Penyampai	**:**	**DATO' SRI NAJIB TUN ABDUL RAZAK**
Tajuk	**:**	**MALAYSIA-CHINA BILATERAL COOPERATION LUNAR NEW YEAR LUNCHEON**
Lokasi	**:**	**GRAND BALLROOM, SHANGRI LA HOTEL, KL**
Tarikh	**:**	**27-02-2018**

Bismillahhirahmannirrahim.

Assalammualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,

Salam Sejahtera and Salam Negaraku Satu Malaysia.

Yang Berhormat Dato' Sri Mustapa bin Mohamed;

Minister of Trade and Industry,

Yang Berhormat Dato' Seri Ong Ka Chuan;

Second Minister of Trade and Industry,

Yang Berbahagia Dato' Seri Ramlan Ibrahim;

Secretary General, Ministry Of Foreign Affairs,

Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Dato' Seri Ong Ka Ting;

Chairman of Malaysia-China Business Council,

His Excellency Bai Tian;

Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Malaysia,

Professor Zhang Rong;

President of Xiamen University, China,

Professor Wang Ruifang;

President of Xiamen University, Malaysia,

Mr Gao Pu;

Executive Deputy Director-General of China-Malaysia Qinzhou Industrial Park (CMQIP) Administrative Committee,

Ms Tan Xiuhong;

Deputy Director-General, Department of Commerce Guangxi,

Mr Wang Zongwen;

Deputy Director-General, Office of Beibu Gulf Economic Zone & Cooperation with Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region,

Members of the Chinese delegation,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen.

1. First of all, let me thank the Malaysia China Business Council for inviting me to this very special **Malaysia-China Bilateral Cooperation Lunar New Year Luncheon**.

2. As patron of MCBC, I'm delighted to join its members and guests in celebrating the Lunar New Year that is marked all over the world, and particularly joyously here in Malaysia.

3. As we bid farewell to the Year of Rooster and welcome the Year of the Dog, we can certainly say that Malaysia and the People's Republic of China did very well in enhancing our relationship in 2017 in all sectors, but especially in terms of trade and investment.

4. In spite of the uncertainty in the global economy, the total bilateral trade between Malaysia and China last year remained strong at **USD 96.3 billion**.

5. As part of this, I must thank MCBC under the leadership of Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting for all their efforts in facilitating the promotion of trade and investment between Malaysia and China, and in contributing to making our ties so strong, warm and mutually beneficial.

Ladies and gentlemen,

6. Let me take an overview of this relationship and some of the milestones of the last few years.

7. There has been the successful establishment of the China-Malaysia Qinzhou Industrial Park and the Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park between 2012 and 2013.

8. The Qinzhou start-up area of 7.87 sq km is almost completed, and has attracted 90 major strategic investors so far who are investing a total of **RMB 90 billion** in the park.

9. In spite of the higher participation rate of Chinese investors, 49 percent of the Master Development share is held by a Malaysian consortium, jointly owned by Rimbunan Hijau Group and SP Setia Bhd.

10. I am pleased to note that the Park Management has created a Malaysian Cluster with an area of 5 sq km to cater specifically for Malaysian entrepreneurs, who have been provided with attractive incentives and good supporting facilities.

11. Likewise, the Kuantan park has also expanded from its initial area at launch and now

totals around 3000 acres. I am pleased to say that one of the first entrants, Alliance Steel, will start operation by the second quarter of this year, with an investment of **RM5 billion** and providing 4,000 new jobs.

12. Connected with this, the Kuantan Port expansion project phase 1, which will see its capacity rise from 45,000 deadweight tonnage to 120,000, will also be completed by June 2018.

13. No wonder they have been talked of as a model for bilateral twin industrial parks, as a win-win development, and with great rewards for investors from both sides.

Ladies and gentlemen,

14. In terms of bilateral cooperation in education, Xiamen University opened its campus near here in Selangor in 2016. I am pleased to say it now has a student population of 2,660, with talented young men and women coming from Malaysia, China and around the region to study there.

15. This was the first renowned Chinese university to set up a branch campus overseas. It is a testament to our good relations, and will accelerate Malaysia's position as a regional hub for educational excellence.

Ladies and gentlemen,

16. The joint cooperation between Malaysia and China in establishing the Digital Free Trade Zone – the first in the world outside China – is another win-win project, and we appreciate the confidence the Alibaba Group has shown in Malaysia by partnering with us on this innovative hub.

17. It is already providing huge gains for the over 2,000 SMEs that have signed up so far, and we are targeting 10,000 to be on the platform by the end of the year.

18. The partnership of Proton and Geely is a further example of how firms from our two countries can come together for mutual gain. I'm sure we will be seeing many of the cars they produce together all across the ASEAN region before long.

19. Going forward, our two countries will continue to work together on an array of projects. Take the East Coast Rail Line, for which we had the ground breaking ceremony last August. This game-changing development will have a huge economic and social impact on the east coast of the Peninsula.

20. It will stimulate investment, increase connectivity and spur commercial activity in towns all the way along the line. It will lead to the creation of thousands and thousands of new jobs, and will make a real difference to the states where the rail runs, and to the prosperity of all Malaysians.

21. There are many, many other instances of fruitful cooperation, but I should also mention the part that tourists from both countries have played in enhancing people-to-people exchanges between Malaysia and China.

22. January to October last year saw a total of 1.89 million Chinese tourists visiting Malaysia, as our diverse and colourful culture has become a major attraction for them.

23. In fact, in recent months we have seen an increase in the number of Chinese tourists, with hundreds of thousands coming to Malaysia for the Lunar New Year celebrations. We are targeting many more for the benefit of our flourishing tourist industry.

24. Likewise, China is a popular destination not only for Malaysian Chinese, but also Malays, as more Muslim-friendly facilities have been set up.

25. The Government welcomes this trend, both in terms of fostering greater ties between Malaysia and China, but also for the value that tourism adds to our two economies.

Ladies and gentlemen,

26. It should perfectly obvious to everyone – and I'm sure it is to you – that, as President Xi Jinping has said: the relationship that has been forged between Malaysia and China is at an all time high, and that is greatly to the good of both countries.

27. We trade with each other – even the price of durian has shot up, due to the strong demand from the Chinese market, to the benefit of Malaysian farmers.

28. We invest in each other; and when appropriate we form partnerships with each other so that we are best placed to take advantage of the economy of the future, and ensure that this really is the Asian Century.

29. A key component of that is President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative, from which Malaysia stands to reap huge opportunities, as it has the potential to create the world's largest platform for economic cooperation.

30. As a responsible Government working to promote the Malaysian people's interests, we embrace the BRI. It would not be in our national interest to turn our back on it.

31. But unfortunately there is a former Malaysian leader who wishes to undermine that relationship. Whenever Chinese investment comes up, he accuses this Government of

selling Malaysia's sovereignty to China. On that basis, did we sell our sovereignty to Japan during his time in power?

32. As it happens, it is still the case that we have had more investment from Japan than from China and Hong Kong in the long run. But as far as I can tell, we are still a sovereign nation!

33. In fact, Malaysian investment into China used to be bigger than Chinese investment into Malaysia. Did that mean we were buying Chinese sovereignty? Of course not! This is simple economic illiteracy – anyone who says this truly has no knowledge of how economics works. It is scaremongering for selfish political gain.

34. We welcome investment, whether it is from China, Japan, India, Saudi Arabia or any of the many countries with which we have friendly relations. And you see this in the multinational companies that have established or are relocating their regional offices to Kuala Lumpur.

35. There is Huawei Technologies, yes, but also Epson, SC Johnson and Air Liquide. That's China, Japan, the US and France. We have just signed an MoU to set up a partnership with SK Group, a Fortune 100 company and the second largest conglomerate by market capitalisation in South Korea.

36. A Swiss firm has just announced it is going to be investing **RM12 billion** in a new plant in Pahang. I could go on, but the list would be too long.

37. The point is that we are an investment-friendly and business-friendly Government – and this has real consequences and tangible benefits for Malaysia. It is one of the reasons why since 2009 we have been able to deliver 2.26 million new jobs, low inflation and unemployment, and years of healthy economic growth.

38. It is one of the reasons why we have attracted so many accolades from renowned global institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Ladies and gentlemen,

39. One of our partners in building the high income, high skills Malaysia of the future is China's business community. I make no apology for saying that.

40. For it would be foolish, and it would be bad for the Malaysian people, if we were to spurn the hand of friendship – a hand that Malaysia, under my father Tun Razak, first offered to China in 1974, making history by being the first ASEAN member state to establish diplomatic relations with China.

41. We were right then, and we are right to welcome Chinese investment now.

42. Let me give you an example. Earlier I mentioned the 4,000 jobs being created by Alliance Steel at the Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park. There are Malaysians working there who have been given training in China – that's skills transfer.

43. As well as having good working conditions, with entertainment and gym facilities and transportation allowances, they are being paid significantly higher wages – that provides for a better standard of living for them and their families, and uplifts the local economy.

44. And of those 4,000 new jobs, it has been announced that 70 percent will be for Malaysian citizens.

45. So let us be absolutely clear that this Government more than welcomes this partnership

and our strong bonds of friendship. We cherish it. Because we know that it is good for Chinese firms and investors, and it is good for the Malaysian people.

46. This is in keeping with Malaysia's history as a seafaring, trading nation, open to the world, and steadfast in our belief that it is building relationships, rather than closing the door in the face of our friends, that will bring prosperity to all.

47. So let me say how happy I am to see the large number of Chinese entrepreneurs joining the luncheon today. Let us thank you for your continuous and active investment in Malaysia over the past years.

48. We will continue to welcome you, and let me assure you that your investments here will be well protected under Malaysia's well-established legal system and stable government.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

49. My appreciation again to MCBC and Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting for all their assistance to me, as well as to the relevant government agencies, in implementing and facilitating the many Malaysia-China projects that have had such a positive impact on our bilateral relations and on our two countries. Please keep up the good work!

50. On that note, may I wish everyone again a Happy Lunar New Year, and I look forward to meeting and talking to many more of you later.

Thank you.

Kami menerima **7,229,825** kunjungan sejak 17 Disember 2008
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