

Strategic Partnership between Malaysia and New Zealand

Now in our 65th year of diplomatic relations, Malaysia and New Zealand continue to enjoy a strong and enduring friendship.

Malaysia and New Zealand have formally elevated our bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership. This elevation recognises our long-standing cooperation, while also providing a framework to enable Malaysia and New Zealand to continue this cooperation into the future. The framework covers the four central areas of the New Zealand- Malaysia relationship: Prosperity, People, Planet, and Peace.

Underpinning this cooperation, Malaysia and New Zealand are committed to establishing annual meetings between Foreign Ministers. Our countries are also committed to senior official meetings that will occur on an annual basis, and that will discuss issues of mutual importance such as regional security and economic cooperation.

Malaysia and New Zealand are deeply committed to ASEAN unity and Centrality. Both countries reaffirm our support to an open, inclusive and prosperous region of sovereign states. We affirm that ASEAN principles of openness, transparency, inclusivity and respect for international law, including the objectives and principles set out in ASEAN's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, underpin peace and security in the Indo-Pacific. Malaysia is committed to supporting New Zealand to enhance its engagement with ASEAN in various ASEAN-led fora and mechanisms as an ASEAN Dialogue Partner.

1. Prosperity

New Zealand is a safe and trusted supplier of high-quality food for Malaysia and the wider region, while Malaysia is a reliable supplier of agricultural inputs and machinery for New Zealand.

Malaysia and New Zealand are committed to maintaining high trade standards; being fully compliant with international trade rules; and ensuring the progressive removal of barriers to trade. This includes ongoing bilateral dialogue, and constructive engagement in economic fora, including the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as well as other trade pacts to which both countries are parties.

Malaysia and New Zealand are committed to a strong bilateral and regional trade architecture. Our various bilateral and regional arrangements collectively provide tools and new opportunities for businesses in both countries including through the Malaysia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (MNZFTA), the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA), the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). We remain committed to ensuring that these, and other elements of our trade architecture, remain living documents that are fit-for-purpose for our businesses. Both countries are active participants in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) to promote high-standard, inclusive, free, fair and open trade commitments and develop creative approaches to trade and technology cooperation, aimed at ensuring economic growth and shared prosperity in the region.

2. People

Malaysia and New Zealand recognise the significant deepening of people-to-people links since the 1950s. These connections have benefitted from air links supported by the bilateral Air Services Agreement and tourism and employment links under the bilateral Working Holiday Visa scheme.

On education, Malaysia and New Zealand have collaborated closely and are committed to refreshing the existing Education Cooperation Arrangement to further strengthen education links, encourage reciprocal student and academic mobility, and enhance our education cooperation through multilateral fora such as the East Asia Summit and APEC.

Indigenous and cultural connections between Malaysia and New Zealand provide warmth and richness to the bilateral relationship. Both countries are committed to expanding informal and formal exchanges on indigenous customs, culture, language, business and tourism, including through increased cooperation and information sharing on indigenous empowerment and education.

3. Planet

Malaysia and New Zealand reaffirm their ongoing commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. We recognise the existential threat posed by climate change, as well as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports demonstrating that the impacts of climate change are far more severe in scenarios where the temperature rises above 1.5 degrees. We are committed to implementing our respective climate change commitments and obligations under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, in line with

the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in the light of different national circumstances. We will contribute towards the efforts to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

We also reaffirm our commitment to cooperation under the Malaysia - New Zealand Environment Cooperation Agreement signed in 2009. Malaysia and New Zealand also value cooperation on reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions under the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases, as well as exchanges on Disaster Risk Management.

Malaysia and New Zealand also intend to explore bilateral cooperation on green economic practices toward decarbonisation, which may include:

- environmental and social policy exchanges;
- benchmarking policies;
- cooperation in Renewable Energy; and
- use of carbon market mechanisms to contribute to the implementation and achievement of both countries' NDCs and long-term low emissions development strategies and to promote sustainable development and environmental integrity.

Recognising the importance of protecting our nations' biodiversity, Malaysia and New Zealand reaffirm their commitment to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

4. Peace and Security

Malaysia and New Zealand's defence relationship stretches back 75 years. The defence partnership is now underpinned by cooperation under the Malaysia-New Zealand Defence Cooperation Agreement (1996), the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus). Malaysia and New Zealand reaffirm dedication to promoting peace and stability through these mechanisms, and maintaining close defence cooperation through structured joint training, exchanges and regular senior level engagements.

Malaysia and New Zealand condemn all forms of terrorism, violent extremism and transnational crime affecting both nations. Both countries are committed to cooperation towards preventing and countering these threats.

Signed

at

Wellington

at

Wellington

on

4 May 2023

on

4 May 2023

**For the Government of
Malaysia**

**For the Government of
New Zealand**



Dato' Norman Muhamad

Deputy Secretary General

Bilateral Affairs



Deborah Geels

Deputy Secretary

Americas and Asia Group