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## MIMOS TRANSITION TO MITI PROPITIOUS AS MALAYSIA NEARS 2020 GOALS

THE year 2018 was a watershed for national applied research and development (R&D) centre Mimos, when it was repositioned under the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Miti) in a shrewdly strategic move by the government to accelerate digital transformation in industries.

The transition was timely, as it has enabled Mimos, which was previously under the purview of Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change, to lay out new strategies and approaches to meet the demands associated with Industry 4.0, as outlined in the Industry4WRD: National Policy on Industry 4.0 formulated by Miti.

Industry4WRD, which was launched by Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in October 2018, states that one of the factors that impacts the manufacturing sector in Malaysia is new technology, where the application of technologies is becoming the new normal in improving efficiency and product quality, requiring Malaysian manufacturing firms to innovate and invest in these new technologies to remain competitive.

Mimos, which employs more than 500 researchers, engineers and scientists with various expertises, offers advanced capabilities, resources and facilities for the research and development of Industry 4.0 technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, Internet of Things (IoT), edge computing and blockchain to



**New approach:** Mimos was repositioned under Miti in 2018 and has helped lay out new strategies and approaches to meet the demands associated with Industry 4.0.

create solutions that would empower the government and industry towards driving economic growth.

This is on top of Mimos' long-established support of the electrical and electronics (E&E) sector, where the agency has been providing advanced shared service facilities for the E&E ecosystem, offering end-to-end services from semiconductor and integrated circuit design to nanoelectronics, photonics and other related services.

Since the advent of Industry 4.0, Mimos' E&E section has kept itself up-to-date with the addition of emerging enabling technologies, such as augmented reality, advanced materials and system

integration.

The government has implemented various initiatives to provide the right platform for Malaysian businesses to reinvent themselves and adopt the latest technologies to be globally-resilient enterprises. One of the initiatives include encouraging SMEs as well as startups to adopt homegrown technologies such as those developed by Mimos.

### Driving Industry 4.0 technology adoption

Mimos interim president and chief executive officer Emelia Matrahah said the application of Industry 4.0 technologies can lead

to improved product and service quality, reduced costs, more efficient workflow and overall business growth, thus enhancing national competitiveness.

Emelia added that Industry4WRD has paved the way for more opportunities for collaboration in offering new solutions for the industry and government alike.

Among Mimos' recent collaboration outputs include the indoor location tracking system using IoT technology, a national health data information system, and a vehicle licence plate recognition system using video analytics, which is an element of AI.

Mimos was also tasked with developing MyDigital ID, an identity management and transaction signing platform for the government. The system has been developed to provide a platform of trust in cyberspace, as highlighted by the Communications and Multimedia Ministry.

### Powering future industry

Moreover, Emelia said that it is increasingly critical for Malaysian businesses to keep up with the times, particularly when regional neighbours have already embraced many Industry 4.0 principles and technologies in their approaches.

"Industries must be competitive and at least on par with, if not ahead of their contenders in terms of innovation and use of technology," she said.

She added that Mimos is provid-

ing full technological expertise and resource support to Miti in implementing Industry4WRD, citing CAIFI (Centre of AI for Future Industry) as an example.

CAIFI was set up at Mimos, in collaboration with Microsoft in December last year, to "deliver capacity development for rapid-response Government policymaking, and the tools required to increase intelligence and leverage on modern technologies such as AI in Malaysia."

Along with the establishment of CAIFI, it is pertinent to note that Mimos has embarked on the applications of AI in nonmanufacturing sectors, such as banking, finance, public infrastructure maintenance, public safety and preservation of the environment.

Mimos' lesser-known role above and beyond research and development includes competence and capability development, where it focuses on developing talents with Industry 4.0 core competencies and skillsets, as well as in advanced electrical and electronics technologies.

This includes engagements with various local universities and skills training centres in the development of talents, in the various areas of future technology.

While Mimos functions as a non-profit government institution, it is mindful that its endeavours serve a key role in outfitting industries and strengthening government service delivery towards economic growth and raising the nation's competitiveness.