

## GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

Dear Stakeholders,

**The past year has been a pivotal one for the AmBank Group. We kept our foot on the throttle in executing our strategies, demonstrating our unwavering commitment to driving growth and enhancing shareholder value.**

**DATO' SULAIMAN MOHD TAHIR**

Group Chief Executive Officer  
AmBank Group



While the financial markets grappled with escalating inflation, sharp interest rate increases and rising geopolitical tensions, Malaysia portrayed a picture of economic robustness, regaining lost ground with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 8.7% in 2022 – the fastest in over two decades. This significant economic rebound was fuelled by the reopening of our international borders on 1 April 2022, paving the way for renewed economic and social activities.

Our Focus 8 strategy has proven instrumental in capitalising on this economic revival, underpinning our resilience during these challenging times and enabling us to achieve a Return on Equity (ROE) of 10%, a year ahead of our goal.

This strategy has also steered us ahead of our competitors in key financial metrics such as CASA, profit after tax and minority interests (PATMI), profit before provisions (PBP), net interest income (NII) and cost-to-income ratio (CTI). Furthermore, it has led to above-industry growth for small and medium enterprise (SME) deposits and loans, based on a five-year compound annual growth rate.

Looking forward, we have zeroed in on three primary growth accelerators: SME empowerment, the advancement of ESG initiatives and digital innovation.

**10%** 

**ROE achieved,  
a year ahead of  
our goals.**

## GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE



We stand by our SME community, implementing comprehensive initiatives and financing options, tailored to fuel their growth and bolster their competitive edge. This is underlined by our innovative AmBank BizCLUB proposition that transcends conventional financing – it offers a platform for SMEs to foster connections and grow their business networks, fast-tracks their transition to embrace digitalisation and facilitates fruitful collaborations with industries that require their services.

Our commitment to ESG is grounded in the belief that we are custodians and pace setters of sustainable value creation, driving societal change for the better. We have made noteworthy strides on this front, such as our support for the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) and our involvement in Malaysia's inaugural carbon credit auction. We were also selected as the sole bank in Malaysia to partner with Pantas and Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) in their Greening Value Chain programme, which is an important initiative aimed at assisting SMEs to green their operations.

Simultaneously, we nurture a green culture within our workspace, employing a suite of initiatives including paper reduction efforts, promoting the use of recyclable utensils, managing electricity usage, eliminating plastic at our events and running programmes such as 'food bank' drives and beach clean-ups. These measures represent our holistic move towards ESG awareness creation and serve to propagate our 'ESG walking the talk agenda' from our leadership team and our people through to our customers and communities at large.

On the digital front, we have reaped substantial benefits that have significantly propelled our businesses forward. Our strategic investment in robotic process automation has made us more efficient and has enabled us to deliver superior, more impactful customer experiences. Online banking has become faster and more secure as a result of our relentless digital drive.

We acknowledge that digitalisation is key to harnessing new opportunities given evolving consumer behaviours and serves as powerful facilitator of financial inclusion. As we continue to double down on our efforts to accelerate our digitalisation to improve access to banking services, we will focus more on tapping into the underserved and unserved market segments moving forward. This year, we have amplified our efforts in fortifying payment solutions and transactions, broadening our digital ecosystem partnerships and refining our customer-centric applications. As part of our ongoing commitment to innovative banking, we are also exploring potential opportunities using artificial intelligence following our success in implementing robotics capabilities. Through the setup of the robotics Centre of Excellence (COE), we have deployed more than a hundred bots across the Bank.

### PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Our diligent efforts have led to a 1.6% increase in income to RM4,737.7 million, bolstered by net interest income growth. Likewise, our profit before provisions experienced a 2.6% increase, reaching RM2,637.4 million, with our net impairment demonstrating significant improvement.

The Group's PATMI saw an upswing of 15.5% to RM1,735.2 million, with a commendable ROE of 10%. This accomplishment aligns with our Focus Area 1 ambition of securing an ROE of  $\geq 10.0\%$ .

Our asset quality has shown resilience, with a gross impaired loans (GIL) ratio of 1.46% (FY2022: 1.40%) and a loan loss coverage (LLC) ratio of 127.7% (FY2022: 139.2%). Encouragingly, we witnessed growth across our loans and deposits portfolios, with an 8.5% rise in gross loans and financing to RM130.2 billion and a 6.3% increase in customer deposits to RM130.3 billion. Furthermore, our CASA balances grew by 13.2% to RM48.8 billion, while our CASA ratio stood at 37.4% (FY2022: 35.2%).

The commendable financial performance we delivered is a clear testament to the effectiveness of our strategies and the disciplined execution by our teams, which have resulted in substantial value creation for our stakeholders.



## GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

## FOCUS 8 PROGRESS

Throughout the financial year, we have made notable progress by remaining committed to our strategic priorities. These priorities represent our collective drive to create sustainable value for our stakeholders. Now in its third year, the Focus 8 strategy continues to be a springboard propelling AmBank toward greater achievements.



## F1 Attaining a Return on Equity (ROE) of $\geq 10\%$

Our unrelenting commitment to optimising capital allocation and improving operational efficiencies have yielded strong results, with the Group achieving its ROE target of 10%. Our cost-to-income (CTI) ratio also improved to 44.3%. Prior to the commencement of the Focus 8 strategy, our ROE stood at 7.4%, while CTI was 49.9%. Our ongoing Business Efficiency Transformation (BET) has yielded positive results, freeing up capital for further investments in IT and the development of new digital capabilities. Since the programmes commenced in 2018, we have achieved cumulative gross cost savings nearing RM700 million.

Furthermore, we successfully completed the strategic divestment of AmGeneral Insurance Berhad to Liberty Insurance Berhad in July 2022. Subsequently, the integration of legal entities and business was finalised on 1 April 2023. This move aligns with the Group's strategy to divest from capital-intensive shareholdings in non-core businesses and to concentrate on the core banking business. We retain a significant minority stake of 30% in the merged entity and continue to look forward to drive new opportunities by collaborating with our new partner, Liberty Insurance, through our bancassurance business.

Since the programmes commenced in 2018, we have achieved cumulative **gross cost savings** nearing **RM700 million**.



## F2 Sharpening Our Segment Play

Our capacity to generate sustained value and meaningful returns for our shareholders is intrinsically tied to our ability to add value for our customers. Our unwavering commitment to cultivating deeper relationships and delivering differentiated value propositions for our customers acts as a catalyst to our segment-focused approach.

Within the affluent segment, our exclusive partnership with the organisers of KL Fashion Week (KLFW) for the second consecutive year allowed us to connect with our customers and elevate the profile of our AmBank SIGNATURE Priority Banking (AmSPB) franchise. The traction we achieved through this collaboration has been encouraging with assets under management (AUM) increasing by RM1.1 billion following the launch of The Metal Card at KLFW 2021.

AUM **increasing** by **RM1.1 billion** following the launch of The Metal Card at KLFW 2021.

In collaboration with one of the leading Umrah travel agency, we are working to launch flexible Umrah financing packages for the retail segment, allowing more Muslim customers to undertake their Umrah pilgrimage.

As our newly appointed Managing Director of Wholesale Banking takes the helm, we remain focused on better serving our customers across multiple segments. While continuing to serve Large Corporations and Government-Linked Companies (GLCs), Wholesale Banking is also intensifying its collaboration with the Investment Banking team.

On Business Banking side, the alignment of our business centres and Mid Corp segment team across all regions have enabled us to have better focus and outreach in growing SME and mid-sized customer base.

In the SME segment, we remain focused on supporting Malaysian SMEs through initiatives extending beyond financing. We strive to provide comprehensive business solutions and uplift them through education, training, development and networking opportunities, as well as media exposure. Our flagship programme, AmBank BizCLUB, which organises BizCONFERENCE, BizDIALOGUE and BizRACE events, has engaged over 12,000 SME leaders since its inception.

Our flagship programme, AmBank BizCLUB, which organises BizCONFERENCE, BizDIALOGUE and BizRACE events, has engaged over **12,000 SME leaders** since its inception.



## GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

We are firmly committed to guiding our clients and customers along their digitalisation journey, helping them explore innovative strategies that can enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. This year, we were involved in financing the construction of a One Stop Supply Chain Centre by Golden Scoop Sdn Bhd, the franchise owner of Baskin-Robbins Malaysia and Singapore. To further promote automation, we continue our collaboration with the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) for SMEs and mid-tier companies to access MIDA's Smart Automation Grant programme, offering grants of up to RM1 million.

In addition, through our long-standing partnership with the Credit Guarantee Corporation (CGC), we have offered over RM3 billion worth of financing over the past seven years to over 4,000 SMEs. We also actively participate in various Bank Negara Malaysia and government schemes such as the BNM High Tech Facility – National Investment Aspirations, Low Carbon Transition Facility, Business Recapitalisation Facility and High Tech & Green Facility to support our SMEs.

As we nurture SMEs, we are dedicated to championing their growth and supporting their graduation process. Our aim is to provide them with the opportunity to achieve potential IPO listing and enable their transformation into much larger companies, through our Road to Capital Markets initiative.



### **F3** Delivering Holistic Customer Value Proposition Leveraging a Collaborative Culture and Partnerships

In our journey to transcend traditional banking, we have been actively fostering cross-industry partnerships to deliver a holistic customer value proposition. Our aim is to place AmBank at the crux of multiple partnership landscapes, effectively enriching the banking experience for our customers. In the year under review, we continued to fortify our alliances with BonusLink, a telco company and Merchantrade Asia, while welcoming a new collaborator, Bask Bear Coffee, to add value to our branch banking customer experience. We also have several potential strategic cross-industry partners in the pipeline, poised to further enhance our offerings.

Our alliance with our strategic telco partner underscores the synergy of banking and telecommunications to meet the evolving needs of our SME clients. We have spearheaded initiatives such as the rollout of innovative merchant payment solutions, alongside bundled digital and financial solutions via our SME-in-a-Box proposition, offering a comprehensive package to our valued customers. Since its inception in 2020, SME-in-a-Box has positively impacted almost 22,000 customers.

Leveraging digital capabilities through our BonusLink partnership, we strive to present an increasingly inclusive value proposition to members, partner merchants and employees. We rolled out an integrated feature in the BLINK application that facilitates smooth credit card applications and we have received an overwhelmingly positive response for the BonusLink points conversion to savings feature.

Collaborating with Merchantrade Asia, we have brought to the fore a range of Foreign Exchange (FX) and payment services and solutions. Most significantly, our market-first hybrid e-wallet that offers cross-border, multi-currency payment solutions backed by a current account was officially launched in October 2022. The e-wallet, linked to an AmBank Islamic Hybrid Current Account-i, allows users to accrue a profit rate and comes with a cumulative limit of RM50,000 per wallet. As of March 2023, the initiative has resulted in the opening of over 4,800 accounts.

Even as we embrace the digital banking era, we recognise the indelible value of human connection. To this end, we have reimagined the branch experience by combining leisure and banking through our collaboration with Bask Bear Coffee at selected locations. Here, customers can savour the café ambience while attending to their banking requirements. While we co-share the cost of premise rental with our partner to enhance cost efficiency, the addition of a coffee stop within the banking space has also resulted in increased foot traffic for these selected branches. We anticipate that this initiative will uplift customer experience and enable us to foster robust relationships, especially with the younger demographic.



## GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE



## F4 Pushing Capital-Light Revenue

We continue to drive capital-light revenue through bolstering our FX franchise, Wealth advisory and CASA propositions. This year, our CASA ratio continues to surpass the industry average of 30.6%, improving to 37.4% from 35.2% in FY2022, reflecting our unwavering commitment to providing differentiated and bespoke solutions.

CASA ratio continues to surpass the industry average of 30.6%, **improving to 37.4%** from 35.2% in FY2022.



We have achieved this through sponsoring banking services via open Application Programming Interface (API) connectivity to Fintechs, leveraging on strategic partnerships that we formed with the likes of Merchantrade and Rakuten. This approach has led to a Year-on-Year (YoY) CASA growth of 13.2%. Additionally, our FX revenue has witnessed a 24% YoY growth, primarily driven by the robust SME segment.

We have gained further traction in the FX arena by rolling out our digital eFX platform to all 168 branches and integrating it into AmAccess Biz. As a result, we see 55% of FX transactions being conducted through automated or digitised processes.

We have also piloted the deployment of cash recycler machines (CRM) at key 7-Eleven outlets, providing micro-SMEs with a secure option for cash deposits.



## F5 Ramping Up the Next Wave of Digital Initiatives

Acknowledging the transformative power of digitalisation, we are harnessing it to equip our customers with superior financial capabilities through convenient and accessible banking. To this end, we have accelerated our digitalisation efforts by enhancing our digital infrastructure, data capabilities and touchpoints, while integrating digital capabilities within our internal operations to drive efficiency, foster collaboration and facilitate well-informed business decisions. Our digital transformation boosts our competitive edge through progressive and speedy insights for customer innovations and offerings.

AmBank embarked on a comprehensive digitalisation journey, spanning three distinct phases, to drive operational efficiency and deliver enhanced experiences. Phase 1, launched in 2017, introduced Project APEX, a transformative initiative aimed at improving front and back-end processes within Retail Banking. Through the implementation of straight-through processing (STP) and technology innovation, Project APEX significantly

enhanced process efficiency for customers and improved Bank's efficiency by about 1,200 FTEs. Simultaneously, the Bank rolled out Project AmACE, which focused on automating credit processes and reducing loan origination turnaround time, thereby elevating the experience for our valued business customers.

In 2019, AmBank commenced Phase 2 of its digitalisation footprint towards building the digitalisation momentum. The bank embraced automation through robotics with Project PARETO, further streamlining operations and improving efficiency by about 500 FTEs.

The Bank's digitalisation journey entered its third phase in 2022, marked by the launch of Project Orion. This transformative initiative established a robust data management platform, empowering employees with explainable data and actionable insights. Project Orion laid the foundation for AmBank's comprehensive digital transformation, enabling the bank to leverage data-driven strategies and deliver enhanced value to customers.

To reinforce its commitment to operational excellence through technology, AmBank established the Operational Excellence Taskforce (OPET) with the mentorship and guidance of the Board of Directors. OPET is dedicated to identifying and seizing operational improvement opportunities, leveraging technology to drive efficiency and sustainable growth across the organisation.

Through the enhancement of our digital touchpoints, we now boast over 1.57 million AmOnline users, signifying a four-fold increase in our user base since 2017, with over 82% of all banking transactions now conducted via AmOnline. We have also seen encouraging growth on our other platforms such as AmAccess Biz, AmEquities and AmAccess Corporate which all notched double-digit YoY growth in FY2023. Much of our success is attributable to our commitment to digitalising all aspects of our banking services. We have revamped the customer experience, allowing our personnel to focus on other value-add activities. Our QR-based cashless payment system is among the fastest in Malaysia, executing transactions in just 11 seconds.

More than **1.57 million** AmOnline users.

Over **82%** of all banking transactions now conducted via AmOnline.

Beyond this, we are integrating various ecosystems with our banking system, AmOnline such as Tabung Haji, ASNB and BonusLink, to provide a wider range of services to our customers. Recognising the increased risk of scams and fraud accompanying digital adoption, we have introduced a kill switch for customers and more robust security features for authentication.

In addition to seamless digital onboarding for SMEs via AmAccess Biz, we continually expand our range of payment solutions for customers. Our latest addition, Apple Pay, complements our existing payment features such as DuitNow QR, JomPAY, virtual account and sponsor bank initiatives. We are also the first bank in Malaysia to provide business-to-business API services via the real-time retail payment (RPP) platform DuitNow. These comprehensive offerings provide our customers with a wide array of convenient payment options to suit their needs.

Our inaugural AmDigital Day, themed "Next and Ahead", is a testament to our commitment to digital transformation, showcasing our digital propositions to investors, SMEs and corporate customers.

## GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE



Within AmBank, we have adopted robotic process automation (RPA) to speed up and automate repetitive tasks, allowing for the reassignment of our workforce to critical tasks. The efficiency-derived savings have been reinvested to expand revenue-generating personnel and enhance customer experience.

Our five-year Intelligence Driven Bank roadmap charts our digitalisation journey, outlining strategies to better understand customer behaviours and preferences and to empower our employees with enhanced decision-support insights. We are tapping into the potential of AI and machine learning to mitigate risks, boost efficiency and devise smart customer value propositions.



### F6 Future-Proofing the Workforce

Recognising the instrumental role that our team plays in steering our growth, we at AmBank continuously endeavour to create a nurturing environment, one that cultivates and recognises talent. Our focus remains on nurturing our future leaders through comprehensive leadership and talent development programmes and by instilling in them the skills and motivation necessary to foster AmBank's continual advancement.

From launching new training initiatives such as AmApprentice and AmDigital Graduate in FY2023 to cultivating talent through a robust development programme, we are future-proofing our workforce and ensuring a constant influx of fresh perspectives. Our Structured Internship Programme (SIP) also serves as a talent magnet, attracting the brightest young minds and fostering a stronger employer brand.



In August 2022, we took another significant step towards empowering our workforce by establishing the AmBank Digital Academy under the purview of the Digital Academy Management Council. The Academy has already started enriching more than 3,000 employees with digital skills and certifications, working in partnership with 10 learning partners to launch comprehensive digital competency programmes. In the spirit of promoting innovation and knowledge sharing through learning across industries and business sectors, we have also forged a collaboration with Capital A to enrol our employees in the AirAsia academy "Digital Marketing Certificate Complete Reskill Bootcamp".

Moreover, our employee-friendly policies, such as Hybrid Working Arrangements (HWA), extended parental leave, paid leave for charity work and enhanced medical coverage for our employees' children, contribute to a positive working atmosphere.

In our commitment to fostering a culture of 'Work-Life Balance' among our employees, we have taken proactive steps to organise a range of engaging activities throughout the year. These initiatives are spearheaded by our dedicated teams, including Group Human Resource (GHR), Group Corporate Communications and Marketing (GCCM) and Kelab AmBank Group (KAG).

Our staff engagement activities encompass a diverse array of programmes. One notable example is our Fireside Chat Series, where we invite leading industry experts to share their insights and expertise with our employees. Another popular initiative is 'Friyay at the Bank,' a weekly event where we treat our staff to complimentary goodies, including snacks, beverages and other treats.

In line with promoting a healthy lifestyle, we organised the highly successful AmBank Run, which was held at the Perdana Botanical Garden and saw the participation of 1,400 staff members.

To emphasise the significance of overall health and wellness, we conducted various health-related activities and engagement sessions during the Health & Wellness month. Additionally, we celebrated International Women's Day and Father's Day with special events dedicated to honouring the contributions of women and fathers within our organisation.

By prioritising employee engagement and well-being, we aim to create a harmonious work environment that nurtures both personal and professional growth for our valued staff members.

As a result of our sustained efforts, our Employee Engagement Index (EEI) has continued to improve, with a score of 86% in FY2023 compared to 78% in FY2022. Similarly, our employee engagement ratio increased significantly to 58% in FY2023 compared to 35% in FY2022.





## GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE



## F7 Integrating Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Considerations into Our Business

At AmBank, we are unwavering in our commitment to ESG principles. Our central role as a trusted banking partner equips us to support our customers in their transition to a more sustainable, low-carbon economy. We participated in the Bursa Carbon Exchange's inaugural electronic auction of carbon credits in March 2023, where AmBank (M) Berhad, AmBank Islamic Berhad and AmInvestment Bank Berhad emerged as successful bidders, acquiring a total of 150,000 Verra-registered carbon credits. We have also been selected as the exclusive banking partner for Pantas, a leading KL-based climate tech provider as part of BNM's Greening Value Chain (GVC) Programme. Through our participation, AmBank will provide 5,000 SMEs access to carbon accounting software to track and report their carbon emissions, thus assisting them in their decarbonisation journey.

We have also been selected as the **exclusive banking partner for Pantas, a leading KL-based climate tech provider** as part of BNM's Greening Value Chain (GVC) Programme.



In the past year, we set ESG targets as part of our commitment to sustainability, committing to lend 70% of our portfolio to companies with low ESG Risk Grades by 2030 and to become Carbon Net Zero by 2050. Reflecting our commitment, we disbursed RM1.94 billion of Green Financing in FY2023 across our Retail, Business and Wholesale Banking franchises.

As part of our efforts to shape and facilitate energy transition in Malaysia, our Business Banking segment has connected solar panel installers with our SME customers while at the same time offering financing. Our Retail Banking segment offers special rates for the financing of electric vehicles (EVs). We have also stopped providing new loans or financing to coal-fired plants and to companies with significant coal-related revenue.

At the crossroads of financial innovation and ecological responsibility, our Wholesale Banking division aims to be the preferred banking partner for clients embarking on sustainability-focused ventures. This is accomplished through our distinct offering of Green Financing. Working hand in hand with our Investment Banking unit, we empower our clients to access the bond market via sustainability-linked Sukuk. Moreover, our Investment Banking division is making significant strides in supporting ESG investments by launching initiatives such as the Sustainable Series Fund and reengineering existing funds to incorporate sustainability principles.

One of our strategic levers to expedite the transition towards sustainable energy is the implementation of our exclusion list. We have taken a firm stand against lending or financing new projects linked to coal-fired plants or companies with coal-related activities contributing to 20% or more of their revenue and production cost. However, certain exceptional circumstances may necessitate continued engagement, such as when the financing is not linked to coal-based activities, supports national power or energy entities, or in the interest of protecting the nation's energy security.

Reaffirming our commitment to the management of climate-related risks and seizing opportunities embedded within a low-carbon transition, AmBank joined the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) in July 2022. To bolster this pledge, we refined our Green Financing Guidelines to include principles from MyHijau and BNM's Climate Change and Principle-based Taxonomy.

From an industry perspective, we continue to be instrumental in fostering the expansion of both sustainability and Value-Based Intermediation (VBI) practices across the banking sector. AmBank Islamic is leading the charge by representing the Group on the risk management subcommittee of the BNM and Securities Commission Joint Committee on Climate Change and the VBI Sectoral Guide Working Group, contributing to the development of sector-specific guidelines.

To further demonstrate the Bank's commitment on its sustainability agenda, we have established the Sustainability Taskforce with the mentorship and guidance of the Board of Directors, aimed at delivering sustainable values for our stakeholders and fulfilling our aspirations of building a prosperous community around us.

## GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE



### F8 The Digital Bank

While we did not apply for a digital banking license, we are charting our path towards digital innovation, incubating what is essentially the fifth line of business to be an integral facet of our Focus 8 strategy. This move not only supplements our diverse revenue generation portfolios, but also forges an inclusive financial landscape catering to the emerging segments of our economy that are underserved or unserved - from fresh graduates and influencers to gig workers and micro-SMEs. We are steadfast in our commitment to fostering financial inclusivity, a mission in alignment with BNM's financial inclusion framework.

We see our collaboration with existing ecosystem partners not merely as a network, but as an alliance that is rich with opportunities for mutual growth and innovation. We envisage creating a dynamic ecosystem where our combined expertise amplifies the reach to our consumer base and fuels the co-creation of unique value propositions. Our collaboration with BonusLink and our telco partner exemplifies this approach, enabling us to offer solutions that enhance the financial flexibility of our customers, while expanding our reach and reducing customer acquisition costs.

Through these partnerships and our continuous commitment to digital innovation, we look forward to offering a diverse portfolio of services that meet our customers' everyday needs, propelling us further on our path of digital transformation.



### OUTLOOK & PROSPECTS

As we look to the future, we anticipate a challenging global environment characterised by higher interest rates and consequent dampening of global economic growth. However, domestically, there are still optimistic indicators. With manageable inflation and BNM's assertion of resilient domestic growth prospects through its recent adjustment of the Overnight Policy Rate (OPR) back to pre-pandemic levels, Malaysia's economy exhibits robust health. We project a solid GDP growth of 4.5% in 2023, following a strong expansion of 8.7% in 2022.

As we transition into the year 2024, AmBank Group will continue to harness challenges and opportunities, with a keen focus on the SME sector, ESG considerations and digital transformation.

Our vision for the SME segment is marked by promising growth opportunities. Expanding our presence both domestically and internationally through partnerships, supporting the proliferation of industrial parks and fostering the growth of the tourism and travel sector stand at the top of our agenda. We are also formulating strategies to capture foreign direct investments (FDI) from North Asia, coupled with targeted expansions within the key regions of Malaysia.

Our commitment to ESG compels us to enhance our ability to finance energy transition. Opportunities abound in transition finance, green home financing, electric mobility financing and the financing of renewable energy enterprises. Additionally, we aim to finance sustainable agribusinesses that contribute to emissions reduction in agriculture and bolster the nation's food security.

Digitalisation remains at the forefront of our strategic priorities. As we tread the path of our Intelligence Driven Bank roadmap, our efforts will be directed towards fortifying our digital channels and enhancing our physical channels through data-driven insights. The expansion of our cross-industry digital ecosystem will be supported by forging new partnerships, aiming to cater to an even wider customer segment. Our digital bank, our fifth line of business, will continue to strive towards serving the unserved and underserved, in support of BNM's financial inclusion framework.

As we enter the final year of the Focus 8 strategy, we remain determined to elevate our performance and propel AmBank Group to the next level of growth.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere appreciation to the Chairman and members of the Board for their unwavering support, leadership and guidance throughout the year. Their strategic insights have been instrumental to the Bank's success, and we are grateful for their unwavering commitment to delivering on our long-term vision and goals.

My heartfelt thanks to our employees, whose resilience, dedication and unwavering commitment to serving our customers have enabled us to navigate a challenging and rapidly changing environment successfully. It is a matter of great pride to lead such an extraordinary team.

I extend my sincerest appreciation to our customers for their unwavering faith in us. We pledge our continued commitment to delivering innovative and reliable financial solutions that cater to their evolving needs.

To our shareholders and regulators, I express my profound gratitude for your undivided guidance and support. Your continued assistance and the avenues you provide play a vital role in enabling us to uphold our principles and values while serving our customers. Your partnership ensures that we remain steadfast in our commitment to responsibility.

Amidst the uncertainties of recent years, we have stood resilient and have consistently delivered on our promise and commitment to all our stakeholders. Our focus remains on creating enduring value for all our stakeholders. The past year has brought significant accomplishments and as we refuse to rest on our laurels, we look forward to another strong year ahead.

Thank you for your continued trust and confidence in AmBank.