

## **Malaysia-EU Initial Framework on Partnership Cooperation**

**Bernama**

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PUTRAJAYA, April 6 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and the European Union (EU) initialled the Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation (MEUPCA) here today.

The MEUPCA provides an overarching strategic political framework for strengthening Malaysia-EU bilateral cooperation, the Foreign Ministry (Wisma Putra) said in a statement here.

The text of the agreement was initialled by the chief negotiators, Datuk Ilango Karuppanan for Malaysia and Ranieri Sabatucci for the EU.

The initialling ceremony was held in the presence of Malaysia's Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Reezal Merican Naina Merican. Also present was Ambassador of the EU Delegation to Malaysia, Luc Vandebon.

Wisma Putra said since the negotiations of MEUPCA commenced in October 2010, 11 rounds of negotiations had been held in Putrajaya and Brussels on a rotational basis.

Malaysia and the EU had successfully concluded the negotiations during the final round in Brussels on December 7-8 last year, it said.

The Wisma Putra statement said the MEUPCA encompasses 60 articles covering a broad field of common interest in economic and non-economic sectors for Malaysia and the EU.

It serves as a catalyst to the strengthening of bilateral relations between Malaysia and the EU and the enhancement of cooperation in wide-ranging areas including political relations, trade and investment, energy, transport, agriculture, finance, maritime affairs and other areas through dialogue and exchanges of information.

"The MEUPCA is also an umbrella agreement that will provide the impetus in concluding other specific bilateral agreements," he said.

In particular, Wisma Putra said, it would enable both sides to pursue Malaysia-EU Free Trade Agreement (MEUFTA) negotiations.

Wisma Putra said the MEUFTA would give access for Malaysian products and services in the EU's huge market base.

"Malaysia will also benefit from capacity building programmes, the sharing of best practices and knowledge transfer in the areas of science and technology, green technology, environment, education and health," it said.

The text of the agreement would be translated into Bahasa Malaysia and 23 other European languages, it said.

Wisma Putra said Malaysia's Foreign Minister and his EU counterpart would formally sign the MEUPCA at a mutually agreed date and venue.

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