

27 October 2017

**Comments on Budget 2018 by Datuk Abdul Farid Alias, Group President and CEO,
Maybank and Chairman of the Association of Banks in Malaysia**

This budget continues to address the Government's present objective of boosting disposable incomes for the B40 to ease cost of living pressures and support consumer spending.

At the same time, we are pleased to see plenty of measures to help Malaysia and Malaysians prepare themselves for the demands of the future. These include developing more infrastructure in logistics, preparing for and promoting the “digital economy”, boosting productivity and automation, as well as focusing on human capital development and investment by further enhancing science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) and coding in the education system, and Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET).

We are also encouraged by the Government's continuing support for Small and Medium sized Enterprises through funding and credit provisions, and also providing tax exemptions for capital markets covering a broad range of activities, products and investors such as ETFs, structured warrants, social & responsible investing, venture capitalist and angel investors for the capital markets.

Finally, we are happy to see Government continuing with its prudent approach in fiscal management as can be seen by the gradual improvement in our fiscal deficit. We acknowledge that this is extremely challenging to execute when external markets continue to be volatile, while at the same time trying to minimize the negative impact on the domestic market and the general population.

Overall, we see this Budget to be positive for the consumption, infrastructure, tourism and finance sectors.