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PRESS RELEASE

Innovative Malaysia Welcomes WTC 2020

World Tunnel Congress 2020 to be held from 15 to 21 May 2020 in Kuala Lumpur.

Kuala Lumpur (MY), 16 January 2020. Malaysia has emerged as one of the most innovative tunnelling countries in the last decade having won at least three major global tunnelling innovation awards. This coming May, seize the chance to visit the unique country and meet other progressive Malaysian engineers on the very prestigious occasion of the World Tunnel Congress, which will be held in Kuala Lumpur from 15 to 21 May 2020. “To maximise participation across Southeast Asia, we have extended the early bird registration closing date until 31 January 2020”, ITA-AITES WTC 2020 Organising Chairman Ir. Dr Ooi Teik Aun announces at a recent press conference held in Kuala Lumpur. More than 2,000 participants are expected to join in the greatest annual meeting of tunnelling and underground space engineers and companies from all walks of the vibrant industry. Exhibition spaces are now fully booked and more than 150 companies from all over the world are ready to welcome all tunnellers.

The world’s greatest meeting of tunnellers, the ITA-AITES World Tunnel Congress (WTC) and the 46th ITA General Assembly 2020, will be organised by the Institution of Engineers, Malaysia (IEM) in Kuala Lumpur. Set in the heart of Southeast Asia, Malaysia has been undertaking tunnelling challenges for the past two decades and along the way has developed many groundbreaking tunnelling technology. Beginning with South East Asia’s longest stormwater drainage tunnel - the 9.7 km two-storey stormwater management and road tunnel in 2007, the first metro construction in Malaysia followed in 2011. To tackle the arduous challenge of mining



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in Kuala Lumpur's karstic limestone ground, the variable density tunnel boring machine was developed by Malaysian engineers and became an industry marvel with the successful delivery of the Klang Valley MRT Line 1 in 2013. The innovation won the Technical Innovation of the Year award in ITA 2014. The next in Malaysian tunnelling offerings is the autonomous TBM operating system which won the ITA award for Technical Product/Equipment Innovation 2019 as well as NCE Tunnelling Festival 2019's "Innovation in Tunnel Excavation" award. Hence, it is only apt that Malaysia being home to many prestigious global tunnelling awards will offer the ultimate platform for technical insights on cutting-edge tunnelling innovation and advances in underground construction.

The WTC will kick start on Friday and Saturday, 15 and 16 May 2020, with the first ITACET training course "Innovations in Tunnelling - Geotechnical Engineering and Project Management" to welcome young tunnellers and those interested in tunnelling and underground space developments. Highly recognized and prominent tunnelling experts from all over the world will be sharing their experiences with the audience. These include Muir Wood's Lecture, a landmark lecture and three more keynote lectures from respective field experts and more than fifteen technical oral presentation sessions and poster displays will be given to provide deep insight into different fields of tunnelling and underground space developments." This will not only be a chance to learn from the best, but also offer ample of time for participants to join in various discussions and networking sessions with industry-recognised experts " , Dr Ooi adds on the event highlights.

The opening ceremony is expected to be officiated by the world's only nonagenarian prime minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad on 18 May 2020, Monday morning. One of the highlights, besides exclusive keynote lectures is the Muir Wood lecture by one of the most recognized specialists for sprayed concrete, Tom Melbye. His talk is titled "Wet-mix Sprayed Concrete: A



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Modern Support Method in Tunnelling and Mining “and will give insights into the development of the aforementioned ingenious tunnelling support method.

The exhibition at Kuala Lumpur Convention Center (KLCC) which will showcase more than 150 companies will also kick-off on Monday morning. Technical dialogues in open sessions, presentations, working group committee meetings and countless networking sessions with fellow participants, exhibitors and business partners will make up the bulk of the days until the closing ceremony on Wednesday late afternoon as the grand finale of the WTC 2020 event, followed by the handover of the ITA flag to the next host country, Denmark, for the WTC 2021.

Various site and technical visits will be held during and after the congress with limited seats available. These include the SMART Tunnel (Monday, 18 May 2020), Tunnelling Training Academy (Tuesday, 19 May 2020) and Underground works at the KVMRT Line 2 construction sites (Wednesday, 20 May 2020) which serve to enumerate Malaysia’s outstanding achievements in tunnel engineering and projects which no engineer should miss. All site and technical visits, as well as short excursions, will start and end at KLCC. On 21 May 2020 (Thursday), a limited number of participants will even have a chance to join a technical visit to either the ongoing East Coast Rail Link project or the completed Pahang-Selangor Raw Water Transfer Tunnel.

Several sightseeing programmes are also available for interested persons to join in and explore the beauty of Malaysia as well as Kuala Lumpur, before or after the congress. WTC 2020 in Kuala Lumpur falls during the month of Ramadan, which is the holiest month in the Islamic calendar. With that effect, participants will get the opportunity to experience the uniqueness of “buka puasa” (breaking of fast) in KLCC itself. The WTC 2020 programme offers a vibrant mix of business, professional and leisure opportunities for all and is designed to leave a lasting memory for all participants.



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Pictures

Figure 1: Handover of the ITA Flag to Malaysia as the host country for WTC 2020: Ir. Dr Ooi Teik Aun (Organising Chairman, right), Ir. David Kong Phooi Lai (IEM President, left) and Anna Ceppaluni (Honorary Consul of Malaysia in Italy) receiving the ITA flag from Andrea Pigorini (SIG President) in Naples, Italy, on Wednesday, 8 May 2019 (Credit: herrroland@t-online.de)



Figure 2: Overview of the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC) with nearby hotels and the Petronas Towers (Credit: Tourism Malaysia)



Figure 3: The exhibition of the WTC 2020 in Kuala Lumpur is with more than 150 companies from all walks of tunnelling and underground space fully booked
(Credit: WTC 2020)

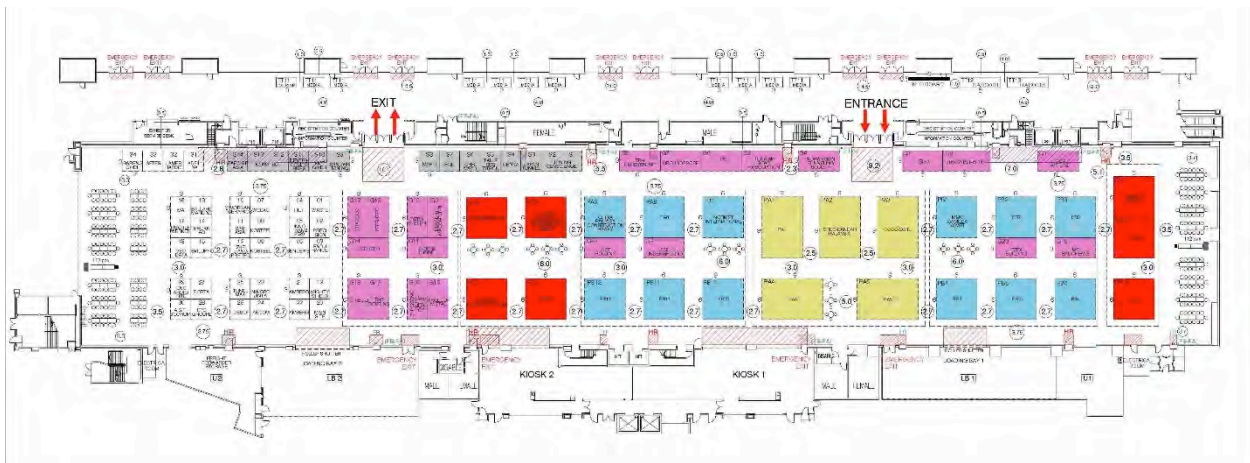


Figure 4: Petronas Towers close to the WTC 2020 venue Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC)
(Credit: Tourism Malaysia)

