



**MINISTRY OF INVESTMENT,
TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

**SPEECH BY
YB SENATOR TENGKU DATUK SERI UTAMA ZAFRUL
TENGKU ABDUL AZIZ**

FOR

ASEAN UNITY DRIVE FLAG OFF

**VENUE : MITI
TARIKH : 20 MARCH 2025 (THURSDAY)
TIME: 5.00 PM**

Yang Berusaha Puan Mastura Ahmad Mustafa

Deputy Secretary General (Trade) MITI;

Yang Berbahagia Datuk Bahria Mohd Tamil

Deputy Secretary General (Investment & Management) MITI;

Yang Berbahagia Datuk (Dr.) Aminar Rashid Salleh

Chairman Malaysia Automotive Robotics and IoT Institute (MARii);

Yang Berusaha En Azrul Reza Aziz

Chief Executive Officer Malaysia Automotive Robotics and IoT Institute (MARii);

Yang Berusaha Encik Roslan Abdullah

Deputy Chief Executive Officer Proton;

Yang Berusaha En Muhammad Zaki Talib

Deputy Director International Promotions Division (ASEAN) Tourism Malaysia;

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Representatives from Embassies;

Senior Officials from MITI;

Members of Media;

Honoured Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Salam sejahtera and Salam Malaysia MADANI.

1. First, I would like to thank the Malaysian Automotive, Robotics and IoT Institute (MARii) for inviting me to the flag-off ceremony of the ASEAN Unity Drive 2025.

2. The ASEAN Unity Drive 2025 demonstrates how ASEAN nations can work together to achieve shared goals in sustainable mobility. **By embracing innovation, enhancing cross-border cooperation, and investing in green technology,** we are positioning ASEAN as a competitive player in the global automotive industry. This event marks another step forward in strengthening our economic integration and environmental responsibility.

Malaysia's Leadership in ASEAN Mobility

Ladies and gentlemen,

3. As Chair of ASEAN in 2025, Malaysia is proud to lead the charge in shaping the region's mobility agenda. The ASEAN Unity Drive reflects Malaysia's vision for our Chairmanship: "Inclusivity and Sustainability". It is also a reflection of our **commitment to spearhead policies that fosters green transportation, enhance infrastructure development, and encourage industry-driven innovations.**
4. As the 5th largest economic bloc in the world, ASEAN plays a crucial role in global trade, foreign direct investments (FDIs), and supply chains. In 2023, ASEAN's total trade reached USD 3.5

trillion, with 22.1% contributed by intra-ASEAN trade and 77.9% by external trade.

5. These figures highlight ASEAN's strategic economic position and reinforce the **urgency of integrating sustainable mobility solutions** to enhance our **competitiveness and resilience**.
6. To support ASEAN's economic growth, **Malaysia proposed 18 Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs) for 2025**, which were unanimously accepted. One of these PEDs is the **ASEAN EV Policy and Guidelines**, aimed at accelerating sustainable EV development across the region.
7. Through the New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP 2030) and the National Automotive Policy (NAP) 2020, Malaysia aims to evolve from being just a producer of goods to a creator of value, intellectual property, and innovation. This evolution is not just a choice but a necessity. MITI has often emphasized that **Malaysia must move up the value chain to remain competitive and resilient** in an era defined by technological disruption and shifting trade dynamics.
8. **NIMP 2030** is our broad industrial reform policy focusing on high-value manufacturing, green technology, and industrial sustainability. Meanwhile, **NAP 2020** provides a more detailed roadmap, positioning Malaysia as a regional export hub for the automotive sector.

9. **Both policies emphasize public-private partnerships**, ensuring strong collaboration between industry players and government to elevate specific industries, accelerate innovation, and develop next-generation mobility solutions.

10. The automotive industry is a pillar of our economy, driving GDP growth, job creation, and technological advancements. Under NIMP 2030, Malaysia is positioning itself as a **regional hub for EV manufacturing, high-value automotive production, and green mobility solutions**.

11. To achieve this, Malaysia is implementing initiatives that strengthen its role in the global supply chain for advanced industries. Our goal is clear: to develop a vibrant, resilient, and future-ready Malaysian economy by 2030.

12. **A major milestone in this journey is the launch of Proton's e.MAS**, showcasing our commitment to sustainable mobility and technological advancement. **The convoy, featuring six Proton e.MAS 7's will serve to highlight advancements in electric mobility, supporting Malaysia's national EV agenda and ASEAN's broader sustainability goals.** Beyond Proton, Malaysia's thriving EV ecosystem continues to attract manufacturers and investors, strengthening our regional competitiveness.

13. To accelerate EV adoption, the government provides targeted incentives, including tax exemptions on EV imports and sales until 2025, as well as road tax and income tax relief for EV charging infrastructure. These efforts reinforce Malaysia's commitment to driving ASEAN's transition to e-mobility.

Enhancing Regional Automotive Collaboration

14. As we refocus on ASEAN's regional automotive landscape, it is crucial to explore collaborative initiatives that enhance connectivity and efficiency across the industry.

15. One such initiative is the **ASEAN Battery Swapping Standard**, which aims to streamline EV charging infrastructure across the region. By establishing a common standard, we can lower costs, increase EV adoption, and provide consumers with a more seamless and convenient charging solution.

16. Beyond battery standardization, regional supply chain integration is vital. **ASEAN must strengthen interconnected supply chains to enhance production efficiency, reduce dependency on external markets, and foster a resilient automotive ecosystem.** By leveraging each country's strengths, ASEAN can collectively become a global leader in sustainable mobility solutions.

ASEAN Unity Drive 2025: Driving Towards a Sustainable Future

17. The ASEAN Unity Drive 2025 **exemplifies the region's collective strength in advancing sustainable mobility while reinforcing economic integration and environmental stewardship.** Malaysia, through initiatives such as the **ASEAN Automotive Institute Alliance**, is committed to shaping a unified mobility ecosystem that accelerates innovation, harmonizes standards, and **strengthens ASEAN's position as a global leader in next-generation transportation.** This initiative is a crucial step towards a future-ready automotive industry that benefits the entire region.

18. This remarkable drive will culminate at the **Malaysia Autoshow 2025 (MAS 2025)** - a strategic platform that will bring together global industry leaders, investors, and policymakers to discuss and showcase the future of mobility in ASEAN.

19. **Through MAS 2025, we aim to attract high-value investments, drive technological innovation, and position ASEAN as a competitive force in the global automotive sector.** This event will highlight our commitment to making sustainable mobility accessible, efficient, and economically viable for all.

Ladies and gentlemen,

20. As we flag off this historic journey, let us remember that **the road ahead requires collaboration, determination, and vision**. We reaffirm our commitment to regional economic integration and chart a path for ASEAN to become the world's fourth-largest economy by 2030.

21. I extend my deepest appreciation to MARii, Proton, embassies, our ASEAN partners, industry players, and stakeholders who have made this initiative possible. Your dedication and support to advancing green mobility is invaluable in shaping the future of ASEAN.

22. Let us continue driving ASEAN forward, together. **Safe travels to all participants of the ASEAN Unity Drive 2025**, and I look forward to welcoming you at MAS 2025.

Thank you.