrated how volunteer-driven networks can create measurable and sustainable impact. And in today's world, volunteerism matters more than ever — at a time when societies are becoming increasingly digitally connected, yet emotionally disconnected.

15. This is why community leadership can no longer be viewed as optional. It is essential. The future of nation-building must involve stronger public-civil society partnerships — grounded not in publicity, but in purpose. Partnerships that move beyond short-term aid towards long-term empowerment and resilience.

16. I believe there is tremendous potential for deeper collaboration between the Ministry and Rotary in the areas of women's empowerment, autism awareness and inclusion, mental wellness and family wellbeing, and support for our most vulnerable communities. Together, we can build stronger ecosystems of care that reach communities more effectively and sustainably.

Ladies and gentlemen,

17. A nation is not measured solely by its economic growth or infrastructure. A nation is ultimately measured by how it treats its most vulnerable. And what gives me hope today is seeing so many individuals here who have chosen service over self-interest, compassion over indifference, and action over apathy.

- 18. To every Rotarian present, thank you for believing that communities can be transformed through service, dignity and humanity. May this conference inspire not only conversations, but collaborations. Not only ideas, but action. Not only goodwill, but lasting impact.**

- 19. Let us continue to unite for women. Unite for families. Unite for children. Unite for persons with disabilities. Unite for stronger communities. And above all, unite for good.**

Thank you.

Wabillahi taufiq walhidayah

Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

YB DATO' SRI HAJAH NANCY BINTI SHUKRI
Minister of Women, Family & Community Development
23 May 2026