

**Malaysia's Economy To Grow 4-4.5 Pct In 2013: Conference Board  
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 21 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's economy is expected to grow between four to 4.5 per cent in 2013 in line with the economic slowdown in the mature economies, said The Conference Board.

However, executive vice president/chief economist Bart Van Ark said Malaysia has been quite successful in catching up with the more advanced economies.

"I think Malaysia is getting to this level of a real middle-income economy. There is a lot of discussion on the middle-income trap, and it is equally important for countries like Malaysia to avoid that," he said.

Van Ark was speaking to reporters at the briefing in Kuala Lumpur, Tuesday, on the Malaysian Institute of Management and the Conference Board New York's 2013 CEO Challenge: The Asia Economic and Business Context.

Malaysia's gross domestic growth grew 4.1 per cent in the first quarter of 2013 as domestic demand growth mitigated the impact of weaker exports.

Domestic demand increased eight per cent during the period.

"The real issue is how do you manage growth slowdown, when the traditional instrument of trying to stimulate the economy through fiscal measures is not necessarily going to work," said Van Ark.

He added that economic reforms undertaken by the Malaysian government, including scaling back subsidies, is a way forward to make the country stand on its own feet.

"I think it is important to make these reforms," said Van Ark.

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