



**MINISTRY OF
INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

SPEECH BY

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**MINISTER OF INVESTMENT, TRADE, AND INDUSTRY
MALAYSIA**

IN CONJUNCTION WITH

DHL GOTRADE SUMMIT 2025

21 OCTOBER 2025 (TUESDAY), 3.15 P.M.

**MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND EXHIBITION
CENTRE (MITEC)**

The Right Hon. Dato' Seri Anwar bin Ibrahim

Prime Minister of Malaysia

The Hon. Liew Chin Tong

Deputy Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Malaysia

The Hon. Dato' Seri Reezal Merican Naina Merican

Chairman, MATRADE

Ms. Johanna Hill

Deputy Director-General, World Trade Organisation

Mr. John Pearson

CEO, DHL Express

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Salam Malaysia MADANI and good afternoon,

1. Firstly, thank you to **Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, our Hon. Prime Minister**, for gracing this GoTrade Summit 2025, organised by DHL in partnership with MITI and MATRADE. We are honoured by your presence. *Terima kasih, Dato' Sri, atas kesudian menghadiri majlis ini. Kami amat berbesar hati menerima kedatangan Dato' Sri.*

2. To the DHL Team, **thank you for choosing Malaysia for this year's Summit.** We feel honoured to know that this is **the first time it is held outside Germany.** This also gives us this perfect opportunity to shape the MSME growth agenda together with key private sector partners like you in Malaysia. **MSME Empowerment** is also an area which we have proactively focused on as the **theme of several ASEAN side events** during our Chairmanship year.

NAVIGATING GLOBAL TRADE IN CURRENT GEOPOLITICS AND GEOECONOMICS LANDSCAPE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. I am sure all of us agree that 2025 has been a pretty volatile year for global trade – underpinned by **trade networks** that have been **re-tuned** and **re-tooled by tariffs, trade wars**, as well as **turf wars**.
4. To add to that complexity, **supply chains that mirror new geopolitical alliances** and **climate disasters** continue to **threaten the integrity of the world order**. All these have added a **huge risk premium** to the **resilience, sustainability, sovereignty, and security** of our current trade architecture.
5. Just take **tariffs**, whose **impacts are threefold**:
 - a. **First**, it has caused **cost inflation** across borders;
 - b. **Second**, it has led to **fragmented supply chains** and a certain degree of **dumping, challenging price points** for producers;
 - c. And **third**, it has caused **businesses' hesitation in investing** due to the **uncertainty** .

6. This is precisely why we need to **re-think and re-tune trade differently**, particularly to **help our MSMEs shape, sustain or shift their strategy**, where necessary. This is important given how **MSMEs are the backbone of ASEAN and Malaysia's economy**.

HOW MALAYSIA IS LEVERAGING THE ASEAN CHAIRMANSHIP TO SUPPORT MSMEs

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. As Chair in 2025, Malaysia is committed to **elevating ASEAN as a beacon of economic resilience, opportunity, and regional cooperation**. Our **combined GDP of almost USD4 trillion** ranks us as **the world's fifth-largest economy**.
8. ASEAN is also **the world's third-largest trading bloc**, generating **over USD3.8 trillion in total trade¹**, while continuing to strengthen its positioning as a **premier investment destination**.
9. For the record, ASEAN attracted **USD226 billion in FDI last year²**, up 8% even as global FDI dipped 11%. Indeed, **with ASEAN's principle of centrality and neutrality**, coupled with our **young demographics, natural resources and other advantages**, we are well-poised to be the **fourth largest economy by 2030**.
10. Our collective efforts to achieve that vision are **guided by the ASEAN Community Vision 2045** and the **ASEAN Economic Community Strategic Plan 2026–2030**.

¹ ASEAN Secretariat, Trade database as of July 2025

² ASEAN Secretariat, FDI database as of July 2025

11. All these blueprints aim to accelerate the **modernisation of trade agreements**, and **eliminate non-tariff barriers**, while **driving transformative, inclusive and sustainable growth** across the region.
12. Against this backdrop, **Malaysia takes the responsibility of elevating our MSMEs seriously**. This is evident from several **Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs)** that champion their needs, like:
 - a. **Catalysing access to climate financing**;
 - b. Growing a **more inclusive ASEAN capital market**;
 - c. Establishing the **MSME Centre of Excellence for green transition**; and
 - d. Creating a strong digital economy foundation via our **Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA)**.
13. I am pleased to share that most of these PEDs will be completed by the end of our Chairmanship tenure.

MADANI GOVERNMENT'S POLICY SUPPORTING SMES' GROWTH

Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. In **cascading our ASEAN commitment to the Malaysian context**, the next pertinent question is: **can policymakers and the private sector do more for our SMEs in Malaysia?**
15. This is where the **MADANI Economy Framework** comes in. As part of its overarching mission to **raise both the ceiling and the floor of our economy**, MITI has spearheaded many reform policies to ensure

better depth and breadth of SMEs' involvement in Malaysia's industrial, trade and investment sectors.

16. Under the **New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP 2030)**, for example, our **SME-focused initiatives** cover the areas of **financing, moving up the global value chain, smart/automated factory and green transition.**
17. To build the country's export resilience, we must **transform our SMEs into "hidden champions"** — **globally competitive firms with niche expertise, homegrown technologies and innovations.** But we cannot do it alone. This must be a **whole-of-nation effort.**
18. And this is where private sector partners like DHL can play their role. I was pleased to know that the **DHL GoTrade** has created an ecosystem with **partners from both the public and private sectors, all helping MSMEs address operational challenges** including **access to financing, logistics, export know-how and technology.**
19. Indeed, **DHL's MSME training and fellowship programmes** cover the **key aspects of building a successful business model** that **promotes the 'Made by Malaysia' concept**, instead of the 'Made in Malaysia' that we have been used to.
20. This is how we empower more **MSMEs to grow into SMEs**, who will then **transform into Mid-Tier Companies**, who can graduate as **MNCs** – generating **growth that create better-paying and higher-quality jobs** for Malaysians and the region's community.

CLOSING REMARKS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

21. As I intend to keep my remarks short, I only wish to add that ASEAN has proven that for almost six decades of our unified existence, **our economic integration has been key to the region's resilience and regional stability.**
22. And as Chair of ASEAN this year, Malaysia fully embraces the heavy responsibility of elevating and positioning ASEAN as a viable **global convenor** in an **era of geopolitical discontent and geoeconomic disruption.**
23. That heavy responsibility also extends to **ensuring** that our **regional policy ambitions translate into real action** to **benefit our Malaysian MSMEs.** To that end, we again **laud DHL's GoTrade complementary initiatives** that have **benefitted over 3,200 MSMEs in the last few years.**
24. In closing, I hope everyone had a fruitful Summit with **actionable and scalable takeaways** to further elevate our MSMEs. Share them with us at MITI, so we can see what more we can do.
25. On that note, our **appreciation again to DHL for making a meaningful difference to the MSME ecosystem** of Malaysia and the region. Thank you.