



## MALAYSIA-GCC OFFICIALLY LAUNCH FREE TRADE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

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**Malaysia and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have officially launched negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA),** marking a significant milestone in the **deepening of economic and trade relations between the two sides.** The GCC comprises six member states: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. This historic step underscores a **strong commitment to establishing a comprehensive and mutually beneficial partnership between Malaysia and the GCC.**

The **Joint Statement** launching the negotiations was **signed by YB Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Aziz, Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry of Malaysia, and His Excellency Jasem Mohamed Albudaiwi, Secretary General of the GCC.** The signing took place on the sidelines of the ASEAN-GCC Summit in Kuala Lumpur, highlighting the strategic importance of the initiative. The exchange of the Joint Statement was **witnessed by YAB Dato' Sri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia and His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait.**

"Malaysia considers the Gulf Cooperation Council to be one of its most valued trade partners in West Asia. The Malaysia–GCC Free Trade Agreement is not merely a trade arrangement, it represents **a strategic platform to recalibrate and enhance our bilateral relationship.** In a world beset with numerous uncertainties, this is also **a timely opportunity to strengthen our collaboration and work together towards inclusive and shared prosperity,**" said Tengku Zafrul.

The **FTA** is expected to cover a wide range of areas, including **trade in goods and services, investment, trade facilitation, and broader economic cooperation.** Both parties have expressed a shared vision for the agreement to respond to current global trade challenges and promote resilient, inclusive, and innovation-driven growth.

**In 2024, total trade between Malaysia and the GCC reached USD22.3 billion (RM101.8 billion), with key exports including electrical and electronic products, jewellery, petroleum products, palm oil & palm oil-based products and processed food. The FTA aims to expand this further by reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers, promoting business mobility, and enhancing regulatory cooperation.**

The launch of the Malaysia-GCC negotiations reaffirms Malaysia's commitment to strengthening trade ties with progressive regional blocs such as the GCC. Malaysia is optimistic about a constructive negotiation process that will deliver substantial benefits to both economies and their peoples.

## **MINISTRY OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY (MITI)**

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### [About MITI:](#)

MITI is the key driver in making Malaysia the preferred destination for quality investments and enhancing the nation's rising status as a globally competitive trading nation. Its objectives and roles are oriented towards ensuring Malaysia's rapid economic development and help achieve the country's stated goal of becoming a developed nation.

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