



**MINISTRY OF
INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

YB SENATOR TENGKU DATUK SERI UTAMA ZAFRUL TENGKU

ABDUL AZIZ

MINISTER OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY

AT THE

“MALAYSIA - FRANCE GALA NIGHT”

**(ORGANISED BY THE MALAYSIAN FRENCH CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY)**

13 NOVEMBER 2025 (THURSDAY)

8.00 PM – 10.30 PM

ST. REGIS HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR

Monsieur Olivier SIGAUD

Deputy Head of Mission

Embassy of France in Malaysia

Yang Berbahagia Datuk Zainal Amanshah

Honorary Chairman of the Malaysian French Chamber of Commerce
& Industry

Monsieur Richard FOSTIER

President of the Malaysian French Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Tan Sri-Tan Sri, Dato-Dato,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mesdames et Messieurs

Bonsoir, Good Evening.

1. On behalf of Yang Amat Berhormat Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia, whom I have the honour to represent this evening, I extend my sincere appreciation to the Malaysian-French Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the kind invitation. It is a pleasure to join you at this prestigious Annual Gala Dinner.
2. I'm delighted to see many familiar faces—and many new ones. Your presence reflects the strong and growing interest of French businesses in Malaysia, a momentum further

strengthened by the Prime Minister's visit to France in July this year.

Malaysia's Economic Outlook and Strategic Partnership with France

3. Allow me to briefly reflect on **Malaysia's broader trade and investment landscape**. Our GDP grew by 4.4% in the first half of 2025.
4. Trade remains the **lifeblood of our economy**. With a **trade-to-GDP ratio of 134%**—among the highest globally—**Malaysia is deeply integrated into the global economy**.
5. To sustain this momentum, Malaysia is actively diversifying its trade partnerships, **expanding into emerging markets** such as the **Middle East, Africa, and Latin America**. We currently implement **18 Free Trade Agreements** and are **negotiating several more** — including with **the EU, the GCC and Canada via ASEAN**. Malaysia also just concluded its **FTA negotiations with South Korea**.
6. What does all this mean for the French businesses here in Malaysia? What we see is **future potential, market access and partnerships**.
7. As of June 2025, 149 projects with French participation have been **implemented, totalling RM6.3 billion** and creating over

12,000 jobs. As Malaysia's **fourth-largest trading partner** in the EU, and **the fourth-largest EU investor**, I am confident we can achieve more.

8. **These figures, and their growth potential** are not abstract—they are **represented by many of you in this room**. Leading French companies such as **Total Energies, Safran, Airbus, Club Med, L'Oréal, Engie, Air Liquide, STMicroelectronics, and BNP Paribas** have made Malaysia their home, contributing to our industrial growth, job creation, and tech advancement.
9. French investment in Malaysia is not just capital—it speaks of **confidence, collaboration, and a common ambition**.
10. Our **Prime Minister's visit to France (mentioned earlier)** secured **RM4 billion** in investment commitments across **high-tech manufacturing, aerospace, renewable energy, tourism, digital economy, and sustainable infrastructure**.
11. **Export opportunities worth RM675 million** were also unlocked in sectors aligned with our **industrial reform and green investment objectives**.
12. **We look forward to these ventures taking shape**—serving Malaysia's domestic economy and leveraging our position as a dynamic hub for ASEAN trade.

13. Additionally, the **resumption of Malaysia-EU Free Trade Agreement (MEUFTA) negotiations** signals our shared belief in open, rules-based trade as a driver of prosperity and high-quality job creation. Once concluded, this Agreement will **deepen industrial linkages, strengthen supply chains, and foster a resilient, mutually beneficial partnership** between Malaysia and France.

Whole-of-nation Effort: Partnering with Malaysia

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. Malaysia is at a pivotal point in its development journey. Our economy has grown steadily, but we are now **consciously investing in infrastructure, empowering talent, and building a future-ready economy**—one that values innovation, sustainability, and shared prosperity.
15. Malaysia is charting this **bold industrial transformation through the NIMP 2030**. The goal is clear: push for **advanced manufacturing, energy transition, and digital industries**, while **attracting quality investments, boosting productivity, and empowering SMEs** to move up the value chain.
16. To that end, we **value French expertise in aerospace, energy, and technology**, and welcoming deeper **collaboration in green**

manufacturing, clean technologies, and industrial innovation.

17. I'm especially pleased to know that **nearly half of the 600 French businesses in Malaysia** were founded by **entrepreneurs who chose Malaysia** as their launchpad. We value that trust and confidence. I also assure you that **MITI**, alongside **MIDA and MATRADE**, stands ready to support **international companies** and **foster strong partnerships**.
18. Our **infrastructures, facilities, as well as investment and export processes** are updated regularly and appropriately, so, you can **focus on what you do best: developing your business**.

Malaysia's Navigation of Geopolitics and the ASEAN Chairmanship

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

19. As Malaysia navigates the **evolving global trading order**, I call on all of you to **work with us in sustaining market confidence** and **ensuring economic security**.
20. Through the NIMP, Malaysia seeks **economic transformation that generates inclusive and sustainable industrial growth**. We believe French businesses can help us shape a **new model**

of cooperation that combines innovation, sustainability and shared prosperity.

21. This is even more important now with the world wrought by **geopolitical tensions** — from the Russia-Ukraine conflict to U.S.-China competition — that **have already reshaped global supply chains.**
22. **Malaysia believes in engagement, not isolation.** We advocate open, rules-based trade **that transcend political divides,** to ensure continuity of trade, technology, and sustainable growth. **In a bifurcated, multi-polar world, Malaysia chooses dialogue, neutrality, and inclusive prosperity.**
23. And this has been the **same ethos that we applied to our Chairmanship of ASEAN this year** – a term marked by advances in ASEAN's **economic integration, regional unity,** as well as **digital and green resilience.**
24. In **deepening ASEAN's engagement with external partners, including the EU and France**—we are simply recognising that cross-regional collaboration is essential to sustaining growth and stability.

Closing

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

25. I hope tonight's gathering inspires deeper understanding, new collaborations, and shared opportunities. **Let us build not just markets—but also meaningful partnerships that shape a better tomorrow.**

26. Congratulations once again to the Malaysian-French Chamber of Commerce and Industry for this successful Gala Dinner.

I wish everyone a pleasant and enjoyable evening. *Merci beaucoup et bonne soirée.*