

**Speech by Dr Ang Ming Chee  
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**National Workshop on Harmonizing Coordination to Implement Disaster Risk  
Reduction (DRR) Strategy in the Heritage City of George Town**

**1 - 2 March 2018 (Thursday & Friday)  
Bayview Hotel Georgetown Penang**

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(VIP salutations)  
Members of the Press  
Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good morning to all our distinguished guests, and welcome to the National Workshop on Harmonizing Coordination to Implement Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Strategy in the Heritage City of George Town.

We are much honoured today to have the Honourable Mr. Lim Guan Eng, Chief Minister of Penang and Chairman of George Town World Heritage Incorporated with us this morning. I would also like to welcome Ms Moe Chiba, the Head of Cultural Unit from UNESCO Office Jakarta, Mrs. Natasha Hairin Mohamad Yusoff, Executive Secretary of Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO, Dr. Rohit Jiyagsu, UNESCO Chair Professor from the Institute of Disaster Mitigation for Urban Cultural Heritage of Ritsumeikan University Kyoto, Japan, Think City representatives, and our colleagues from George Town, Penang and Melaka at this very important workshop.

This is the second time we are hosting this workshop in the historic city of George Town. On 5 and 6 April 2017, George Town World Heritage Incorporated along with UNESCO Office Jakarta and UNESCO Apia Office organised an Inception Workshop on the “Capacity Building for Disaster Risk Reduction of Heritage Cities in Southeast Asia and Small Island Developing States in the Pacific” project at this very same venue.

We in Penang are very fortunate to be blessed with immunity from major catastrophes such as earthquakes, hurricanes or tornados. Unfortunately, we are facing increasing risks from global warming and world climate change, and therefore we have to reduce our vulnerabilities to disaster by empowering our stakeholders with risk management plans. Such determination prompted George Town World Heritage Incorporated to collaborate with our working partners to host this National Workshop on Harmonizing Coordination to Implement Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Strategy in the Heritage City of George Town.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We, at George Town World Heritage Incorporated, are a state agency that walks the talk. From 28 August till 16 September 2017, I was given the opportunity to attend a three-week intensive training called the International Training Course on Disaster Risk

Management of Cultural Heritage, under the UNESCO Chair Programme on Cultural Heritage and Risk Management, and organised by the Institute of Disaster Mitigation for Urban Cultural Heritage at Ritsumeikan University Kyoto, Japan. Upon my return from Japan, follow-up working meetings were conducted with Penang State Museum, Penang Island City Council, and the owners of various Category One heritage properties in Penang.

I will present the details of these meetings in Session 2 today but I am glad to announce that we have received very positive support and commitment from our stakeholders to develop a sustainable Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy of Heritage Cities for the George Town World Heritage Site. I look forward to further the discussions in this workshop, with professional guidance from Dr. Rohit Jiyagsu, who has taught me so much on Disaster Risk Reduction last year.

In closing, I would like to again express my heartfelt thanks to all our honoured guests, in particular from the State Government of Penang and UNESCO Office Jakarta for their continuous support in making George Town a more sustainable heritage city for all. I also thank all participants for graciously devoting your time to attend this National Workshop. Together, we can safeguard the Outstanding Universal Values of George Town for all of mankind.

Thank you.