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Title : **MALAYSIA-TURKEY: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IN A GLOBALISING ASIA**

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. I am delighted to be back in Ankara. This city— like so many in Turkey – is a living witness to history. It is always a pleasure to visit; especially so in 2014, when Malaysia and Turkey celebrate fifty years of diplomatic relations.

2. In the five decades since our countries joined hands, much has changed. Malaysia was then a young, newly independent country; Turkey a young republic. Our nations have followed different paths, but both have changed for the better. In the past ten years, soaring growth has brought huge benefits to our people, as more Turkish and Malaysian citizens embrace the rewards of economic modernisation.

3. Many around us have stood still, but we have risen to greater heights. Today, our countries sit next to each other in the per capita income rankings: both poised to become high-income nations in the next few years.

4. This success owes much to our position in the world. Our cities lie at the heart of great trade routes; our countries bridge the gap between East and West. And the same seas which in antiquity brought spices from Melaka and silk from Istanbul also brought our nations closer together.

5. Yet the sense of shared destiny goes beyond economic development alone. Culturally, we inhabit distinct spheres, but we are enjoined by common beliefs: not just our faith, but also our values. Where others have succumbed to radicalism, we have chosen a moderate vision of Islam. And we have strived to exercise the diplomatic leadership which characterised the great Islamic empires of old.

6. Over the past fifty years, a new, confident, Turkey has emerged. Malaysia, too, has assumed a greater role in the region – and the world. Yet there is much work still to be done.

7. As we look to the future, we face similar challenges. With the coming of modernity, we seek the right balance between opportunity and tradition. As we open our economies to outside

investment, we work to secure a better standard of living for our people, and a brighter economic future for our nations. In the face of demographic and technological change, we look to strengthen our societies and the democracy that they depend on.

8. As we prepare for closer regional integration we must prove that we are equal to these challenges; that we can rise to the occasion, and deliver the economic and democratic development that our people deserve.

9. And at a time of unprecedented global interest in Asia – a time when superpowers and trading blocs seek greater influence in one of the world's most dynamic regions – we must ready ourselves to play a greater role in the world.

10. From opposite ends of the continent, we can help define Asia's part in the twenty-first century. Through strategic partnerships, we can act in concert on areas of common interest: diplomacy and moderation, trade and economic integration. That is what I would like to speak about today: strategic partnership in a globalising Asia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

11. What do we mean by 'globalising Asia'? Fifty years ago, Asia accounted for less than 15% of global output; today it is more than 40%. Within a single generation, the most populous region on earth became one of the most prosperous. Fifty years ago, South Korea's economy was smaller than Mozambique's; today it is almost equal to the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. Fifty years ago, Kuala Lumpur was not even classed as a city; today it is twice as big as San Francisco.

12. Within the next decade, China will become the world's largest economy. By the end of the decade, Asia's output will exceed that of Europe and North America put together. And this remarkable economic development – perhaps the fastest in history – has been accompanied by waves of political reform.

13. As a result, our continent is commanding a greater share of world attention. President Obama, who attended school in Indonesia, has recalibrated his nation's strategy toward Asia. But the 'pivot to the Pacific' is not the preserve of one country: Russia, Australia and the European Union are also focusing their foreign policies on Asia.

14. Nor is it strictly a diplomatic phenomenon: Asian nations are attracting young graduates and global corporations. New centres of wealth and influence are emerging throughout this varied continent. The scramble for a foothold in Asia's emerging markets is underway.

15. Asia accounts for a large and growing share of the world economy. In a time of global challenges –from inequality to climate change – it seeks a development model which is socially and environmentally sustainable. And it is coming to terms with the responsibilities and risks of assuming a greater role in global governance.

16. This is what the globalisation of Asia means. Driven by economic growth and growing geopolitical influence, Asia's role in the world is changing. And a continent of 4.3 billion people cannot speak with a single voice.

17. To live up to the expectations of its people and the world, Asia must act on many fronts. We must exercise our growing influence not just by assuming a greater role within existing institutions, but through new strategic partnerships.

Ladies and gentlemen,

18. I believe Asia can and should play a greater role in global governance; in defining a new international order that supports sustainable, inclusive and secure growth.

19. We should explore ways to make a bigger contribution to the world's primary security challenges: non-proliferation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, terrorism and piracy.

20. On non-proliferation, for example, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has adopted a comprehensive treaty, the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone. I believe Asian voices should continue to support the establishment of a similar zone in the Middle East. We should also make a concerted effort to implement and enforce strategic trade controls to cut the risk of dual-use goods.

21. Our regional agreement on piracy is cited as a strong example of regional co-operation by the International Maritime Organisation, which seeks to replicate it elsewhere. The same principles – of sharing information and building capacity – could be applied to anti-terrorism initiatives, which, despite their successes, have sometimes lacked the co-ordination needed to be truly regional.

22. Malaysia has also sought to deal with the root cause of terrorism by recalibrating attitudes towards extremism, launching a Global Movement of the Moderates, to unite those who practice moderation in religion and politics.

23. The Movement has been endorsed by the Asia-Europe Meeting, the Commonwealth, and ASEAN; I believe it can give the moderate mainstream a clearer voice. By showing that moderation and negotiation are essential for foreign affairs as well as faith, we can move away from the confrontational perspective which holds that Islam and the West are incompatible.

24. On peacekeeping and conflict resolution, Asian nations are already ramping up their involvement in the promotion of global peace. This is driven partly by pragmatism: we have seen from the rise of nations that growth in influence and hunger for resources can bring new tensions – or exacerbate old ones.

25. Faced with the prospect of conflict, we must place our trust in diplomatic solutions. We should heed the fundamental principles on which good diplomacy is conducted: sovereign equality, respect for territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes and mutual benefit in relations. And we must affirm our commitment to rule-based solutions to competing claims. International law – and not economic or military coercion – should guide the resolution of disputes over resources.

26. Malaysia, which has provided numerous deployments to ISAF in Afghanistan, has sought an active role resolving regional conflicts: helping broker a peace deal to end a brutal insurgency in the Southern Philippines, and taking the first steps towards negotiation in Thailand's restive south. It is our commitment to regional peace through moderation and negotiation which underpins our bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2015-2016.

27. That aspiration is not the only thing connecting Malaysia and Turkey's approach to foreign policy. Both our nations lie at the heart of strategically significant regions; both have seen larger ideological tussles being fought in neighbouring countries; both have felt the horrors of world war.

28. For Malaysia, our experiences have reinforced our belief in Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's maxim: 'peace at home – peace in the world'. It is one of the principles which lies at the heart of ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Co-operation, which Turkey signed in 2010, as part of a prescient diplomatic outreach. By working to arrive at common positions on issues that affect us – such as non-proliferation and terrorism – we can strengthen our ability to secure the right outcomes: bilaterally, regionally, and in global forums such as the UN.

29. Together, these steps will lay the foundation for a more involved, more active Asian engagement in the international security agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen,

30. I also believe Asian states must look to build stronger, more lasting economic connections – both within our region, and with the outside world.

31. Greater financial integration across borders can not only help developing nations climb the ladder, but also ensure fewer citizens are left behind, as common standards and entry requirements filter back into domestic policy. It can increase the influence of middle nations such as my own, and raise living standards for all.

32. As a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Malaysia therefore supports the push to create a single market in Southeast Asia. It is my hope that the ASEAN economic community will provide greater opportunity for citizens across the region.

33. But in an interdependent global economy, the benefits of greater co-operation extend far beyond Asia's borders. That is why I look forward to the completion of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which will strengthen our ties with the wider world; the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, which will bring three of the largest economies into the world's largest trading bloc; and, of course, the Free Trade Agreement between Turkey and Malaysia.

34. The Free Trade Agreement is many years in the making. We hope that it unlocks a new era not just of trade between our nations, but of deeper economic integration; with Malaysia as a passage to Asia's emerging prospects, and Turkey as a gateway to the mature markets in Europe.

35. When I visited Turkey in 2011, it was the first trip by a Malaysian Prime Minister in three decades; a consequence of our nation's preoccupation with the East, and yours with the West. But I knew then that this mutual distraction could not last. As our nations approach high-income status, the fruits of greater economic collaboration are too rich to ignore.

36. Total trade between our nations in 2013 is just US\$1.1 billion. Earlier this year, Prime Minister Erdogan announced his ambition to more than triple that figure, to US\$5 billion. We will also do more to increase investment: Malaysia's sovereign wealth fund has agreed to invest US\$1.5 billion in Turkey; US\$1.1 billion will be invested in Turkish healthcare; and Malaysia Airports will also commit a further US\$400 million to increase its share in the second Turkey International Airport.

37. In return, I hope to see more interest from Turkey in Malaysian prospects, and further collaborations – for example on Islamic finance. Malaysia boasts a world-leading syariah-compliant banking industry, issuing the lion's share of the world's Islamic bonds, and is fast developing a reputation as a centre for Islamic financial education.

38. By forging stronger economic connections, we can open up new opportunities for our people and our companies; and access to new markets on new terms. That is the promise of strategic economic partnership – the promise which inspired the Free Trade Agreement between our nations, and will continue to shape our economic relations in decades to come.

Ladies and gentlemen,

39. In January this year, Turkey and Malaysia signed a Joint Statement on the Framework for Strategic Co-operation. Today we sign a historic Free Trade Agreement, and we unlock further academic relations with memorandums of understanding between our universities. Insyallah, next year we will find ourselves working together at the UN Security Council, advancing our shared interests: moderation, peace and prosperity.

40. From commerce to education, from diplomacy to defence, we are laying the foundations for greater dialogue and closer collaboration. Our task now is to turn this strong beginning into a lasting success. A strategic partnership is one in which both sides prosper; one that accounts for national difference, but promotes common causes.

41. That is the partnership we have been building over the past few years. And it is going from strength to strength. Although we are five thousand miles apart, separated by language and culture, we represent similar ambitions: to be moderate, prosperous Muslim nations, active on the world stage and central to our regional economies. Let us work together to bring those ambitions to life.

Thank you.