



MEDIA RELEASE

AUSTRALIA - MALAYSIA VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYMPOSIUM 2007

Australia's bilateral education relationship with Malaysia is set to be stepped up a notch with the *Australia - Malaysia Vocational Education and Training Symposium 2007* aimed at building a strong platform of engagement between both countries in this sector.

The inaugural one-day symposium will work towards identifying how Australia can work in partnership with the Malaysian Government, training providers and industry to help develop opportunities in the sector that match industry needs and student expectations.

Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia, H.E. Ms. Penny William said in her opening speech this morning that this effort was a natural progression from the rich history that both countries have shared in education since the days of the Colombo Plan in the 1950s.

"We are now starting to see an evolution of our bilateral education relationship", she said, adding that "this change largely reflects a maturing of our relationship and a more sophisticated engagement between governments, education institutions and industry partners."

She added that where once students had set their sights only on universities as their tertiary education option, more school leavers in both countries were now considering the vocational education and training options that will enable graduates to "hit the ground running with relevant, practical and competent skills".

The symposium, organised by Australian Education International (AEI) Malaysia, features a delegation of eight senior Government and industry representatives from Australia who will speak on Australia's experience in the development of the vocational education and training sector.

Senior officers from the Malaysian Ministry of Human Resources, Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Education, education providers and industry also contributed to the day's discussion.

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