



**AI COOPERATION, DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES ARE KEY FOCUS AREAS AT 31ST APEC
MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRADE (MRT) MEETING
IN REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and demographic challenges will be the key priorities at the 31st APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) Meeting in Jeju, Republic of Korea (ROK) on 15-16 May 2025. The Malaysian delegation to the MRT will be led by YB Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Aziz, Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI).

The 31st APEC MRT Meeting will be chaired by His Excellency Inkyo Cheong, Minister for Trade, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of ROK. As the host of APEC 2025, **the ROK has adopted the theme “Building a Sustainable Tomorrow: Connect. Innovate. Prosper.”**

Given current global trading challenges, **Malaysia will utilise the APEC platform to reaffirm its strong commitment to a transparent, rules-based multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core.** This is in alignment with the ROK’s thematic priorities - *Connectivity through the Multilateral Trading System, AI Innovation for Trade Facilitation and Prosperity through Sustainable Trade.*

Malaysia’s commitment is also consistent with the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040, which calls for open, fair and non-discriminatory trade and investment to drive regional integration and promote sustainable, inclusive growth. Malaysia fully supports APEC’s focus on AI as a catalyst for trade facilitation and innovation, which directly reflects the Vision’s aspiration for an open, dynamic, resilient, and peaceful Asia-Pacific community powered by innovation and digitalisation.

YB Tengku Zafrul said, **“Malaysia remains committed to working closely with the APEC economies to ensure that sustainability, innovation and open trade are reinforcing and beneficial to all economies,** as the region moves towards a more resilient, inclusive and future-ready Asia-Pacific.”

The MRT Meeting is being held amidst global uncertainties and the pressing need for the Asia-Pacific region to uphold multilateralism, enhance free trade and strengthen supply chains. In view of this, the Malaysian delegation to the MRT, led by YB Tengku Zafrul, will also engage in **bilateral meetings with key trade partners including the APEC-ASEAN Trade Ministers,** as well as the **Director-General of the WTO, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.** The **Informal Ministerial Meeting of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)** will also be held on the sidelines of the APEC meetings.

MINISTRY OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY (MITI)

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About MITI:

MITI is the key driver in making Malaysia the preferred destination for quality investments and enhancing the nation's rising status as a globally competitive trading nation. Its objectives and roles are oriented towards ensuring Malaysia's rapid economic development and help achieve the country's stated goal of becoming a developed nation.

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