

# 60 years and beyond:

Preparing Malaysia-Republic of Korea relations for a new era

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**Korea-Malaysia**

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# Malaysia-Korea at 60 and beyond

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# The comprehensive strategic partnership: What we have achieved?

- In comparison to ROK's partnership with other ASEAN member states, there is still room for growth between ROK and Malaysia
  - Strategic partnership is still not as comprehensive as anticipated
  - We need to expand cooperation from economic- and cultural-focus to more diplomatic exchanges, and increased maritime safety and defence industry cooperation
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# Niche areas of cooperation

- Reminiscence of the realization of EAVG to East Asian Summit
- Shared characteristics of Malaysia's and Korea's policies:
  - Bridging East Asian regionalization
  - Navigating geopolitical space: mitigating risks, maximizing gains
  - Multi-track expertise, networks, and niches
- Niche areas for bilateral focus
  - Inter-regional activism: bridging the inter-regional gap
  - Regional hub for maritime capacity training: safety, accidents, and pollution; cyber security
  - Implementing Korea's infrastructure diplomacy in Malaysia
  - Smart Cities projects, Green Economy, 4IR capacity building

# Malaysia-ROK's Economic Partnership (Prosperity Pillar)

## How does an enhanced ROK-Malaysia economic partnership benefit both?

- Offset the risk of high uncertainties amidst global economic and financial volatility
  - Institutionalization of APT as a post-pandemic recovery mechanism
  - Offset the risk of China's economic retaliation
- “Walk the talk” for ROK's New Southern Policy in bilateral dimension & “Acting” for the Look East Policy 2.0 for Malaysia
- Korea-Malaysia trade and investments:
  - Enhancing quality infrastructure investment
  - Diversifying production and exports of goods and services, trade negotiation on tariff (+RCEP)
  - Digitalization, Smart Cities Network, 4IR, Halal Industry, Future Car

# Malaysia-ROK's Diplomatic Partnership (Peace Pillar I)

- The Bilateral-Multilateral Nexus
  - Mutually reinforcing effects from Malaysia-ROK cooperation and ASEAN-ROK cooperation
- Enhancing bilateral understanding through Track 1.5 and Track 2 exchanges
- Coordinated actions on:
  - Peaceful resolution of regional conflicts (North Korean problem, South China Sea dispute)
  - Hedging (“not choosing sides”) between the great powers
  - Revitalizing regional institutionalism, building resilience to withstand future shocks


# Malaysia-ROK's Security/Defence partnership (Peace Pillar 2)

- From key areas of concerns to comprehensive win-win cooperation
  - Maritime cooperation
  - Cyber security
  - North Korea
- Maritime confidence-building measures:
  - Reciprocal ships' visits
  - Increasing military-to-military contacts and exchanges (academics, think-tanks, and functional/technical experts)
  - Continued ROK participation in multilateral military activities, such as ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (DiREx)
  - Conference and workshops on inter-regional maritime dialogues and cooperation
- Malaysia as the hub for regional maritime safety capacity building centre
  - Strengthening regional maritime capabilities in coping with transnational security challenges

# Malaysia-ROK's Socio-Cultural partnership (People Pillar)

- Medical science and healthcare exchanges
- ROK's Creative Industry: lessons for Malaysia and ASEAN
- Smart Cities by the people for the people:
  - From Smart Selangor to Smart Malaysia?
  - Seoul Metropolitan Smart City organization WeGo
- Digital tourism

# Conclusion

- Korea's experience reaffirms that economic development is the fundamental driving force to sustain and consolidate middle-powership.
  - As two middle-powers from their respective regions that aspire to make regionalism work, bold steps forward by the two governments can bridge the gap of Northeast-Southeast Asian regionalism.
  - We shall invite 3Ps counterparts from Korea and Malaysia to build workable blueprints for realizing the joint potentials of the Look East Policy 2.0 and the New Southern Policy-Plus.
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Thank you  
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