



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
PRIME MINISTER**

AT

**ASEAN BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT SUMMIT 2025
OFFICIATION CEREMONY
25 OCTOBER 2025 (SATURDAY) | 8:15 PM**

**MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND
EXHIBITION CENTRE (MITEC),
KUALA LUMPUR**

(SALUTATIONS)

**YB Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Aziz,
Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Malaysia**

**YB Tuan Liew Chin Tong
Deputy Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Malaysia**

**YBhg. Tan Sri Nazir Razak
Chairman, ASEAN Business Advisory Council 2025**

**Joey Conception
ASEAN-BAC Philippines Chair**

**Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, members of the
media, ladies and gentlemen,**

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and a very
good evening,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the ASEAN
Business and Investment Summit 2025.

The Prime Minister extends his sincere apologies for not able to be with us this evening. Despite his earnest intention and best efforts to attend, unforeseen circumstances and the pressing schedule of the ASEAN Summit have required his attention elsewhere. He has therefore requested me to represent him and to convey his heartfelt regrets and gratitude for your kind understanding.

1. We gather at a time when the global economy is being reshaped by intensifying competition and uncertainty. Geo-economic fragmentation has disrupted supply chains, altered trade and investment flows, and redefined how nations engage with one another. Amid these shifts, ASEAN continues to stand as a region of stability, opportunity, and resilience.
2. Our strength has always rested on cooperation, trust, and dialogue. Guided by the theme **Inclusivity and Sustainability**, Malaysia's Chairmanship seeks to strengthen ASEAN's role as an integrated and forward-looking region that embraces collaboration and shared progress.
3. Even as others turn inward, ASEAN remains outward-looking, upholding open regionalism and reinforcing our Centrality in an increasingly divided world.

Ladies and gentlemen,

4. Tomorrow marks a historic moment as Timor-Leste joins ASEAN as our newest Member State. This milestone underscores our commitment to inclusivity and solidarity, reminding us that ASEAN's strength lies in its unity of purpose.
5. Regional integration remains central to ASEAN's long-term resilience. Our goal is clear, to make it easier to trade with, invest in, and operate across, ASEAN.
6. Complementing this, the **Second Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement** and our **upgraded free trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand, as well as China**, represent major steps forward in deepening regional integration. Together, these protocols modernise trade procedures, reduce barriers at the borders, strengthen supply chains, and expand market access.
7. Notably, they reaffirm ASEAN's standing as a trusted and dynamic trading partner, giving enterprises the confidence

to grow, and investors the assurance that ASEAN will remain open, stable, and forward-looking.

8. Equally important is the **ASEAN Business Entity (ABE) Framework**, which provides a practical platform for ASEAN-recognised companies to operate more seamlessly across Member States. It represents a concrete manifestation of our regional economic integration efforts, translating ASEAN's vision of a single market and production base into reality. By enabling businesses to move, invest, and operate with greater ease, the ABE Framework deepens the region's interconnectedness and reinforces ASEAN's role as a dynamic, cohesive, and competitive economic community.

Ladies and gentlemen,

9. Another key priority under Malaysia's Chairmanship is digital transformation. ASEAN's digital economy is projected to exceed **US\$2 trillion by 2030**, and we are determined to accelerate this progress.
10. One of the major achievements this year is the substantial progress made in the negotiations of the **ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA)**. Once

implemented, the DEFA will set the course to transform ASEAN into a borderless digital marketplace. Malaysia is also leading the **ASEAN AI Safety Network (AI Safe)** to ensure artificial intelligence is developed and applied responsibly, transparently, and ethically, across the region.

11. At the same time, we are committed to ensuring that MSMEs, the backbone of ASEAN's economy, are not left behind. Through regional programmes expanding access to digital tools, skills, and financing, we aim to help enterprises of every size thrive in this new digital era.
12. Together, these efforts will shape a future where technology drives inclusion, innovation, and sustainable growth across our region.

Ladies and gentlemen,

13. The **Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2045** envisions a region that is resilient, innovative, and people-centred, with sustainability at the heart of its development agenda.
14. In line with this vision, progress on the **ASEAN Power Grid** and its Financing Framework will enhance energy

connectivity and accelerate renewable investments, laying the foundation for a greener and more secure future. In addition, the **ASEAN MSME Green Transition Centre** will support small enterprises in adopting low-carbon and circular economy solutions.

15. These initiatives embody the values of Malaysia MADANI: sustainability, prosperity, innovation, respect, trust, and compassion, reminding us that development must create wealth while upholding fairness and dignity for all.
16. As global challenges multiply, ASEAN must remain steadfast in our partnership. We must deepen integration, advance innovation, and uphold open and rules-based trade.
17. To our business leaders gathered here tonight, my message is clear: ASEAN is open; we are open for investment, open for collaboration, and open for innovation.
18. Let us move forward together, governments and enterprises alike, united in purpose to build an ASEAN that is confident, connected, and compassionate.

19. May this shared spirit continue to inspire us as one community, united in the pursuit of peace, progress, and prosperity.

On that note, thank you.