



**MINISTRY OF
INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

OPENING REMARKS BY

**YB LIEW CHIN TONG
DEPUTY MINISTER OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY (MITI)**

AT THE

**EXPANDING HORIZONS:
EXPORTING ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES OVERSEAS**

**19 FEBRUARY 2025
PERDANA HALL, MITI TOWER**

Salutation list

Ar. Adrianta Aziz, President of Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia

Ar. Thirilogachandran, Chairman of the Export of Specialised Services Task Force,

Distinguished speakers, guests, PAM members, and participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Salam Sejahtera, Salam Malaysia MADANI and a very good morning.

I would like to thank PAM for inviting me to say a few words at this important gathering of Malaysia's architect community.

1. Malaysian architecture has long been celebrated for its **seamless blend of modern functionality with deep cultural heritage**.
2. Despite our strength in this field, however, architecture **remains an under-developed export segment**. Malaysia's total **services trade reached RM433.2 billion in 2023**, yet the contribution of architecture and professional design services has **not been fully capitalised on** in global markets. While **transport, ICT, and business services** dominate our services export profile, architecture should emerge as a strong contributor.
3. A common narrative suggests that Malaysia **lacks talent in specialised fields**. I disagree. The **real challenge is not a talent shortage but a need for Malaysia to take pride in our talents, pay them well, and push them to explore new boundaries and horizons**.
4. We see this reflected in **Malaysia's RM17 billion services trade deficit in business services**, which includes architecture. The heavy reliance on **foreign consultants for specialised expertise** reflects an old colonial mindset to assume that we have no local expertise. **We must strategically reduce dependence on foreign consultants by investing in local professionals**.
5. The Government and its agencies, GLICs and GLCs, Malaysian private sectors, need to come together to prioritise Malaysian architects while pushing them to gain more international exposure and accreditation.

6. Malaysia's strategic location provides an unique advantage, but we must **actively promote Kuala Lumpur and other key cities as architectural service hubs**. This means:
 - Increasing Malaysian participation in international design projects and tenders;
 - Encouraging partnerships between local architects and global firms;
 - Enhancing Malaysia's presence in major architectural expos and trade fairs; and
 - Promoting foreign investment in Malaysian architectural firms.
7. By integrating these initiatives, we can ensure that Malaysia is not only seen as an exporter of goods but also as a recognised leader in architectural services.
8. To drive the expansion of Malaysia's architectural sector globally, **MITI, through MATRADE, will work closely with PAM** to:
 - Expand networking and business development programs for local firms;
 - Facilitate international certifications for Malaysian architects;
 - Support greater participation in trade missions and exhibitions;
 - Advocate for policies that enhance global market access;
 - Provide financing facilities for firms looking to bid on international projects; and
 - Encourage local universities to collaborate with global architectural institutions.
9. These efforts will ensure that Malaysian architectural firms are better equipped to compete internationally.
10. Malaysia has all the ingredients to excel in architectural exports—a rich professional base, a distinctive cultural identity, and a strong design ethos. Now, we must **work together to elevate our global presence**.
11. This is our moment to turn **Malaysia's architectural expertise into an important economic asset**.

Thank you.