

## **Malaysia And Czech Republic Hail 40 Years Of Diplomatic Ties**

**Bernama**

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 16 (Bernama) - Malaysia and the Czech Republic marked the 40th anniversary of their diplomatic relations Friday with optimism that the cooperation would be strengthened and expanded.

Czech President Vaclav Klaus said it was a special moment to celebrate the "40 years of prosperous and amicable relationship" on this Malaysia Day celebration.

"Today, our relations benefit from the ever growing economic and commercial cooperation - the volume of our mutual foreign trade has grown more than 40 times over the last 17 years from 25.7 million USD in 1993 to 1.02 billion USD in 2010," he said in his message.

The Czech Republic exported goods in the fields of transportation, chemical and telecommunication industry to Malaysia while its import consisted mainly of processors and computer parts.

Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin, in his message to Klaus, said he was delighted that the relationship between the two countries had been strengthened and developed since the diplomatic ties were established on Sept 16, 1971.

The King renewed his invitation for Klaus to visit Malaysia so as to provide fresh impetus to expand collaboration.

Meanwhile, Malaysian Ambassador to the Czech Republic Zainal Abidin Bakar hosted a National Day reception with specially-prepared Malaysian cuisine at his residence in Prague, last night which was well attended.

The guest-of-honour was Milan Stech, Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic.

His attendance reflected the importance and respect given to Malaysia as in terms of ranking, the chairman of the senate of the Parliament is second after the Czech President.

In his speech, Zainal Abidin said there were more than 300 Malaysian Government-sponsored students pursuing medical degrees at three prestigious Czech universities and the number was expected to increase.

"The Malaysian Government is keen on expanding this programme to more universities in this country and also to degrees in dentistry and pharmacy," he said.

The two countries are currently negotiating two Memorandums of Understanding in tourism cooperation and higher education which would further enhance their relations.

Zainal Abidin told Bernama that another potential area was scientific and technological cooperation as the Czech Republic had a long tradition of research and development (R&D).

The country is recognized as a centre of profitable innovation and technological

entrepreneurship in Central and Eastern European region.

Located in Central Europe, the landlocked country is bordered by Poland to the northeast, Slovakia to the east, Austria to the south and Germany to the west and northwest.

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