



## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**YB SENATOR TENGKU DATUK SERI UTAMA ZAFRUL  
TENGKU ABDUL AZIZ  
MINISTER OF INVESTMENT, TRADE & INDUSTRY**

**YOUTH EMPOWERMENT FAIR  
“EMPOWERING YOUTH IN DIGITAL WORKFORCE”**

**14 SEPTEMBER (SUNDAY) | 10:00 AM  
WORLD TRADE CENTRE, PWTC  
DEWAN TUN HUSSEIN ONN**

[SALUTATIONS]

Assalamualaikum warrahmatullahi wabarakatuh,  
Salam Malaysia MADANI, and a very good morning.

1. I wish to thank the organisers - for inviting me be at this **Youth Empowerment Fair 2025**. It is inspiring to be here today, surrounded by young, bright minds - who will shape Malaysia's future.
2. The theme - "**Empowering Youth in the Digital Workforce**" - is not just timely. It is the most critical economic and social mission of our time. Today, I wish to touch upon not just how you can prepare for the future, but also become the architects of it.

## **THE NEW WORKFORCE REALITY: ADAPT TO LEAD**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. The world is changing at an unprecedented pace. A study<sup>1</sup> has forecast that by 2030, **44%** of a **worker's core skills** will need to change, driven by two powerful forces: **emerging technology** and the **green transition**.

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<sup>1</sup> World Economic Forum Report

4. A recent TalentCorp study<sup>2</sup> confirms this for the Malaysian employment space - showing a surge in demand for new roles like **AI Specialists, Data Scientists, and Sustainability Engineers**. The study also highlights that **29 new job roles** are expected to become **critical** in the **next 3-5 years** across 10 key sectors. These include the **Aerospace, E&E and ICT subsectors**, all of which are vital to Malaysia's economy.
5. This is not just a shift. It is a complete rewiring of the economy. To help youths capitalise on this development, MITI is focused on ensuring your careers can flourish within this new high-tech environment. We do this through our **three core pillars: Industrial Development, Investment Promotion, and International Trade**.

## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. For Malaysia to achieve the status of a high-income nation, one key factor is Malaysia's systematic reindustrialisation. Through policies like the **New Industrial Master Plan 2030** and the **National Semiconductor Strategy**, MITI is not only paving our path towards reindustrialisation, but also actively promoting our industries to embrace high

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<sup>2</sup> TalentCorp's Impact Study on AI, Digitalisation and the Green Economy, September 2024 (Reported through a KESUMA/TalentCorp Paper circulated to Majlis Ekonomi Digital dan 4IR Negara, 4 December 2024)

technology and digitalisation. We want to ensure that a "Made in Malaysia" stamp is a **mark of quality** and **innovation**. This in turn creates the high-value jobs of the future.

7. One of the NSS's missions is also to train **60,000 high-skilled engineers** for the **semiconductor industry**. But our ambition goes beyond strengthening our semiconductor industry. We want to establish Malaysia as a **Generative AI Hub** by 2030. And to position Malaysia as a creator and innovator in the AI space, we are looking to integrate this powerful technology across our entire economy.
8. Related to these are clear career opportunities for all of you, co-created by **MITI and its agencies**. For example:
  - Our agency, **MARii**, is establishing dedicated digital hubs to build expertise in data analytics, robotics, and AI specifically for the future of the automotive and mobility sectors.
  - The **Malaysia Productivity Corporation** has partnered with **Siemens** –to train our workforce on cutting-edge tools like AI and digital twins, creating an environment where the pursuit of innovation and excellence becomes a norm.

- The **Engineering Talent for Semiconductor Industry programme** – jointly spearheaded by **CREST** and **HRD Corp** – offers structured internships and targeted training to develop the engineers required by our high-tech, high-value industries.
9. Initiatives such as these ensure that our **industrial growth** is supported by a robust **talent pipeline**. This is where **Malaysian youths and STEM graduates** can take up **high-value, high-paying roles in the industry**.
10. Let me provide a better context to that concept. In **2024**, our **aerospace industry recorded RM25.1 billion in revenue**, the highest in the past 10 years. And believe it or not - our aerospace industry **currently employs only 30,000 skilled workers**.

## **INTERNATIONAL TRADE.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. As for **international trade**, our responsibility is to create a **dynamic and competitive trading environment** to support your careers. By promoting our exports to various international markets, we are also pushing our industries to adopt the highest international standards and the latest technologies.

12. Through trade agreements like the **CPTPP** and **RCEP**, we create opportunities for our companies and MSMEs to **expand** their **markets**, which in turn creates demand for a **globally-minded, highly skilled workforce** – all these are opportunities for all of you.
13. In terms of the digital economy, Malaysia, during our **ASEAN Chairmanship** in **2025**, is also pushing for the substantial conclusion of the **ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA)**. This is a landmark initiative to create a seamless and inclusive digital economy in ASEAN.
14. By **harmonising digital trade** rules, we aim to unlock the full potential of ASEAN's digital economy, which is projected to double to **US\$2 trillion by 2030**.
15. DEFA will create immense demand for **digitally-skilled talent** to drive **regional value chains**, empowering our youth and MSMEs to **innovate** and **scale** across a market of **over 680 million people**. This also means many more **career opportunities** for you, and many of them will **not be confined by borders**.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTHS: SEIZE THE MOMENT!

16. We are building the ecosystem, but **you** must seize the opportunities. The TalentCorp study I mentioned earlier confirms that you need **two sets** of **skills** – both **technical** and **human skills**.
17. Yes, the **technical skills** like Data Analytics, AI, and Cloud Computing are your **ticket** to the game. But in a world increasingly powered by Artificial Intelligence, it is still the **real human skills** - like the capacity for human empathy - that will help you win.
18. **Additionally, you must make agility** your new superpower. **Agility**, combined with **a passion for lifelong learning** is your best career strategy - **to thrive, to build resilience, and to win** in high-tech sectors.
19. So, my concluding message to you is this: The **future** is not a path you find; it is a **reality** you **create**. Use the tools of this **digital age** to create something of value to humanity, solve world problems, while building a **smarter, greener**, and more **inclusive** future for **Malaysians**.
20. Policymakers like MITI have been laying the foundation and provided all the opportunities – they are yours for the taking. And we fervently hope you will **apply your talent, energy**,

**and your ambition to these opportunities, to help shape  
a more progressive future for Malaysia.**

Thank you.