

**WELCOME REMARKS BY  
YB DATO' SERI MOHAMED AZMIN BIN ALI  
SENIOR MINISTER,  
MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
AT THE LAUNCHING CEREMONY OF  
NATIONAL TRADE BLUEPRINT**

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Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,

Yang Amat Berhormat Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Bin Yaakob,  
Prime Minister of Malaysia,

Yang Berhormat - Yang Berhormat,

Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Dato' Sri Mohd Zuki Bin Ali,  
Chief Secretary to the Government,

Leaders of Trade and Industry Associations and Business Chambers,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Warm greetings to everyone.

1. It is a great honour to have the presence of Yang Amat Berhormat Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Bin Yaakob, Prime Minister of Malaysia at this launching ceremony of the National Trade Blueprint.

Ladies and gentlemen,

2. In today's globalised world, trade has become one of the primary drivers of a nation's economic growth and countries that have fostered business-friendly ecosystems have benefitted most from international trade activities.
3. The Malaysian government is fully committed to fostering an environment where our export sector can thrive and remain sustainable in the face of external challenges.
4. On this note, I am delighted to share that despite the adverse impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic last year, Malaysia's trade for the first eight months of this year grew by 22.9 per cent to RM1.407 trillion, compared to the same period in 2020. Exports increased by 24.9 per cent to RM778.49 billion and imports rose by 20.4 per cent to RM628.29 billion. Trade surplus surged by 48.2 per cent to RM150.20 billion.
5. Nevertheless, we continue to face challenges to our export competitiveness impacted by global economic uncertainties across multilateral fronts. Indeed, there is a dire need to quickly respond to these headwinds. While national level promotions play a useful role, we need the support of a strong business ecosystem to further strengthen Malaysia's position as a leading exporting nation.
6. Towards this end, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry in collaboration with the Malaysia External Trade Development

Corporation (MATRADE), commissioned the development of the National Trade Blueprint as a strategic document to further evolve Malaysia's business ecosystem and enhance our export competitiveness in the global marketplace.

7. I wish to take this opportunity to thank each and every one who has contributed towards completion of the Blueprint. It is heartening to note the synergies between the public and private sectors in pooling their resources to formulate this valuable document as we continue working to propel the nation's economy.
8. On a final note, allow me to assure you that as the nation's economic frontliner, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry will continue to spearhead and ensure the implementation of the National Trade Blueprint, together with all the stakeholders.
9. With that, it is my greatest pleasure to invite Yang Amat Berhormat Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Bin Yaakob, Prime Minister of Malaysia to deliver the keynote address and officially launch the National Trade Blueprint.

Thank you.