

OPENING KEYNOTE SPEECH

Represented By

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Deputy Minister of Energy Transition & Water Transformation

Malaysia–China Commemorative Forum

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Shangri-La Kuala Lumpur

[Salutations]

His Excellency Mr Ouyang Yujing

Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Malaysia

Tan Sri Michael Yeoh

President, KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific

Tan Sri T.C. Goh

Exco Chairman, Malaysia-China Business Council

Mr Zhou Li

Deputy Editor-in-Chief, China Daily

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,

Ladies and gentlemen and distinguished guests,

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,

Salam Malaysia Madani and Good Morning,

INTRODUCTION

1. I am honoured to deliver the opening keynote speech at today's Malaysia-China Commemorative Forum. I stand before you representing Dato' Sri Haji Fadillah bin Haji Yusof, the Deputy Prime Minister and also the Minister of Energy Transition & Water Transformation who, due to other commitments, is unable to attend this momentous occasion.
2. Nevertheless, it is with great pride that we gather here today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and the People's Republic of China later this month, on 31 May 2024.
3. Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the co-organizers of this event, namely the KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific, Malaysia-China Business Council and China Daily.

50 YEARS OF MALAYSIA–CHINA DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. Fifty years ago, our second Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak, made a historic visit to China on 28 May 1974 and established relations between our two great nations.
5. Since then, our bilateral partnership has flourished across various sectors. In 2013, the relations between Malaysia and China were elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP). Throughout our journey, we have achieved significant milestones, ranging from establishing robust political and diplomatic ties to enhancing economic and trade cooperation.

6. I am glad to mention that our collaboration now extends beyond politics and economics to include education, culture, tourism, and people-to-people exchanges. These efforts have strengthened the bonds between our societies. However, there remains ample opportunity for both sides to consolidate further and expand the excellent ties.
7. Malaysia Madani, which was introduced in January 2023 shares the same common values and attributes of the Community Shared Future (CSF) proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2013. Both concepts advocate and promote innovation, care and compassion, inclusiveness as well as mutual respect.
8. The Malaysia Madani economic framework aims to strengthen national competitiveness by focusing on fiscal sustainability, excellent governance, and effective service delivery.
9. As Malaysia and China celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations this year, I believe that both countries can continuously materialise these concepts for the benefit of its people.
10. Malaysia is confident that, through the implementation of the Plan of Action of the ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, this cooperation will bring substantial benefits to the peoples of ASEAN and China and address future challenges in essential areas such as food security, clean energy, supply chain and public health emergency.
11. With the establishment of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area, China has become Malaysia's largest trading partner. This relationship was further solidified through our engagement in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), catalysing economic growth and presenting new opportunities for businesses in both nations.

GREAT POTENTIAL IN OUR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. China has been Malaysia's largest trading partner for the past 15 years. In 2023, total trade between our nations reached USD98.80 billion (RM450.84 billion), with imports from China accounting for USD56.69 billion (RM258.63 billion). These imports primarily include electrical and electronics products, machinery, and chemicals. This strong trade relationship demonstrates the depth of our economic ties.
13. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) strengthens our connectivity, both literally and figuratively. It serves as a catalyst for enhancing international connectivity and fostering greater cooperation among nations. As the pioneering BRI project, the "Two Countries, Twin Parks" initiative not only strengthens trade relations but also stimulates economic activity and creates jobs, particularly in Malaysia's East Coast region. Other notable projects by China include the ongoing "East Coast Rail Link (ECRL)" and the "Automotive High-Tech Valley (AHTV)" which I understand is transitioning to the usage of Electric Vehicle (EV). These projects have contributed to the economic growth and employment opportunities in the local communities and national level as well.
14. In 2023, we witnessed a total of 32 high-level visits between the two countries. These visits have contributed to the strengthening of bilateral ties and promote closer people-to-people relations, which will provide impetus in nurturing the existing relations further. During the Prime Minister's visit to China last year, we successfully secured 19 Memorandum of Understanding from Chinese entities, reflecting an impressive investment commitment of RM170 billion. It is imperative that we work collaboratively to ensure the fulfillment of these commitments.

15. Looking ahead, we see tremendous potential for deeper cooperation. We can expand and accelerate our collaboration in infrastructure, the digital economy, green development, new energy vehicles and rare earth. These areas offer growth and sustainability benefits.

ADVANCING GREEN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Ladies and Gentlemen,

16. As the Deputy Minister of Energy Transition & Water Transformation, it would be remiss of me not to address the topic.
17. Malaysia is committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, as outlined in the Twelfth Malaysia Plan. Our goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030, aligning with the Paris Agreement. This ambitious goal, which includes targeting 70% of renewable energy (RE) installed capacity by 2050, is outlined in the National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR) and the New Industrial Master Plan (NIMP).
18. These plans will ensure a just and inclusive transition towards a sustainable and low-carbon economy.
19. It goes without saying that Malaysia places a high priority on green energy and environmental sustainability. These elements are central to our development agenda. Our commitment to a greener future is unwavering.
20. In partnership with China, Malaysia is leading the way in promoting renewable energy. Both countries are heavily investing in clean technologies including solar, wind, and hydroelectric power. Our joint efforts aim to lead the global transition to sustainable energy.

21. Our collaboration extends beyond technology. We actively participate in knowledge-sharing initiatives to harness the immense potential of green energy. Through these initiatives, we strive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
22. By prioritizing innovation and sustainable development, Malaysia and China are making significant contributions. We are addressing global climate challenges. At the same time, we are also unlocking new economic opportunities. This dual approach promotes growth while ensuring environmental stewardship.

CLOSING

Ladies and Gentlemen,

23. As we celebrate the formal diplomatic ties between Malaysia and China that span over five decades, we must remember that our friendship stretches back over a thousand years. Our relationship is built on a time-honoured history of mutual respect and collaboration.
24. Malaysia will continue to advocate strongly for peace, security, and stability in the region. In our nation-building journey for shared prosperity, we recognise China as a reliable friend and partner.
25. The Government of Malaysia believes that the close and traditional friendship between the Governments and peoples of Malaysia and China, is anchored on mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence.
26. Together, we aim to forge a brighter and more prosperous future for all.

Thank you.