

**OPENING REMARKS BY
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MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, MALAYSIA
2ND CHINA MALAYSIA PORT ALLIANCE ANNUAL MEETING 2017
KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTRE
SEPTEMBER 4TH 2017**

SALUTATIONS

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning,

First and foremost, let me thank and welcome all delegates to the 2nd China Malaysia Port Alliance (referred to as CMPA) Annual Meeting 2017 here in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Malaysia's Secretariat especially Port Klang Authority for inviting me to officiate this 2nd CMPA Meeting. It is indeed a pleasure to be here today.

It's amazing how time flies. It feels like it wasn't too long ago since the signing ceremony of the MoU between the Malaysian Port Alliance and China Port Alliance which was signed by me and my Chinese counterpart Mr. Yang Chuantang, Minister of Transport, PRC, on 23rd

November 2015. The signing ceremony was witnessed by The Hon. Prime Minister of Malaysia YAB Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak and Prime Minister of China H.E. Mr. Li Keqiang.

As you are all aware in 2013, President Xi Jinping announced China's ambition to develop the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road, also known as the One Belt and One Road initiative. The idea was to promote regional economic co-operation, increase investments and bring development and prosperity to the countries along the historic Silk Road.

The initiative, which has attracted attention from all over the world, is of paramount interest to Malaysia as we are strategically positioned along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. By virtue of our location, in the center of Southeast Asia and along the Straits of Malacca which is one of the busiest maritime trade routes in the world, Malaysia has the edge to help develop and bring to reality the vision of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Malaysia strongly supports the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road initiative and we are committed to work with China to further enhance the bilateral ties towards a comprehensive strategic partnership. The agreement calls for the integration of the region into a cohesive economic area via infrastructure development, cultural exchange and broadening of trade activities.

China has been Malaysia's largest trading partner since 2009 while Malaysia is China's largest trading partner among the 10 ASEAN member countries. China has retained its position for the 8th consecutive

year in **2016** with trade between both countries expanding by 4.4 % to RM240.91 billion.

The Malaysian Government has full confidence that the new Maritime Silk Road will be instrumental in expanding the regional economy and would present new opportunities to many countries especially those within ASEAN.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The formation of this Port Alliance between six Malaysian ports and 10 Chinese ports is intended to pave the way for cooperation in various disciplines including Port Studies, Training and Apprenticeship, Technical Assistance, Exchange of Information, Traffic Development and Promotion of trade services between ports.

The ultimate objective of the port alliance is to facilitate trade by using ports in Malaysia and China as the gateway. The port alliance is also aimed at linking Malaysian and Chinese businesses and logistics players to expand their ventures into the respective countries. In pursuing these objectives, Malaysia will be putting forward a few initiatives for discussion in today's meeting. These proposed initiatives will without doubt open new frontiers and provide opportunities toward strengthening Malaysia – China co-operation in the ports and logistics sector.

In future, this alliance may look to widen as well as to strengthen the Port Alliance with the expansion of the existing membership of the China - Malaysia Port Alliance to include additional ports and port operators, shipping lines, freight forwarders and others.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to inform that there is already a strong collaboration with China as there are several Chinese companies investing in various sectors in Malaysia and this relationship is growing stronger by the day.

Recently, we have partnered with the China's technology leader Alibaba to create the Digital Free Trade Zone, the world's first special trade zone that will promote the growth of e-commerce, and provide a state-of-the-art platform for both SMEs and larger enterprises to conduct their digital businesses and services. This initiative is part of the digital roadmap which aims to double e-commerce growth rate of SME's goods exports to reach US\$38 billion by 2025.

Other business partnerships include the proposed development of the Melaka Gateway Multipurpose Deep Sea Port and Maritime Industrial Park and the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) project. This is a good starting point for business cooperation and augurs well in further enhancing the friendly ties between both countries.

We are confident that closer cooperation between Malaysia and China will pave the way for a brighter future for both countries, leveraging on the strength and potential of our people and resources. We believe the proposed initiatives will be an avenue for both countries and our ports to learn and share best practices and knowledge which will enhance operational efficiency and reduce the cost of doing business.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With that, I hereby declare 2nd China Malaysia Port Alliance Annual Meeting 2017 open and wish you all fruitful deliberation during the session ahead. I do hope that our foreign guests will take some time to savour the sights and sounds of Kuala Lumpur during your stay here.

Once again, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Port Klang Authority as Malaysia Secretariat and also the other Malaysian Ports on this initiative and applaud them on their efforts.

Thank you.