



## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**BY**

**YB DATUK LIM BAN HONG  
DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL  
TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

**AT**

**THE OPENING OF  
THE eNATIONAL EXPORT DAY (eNED) 2021**

**“REINVENTING BUSINESS DURING THE  
PANDEMIC AND BEYOND”**

**13 July 2021 (Tuesday)**

**9.15 am**

**YBhg. Tan Sri Dr. Halim Mohammad  
Chairman of MATRADE,**

**En. Mohd. Mustafa Abdul Aziz  
CEO of MATRADE**

**Honourable guests,  
Distinguished speakers,  
Ladies and gentlemen.**

**Salam Sejahtera,**

**A very good morning, good afternoon and good evening to everyone joining the event remotely from various parts of the world.**

- 1. It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the eNational Export Day 2021 (eNED2021), organised by the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) With a theme “Reignite Your Exports”, today’s initiative is set to articulate the transformation of our Malaysian exports in the face of the pandemic.**
- 2. To begin with, among its greatest impact has been the disruption of the global supply chain particularly for**

**Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). I, however have witnessed the agility of Malaysian exporters who are quick to adapt and make the necessary adjustments to stay afloat in today's very challenging economic climate.**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

- 3. The Government's response has been to strike a balance between protecting lives and livelihoods.**
- 4. Under the National Recovery Plan, the thresholds set in order for us to move from Phase 1 to Phase 4 are necessary so as to ensure that we successfully come out of the pandemic. In this regard, the task force set up by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) to monitor the operations of local manufacturers around the nation, plays an essential role in ensuring strict compliance with the SOPs.**
- 5. The Government has redoubled its efforts to accelerate vaccination through the National COVID-19 Immunisation Program (PICK), especially for the most vulnerable groups. Complementing PICK is the**

**introduction of the Public-Private Partnership COVID-19 Industry Immunisation Program (PIKAS).**

- 6. This is an innovative approach in supporting the Government's aspiration to reach herd immunity among the community. It is aimed at workers in the manufacturing sector and managed by MITI. While the Government provides the vaccines for free, the private sector will be contributing their resources in running the vaccination centres (PPVs) developed across the country. As of 5 July 2021, 4,601 companies with 676,544 workers have registered in the program.**
  
- 7. The vaccination of the business community will bring a positive impact to the local export businesses and the key to reigniting our exports**
  
- 8. Undoubtedly, our businesses play a key role in the global supply chain for essential products particularly for the health sector. As a trading nation, we hope there will be a gradual opening of the economic sectors to save our businesses from the long-term damage.**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

- 9. Malaysia's trade had shown positive growth trajectory since September 2020, following the progressive opening of the economy and gradual recovery of external demand.**
- 10. In 2020, while Malaysia's trade contracted by 3.6 per cent to RM1.777 trillion (USD423.66 billion), our trade surplus recorded the fourth consecutive year of double-digit growth, with an expansion of 26.9 per cent to RM184.79 billion (USD44.20 billion) compared to 2019. Therefore, in spite of the challenges, Malaysia's exports have shown a positive growth trajectory, following the progressive opening of the economy and gradual recovery of external demand.**
- 11. For 2021, trade for the first five months grew by 26 per cent to RM867.4 billion (USD212.04 billion), compared to 2020. The export growth was contributed mainly by robust demand for E&E products mainly semiconductors due to the increasing orders for work-from-home equipment and digitalisation of businesses, rubber products as well as petroleum products.**
- 12. Most notably, being the largest global supplier, contributing approximately 50 per cent of rubber**

**gloves in the global market, Malaysia had benefitted from the strong demand for rubber gloves during the pandemic, where exports surged by 234.4 per cent to RM30.09 billion (USD7.36 billion).**

- 13. Malaysia's export growth is projected to rebound by 8.2 per cent in 2021 (2020: ↓1.4%), driven by the improvement in external demand.**
- 14. The Government takes cognisance of the plight of the *Rakyat*, thus, have introduced various measures to aid our businesses. To date, the Government has announced strategic and targeted assistance in the form of seven stimulus packages amounting to RM380 billion to cushion the economic and social impacts of the pandemic experienced by various segments of the community, encompassing individuals, families, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), informal sectors and businesses.**
- 15. The Government takes seriously the economic impact Malaysian businesses are facing and as a response measure the Government has announced the PEMULIH financial aid package worth RM150 billion with a fiscal injection of RM10 billion to lessen the burden faced by**

**businesses. The economic stimulus package announced by the Prime Minister, remains to be a manifestation of the Government's resolute stance to walk the fine balance between lives and livelihoods, and is especially vital in serving the interest of the *Rakyat* as a whole. The business community in particular is given much consideration under the third objective of the aid package, that is to support business continuity, through the implementation of initiatives such as the increased allocation for PRIHATIN Special Grant expected to benefit almost one million eligible enterprises, as well as micro-credit facilities made available for small businesses, street vendors and micro-enterprises with financing rates as low as 3%.**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

- 16. Through the recent unveiling of Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint, foundations are being laid out for the nation to strategically transform itself towards an advanced digital economy, with concrete action plans to efficiently implement the efforts and initiatives in realising the aspirations of MyDIGITAL. This is pivotal in creating a business ecosystem, which is imperative**

for businesses to become enablers for revolutionary growth in the economy.

17. Indeed, the Government's commitment for digitalisation is manifested in its endeavours through the Jalanan Digital Negara (JENDELA) plan. This is to ensure that transition of the country towards 5G technology and timely delivery of broadband services nationwide can be a reality for the *Rakyat*.
18. The National Investment Aspirations (NIA), a forward-looking growth framework that will form the basis for comprehensive reforms of Malaysia's investment policies has also been launched. At its core, the NIA will focus on coherence and cohesiveness, with these aspirations being reflected across all national policy documents and initiatives related to investment, including the Fourth Industrial Masterplan and the 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan.
19. In a nutshell, the NIA aims to attract strategic and high-quality investments which will definitely benefit the export business of local SMEs as we see more and more foreign MNC setting their footprint in the country.



- 20. In closing, I believe that this annual event, will create an effective platform in the new normal to impart knowledge and technical know-how on export opportunities and strategies, through constructive and engaging discourses with businesses. I urge businesses to actively participate in the trade promotion programmes made available throughout the year.**
- 21. With this synergy set into motion, it is hoped that the continuous recovery of Malaysian exporters can take place, ultimately building our economic resilience in the long-run.**

**Thank you.**