

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MDBC 21-03

**CELEBRATING ENTREPRENEURS AND FURTHER DEVELOPING OUR  
UNDERSTANDING OF INNOVATION & SUSTAINABILITY**

**KUALA LUMPUR, 18 November 2021 – On Thursday, 18 November, the Malaysian Dutch Business Council (MDBC), in close partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, celebrated the ‘Day of the Entrepreneur’ or “Dag van de Ondernemer” (DVDO) at the Traders Hotel Kuala Lumpur. Festivities culminated with the launch of the MDBC Innovation & Sustainability Awards (MISA) 2021 / 22.**

Entrepreneurs and SMEs were recognized for their courage, perseverance, and innovativeness at the ‘Day of the Entrepreneur’ (or ‘Dag van de Ondernemer’ (DVDO) as it’s known in the Netherlands) event with MDBC and the Netherlands Embassy.

With the huge role that SMEs play in Malaysia’s economy (accounting for just over 97% of total business establishments in 2020 according to DOSM), it seemed a natural fit for Malaysia to join the event. Initiated by MKB – Nederland (Dutch association for SMEs) back in 2016, DVDO is strongly supported back in the Netherlands with everyone from cabinet members down to individual entrepreneurs encouraged to participate.

In 2018, one of the first dedicated DVDO activities outside of the Netherlands took place when MDBC organized a DVDO event in Malaysia, followed by another in 2019. It has since grown into a worldwide celebration, and this event marks the third time it has been observed locally.

The ‘Day of the Entrepreneur’ was made possible by the strong support and presence of Event Partners: the Netherlands Embassy and NL in Business, as well as Service Providers: Signify, Malaysia Airlines, Maxis, Standard Chartered Bank, and Volkswagen.

Taking the lead, the Embassy kicked off festivities with a lunch for Dutch entrepreneurs in Malaysia. In attendance was Eva Oskam (Deputy Head of Mission & Head of the Economic Section, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands). When asked about her thoughts on the event, said, “We are thrilled to be able to celebrate the Day of the Entrepreneur once again with an offline event for Dutch businesses. While COVID restrictions have posed challenges for everyone in the past one and a half years, small and medium sized entrepreneurs have often been hit even harder. By organizing this event, in close partnership with MDBC, we acknowledge and honor their courage and perseverance, and salute the innovative solutions many small and medium sized enterprises bring to the economies of both Malaysia and the Netherlands.”

Malaysian Dutch Business Council (MDBC)

Unit 808, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Wisma Lim Foo Yong, 86 Jalan Raja Chulan, 50200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Tel: 03 2722 8335 E mail: [info@mdbc.com.my](mailto:info@mdbc.com.my) Web: [www.mdbc.com.my](http://www.mdbc.com.my)

MDBC then brought together both Dutch and Malaysian SMEs and entrepreneurs for a presentation by the service providers who shared business solution tools, valuable information, and offers to support entrepreneurship.

Several attendees shared some advice for others, as well as insights into their favourite things about being entrepreneurs. When asked to share some advice to entrepreneurs or SMEs, Remco Koster (Managing Partner, EXPANDIAN Limited) shared, "Your network will be a crucial part of your success; MDBC has the best network for Dutch entrepreneurs."

S. Adzlinda Zin (Founder and CEO, Rumah Duta Sdn Bhd) shared her favorite thing about being an entrepreneur, "It's thrilling, you never stop learning and growing!"

Sjoert Bolhuis (General Manager, Frames Group) added, "Every day is a new challenge."

"There's never really a dull moment and I can constantly push myself to go from strength to strength", said John Tan (Managing Director, Poet Farmer).

Attendees were also on hand to witness the launch of the MISA 2021 / 22 edition.

"We know that there have been a great number of challenges to the community over the past couple of years, and we have been witness to the strength and tenacity of these individuals and corporations who have found new ways to meet this demanding period. MDBC, in its role of facilitating trade and investment between Malaysia and the Netherlands, is keen to celebrate and increase the awareness of these innovations and as such, is happy to also launch the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the MDBC Innovation & Sustainability Awards (MISA) 2021 / 22," shared Marco Winter (Executive Director, MDBC).

MDBC's unique Awards Program – MISA - is a platform to showcase the best practices of companies in the areas of Sustainability and Innovation, recognizing them for their excellence and trailblazing spirit in these fields. Open to the local business community to participate (as long as the submitted projects meet the category requirements), shortlisted finalists are obliged to participate in a day event, presenting their projects in front of a panel of judges and an open audience for review.

The open forum concept of the presentation day (judges and audience members can ask questions about the project to shortlisted candidates, but the candidates may also ask questions to the audience) means that the knowledge gained by these finalists is shared, while allowing them to also gain information themselves. Awards are presented immediately after during the evening event which is held on the same day. This special

edition of their long running Innovation & Sustainability Awards will be expanded to include dedicated categories for SMEs and Entrepreneurs. The seven MISA categories are:

- Dutch Investor in Malaysia (MNC)
- Dutch Investor in Malaysia (SME)
- Malaysian Investor in the Netherlands
- Malaysian exporter to the Netherlands / EU
- Most Promising New Dutch SME in Malaysia
- Dutch – Malaysian partnership
- Flexible Work Arrangements

The packed value add to this celebratory event for Dutch and Malaysian entrepreneurs and SMEs is a great example of how MDBC always strives to provide the best value for their members. In their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary milestone year, MDBC continues to gain recognition for this, having just won the 'Best Bilateral Business Services Provider – Malaysia' award from APAC Insider earlier this year.

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## **About MDBC**

The Malaysian Dutch Business Council (MDBC) is all about providing business services, representation, and networking. We forge business ties between Malaysia and The Netherlands. Established in 1996 by Malaysian and Dutch companies, MDBC is a private, well established, trade support organisation with over 280 member companies. It is considered one of the most active councils in Kuala Lumpur and in Malaysia as a whole.

In 2021, MDBC won the 'Best Bilateral Business Services Provider – Malaysia' award from APAC Insider. In 2019, MDBC became the second Dutch Chamber in the world to receive the NLinBusiness quality mark. In addition to being acknowledged as a 'best – in – class' leader, MDBC is now officially a member of the new NLinBusiness network of business hubs. This is a sign to Dutch entrepreneurs that they can be guaranteed a 'soft landing' in Malaysia as they seek to enter the Malaysian and / or wider ASEAN market. In 2018, MDBC won the APAC 2018 International Chambers of Commerce Membership Engagement Program of the Year Award.

With the audacious goal of becoming the full - fledged service provider for all members and businesses with Malaysian – Dutch links, the MDBC achieves its high standards through the successful execution of its three objectives (Business Services, Representation, and Networking). Our core values are to be Entrepreneurial, Independent, Accessible, Responsible, and Service Oriented.

## **BUSINESS SERVICES:**

MDBC provides business services and information to our members. MDBC assists members and newcomers to the Malaysian market on issues related to setting up a company or a representative office here. MDBC keeps members updated on the latest developments in the business world and members' news through our quarterly magazine (the MDBCCONNECTS), the organisation of informative & educational events and through this website, electronic newsletters (the e – Update), and e mails. MDBC also publishes a Business Directory every 18 months.

## **REPRESENTATION:**

MDBC serves as a link to other bilateral Business Associations and Chambers of Commerce. We participate in a dialogue amongst European Union member states in Malaysia and in EU – related programs. We also have established relations with various government institutions. The common business interests of our members, as well as individual needs of companies, are voiced through MDBC to the appropriate authorities in

Malaysia. The Council also looks into combined efforts for representation at exhibitions and into commercial partnerships with Malaysian and Dutch government authorities on behalf of our members.

## **NETWORKING:**

Through our regular (monthly) events, members are able to develop good business contacts with the Dutch – Malaysian business community in Malaysia, as well as with other foreign companies, Malaysian counterparts and government bodies. On an annual basis, MDBC members receive several dozen event – invitations, including signature events such as the MDBC Sustainability Awards and the Human Resources Forum. Numerous social networking events are organised together with other Business Associations and Chambers of Commerce to further extend networking opportunities.

Together with the Economic Department of the Netherlands Embassy and industry associations, the MDBC will, whenever possible, participate in Trade Exhibitions, Dutch missions to Malaysia, and matchmaking sessions. At exhibitions, MDBC members are invited to present their products and services within a larger “Holland Pavilion”. We also support Malaysian missions to The Netherlands.

MDBC is also one of the founders of the ASEAN Dutch Chamber Network (ADCN), a collaboration that consists of six Dutch Chambers of Commerce — Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam — that represent a diverse range of Dutch businesses in the region. Within ADCN, we share best practices. Since this year, ADCN has been developing some common exposure, highlighting our activities and events to entrepreneurs in The Netherlands, better streamlining of membership, and providing increased opportunities for respective members to attend events from Dutch chamber colleagues that could especially be of interest for many regional representatives in ASEAN.

More information about the Council is available at:

[www.mdbc.com.my](http://www.mdbc.com.my)

[www.facebook.com/mdbc.com.my](https://www.facebook.com/mdbc.com.my)

[www.linkedin.com/company/malaysian-dutch-business-council-mdbc-](https://www.linkedin.com/company/malaysian-dutch-business-council-mdbc-)

[www.twitter.com/MYMDBC](https://www.twitter.com/MYMDBC)

For media enquiries about MDBC please contact:

Jocelyn Choo

Communications Manager

Tel: +603 2722 8335

E mail: [communications@mdbc.com.my](mailto:communications@mdbc.com.my)

Malaysian Dutch Business Council (MDBC)

Unit 808, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Wisma Lim Foo Yong, 86 Jalan Raja Chulan, 50200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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For media enquiries about the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands please contact:

Josephine Ris  
Communications and Public Diplomacy Officer  
Tel: +603 2168 6200  
Email: [KLL@minbuza.nl](mailto:KLL@minbuza.nl)