

Prezident republiky

It is my honour and special pleasure to address all the people of Malaysia on 16 September 2011 when we are celebrating the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Czech - Malaysian diplomatic relations.

During these years our diplomats contributed a lot to the strengthening of cooperation in all areas and supported dynamic development of friendship between our countries. Now, after four decades, we can fully enjoy mutually beneficial and intensive relations between the Czech Republic and Malaysia.

It is worth remembering that the bilateral contacts between our two nations date back much further than 40 years. It was in the late 1920's when the Czech anthropologist Mr. Šebesta studied the Pygmeys in Perak. In 1936, two major Czech industrial companies, Škoda and Baťa, opened their affiliations in the Malaysian City of Klang. Later, in 1941, also their Czech employees joined the Federated Malayan States Volunteer Services and Strait Settlements Volunteer Force and helped your country in the difficult years during World War II.

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 mil. USD in 1993 to 1.02 bil. USD in 2010. The Czech Republic is exporting its traditional goods in the fields of transportation, chemical and telecommunication industry, Malaysian export consists mainly of processors and parts of computers.

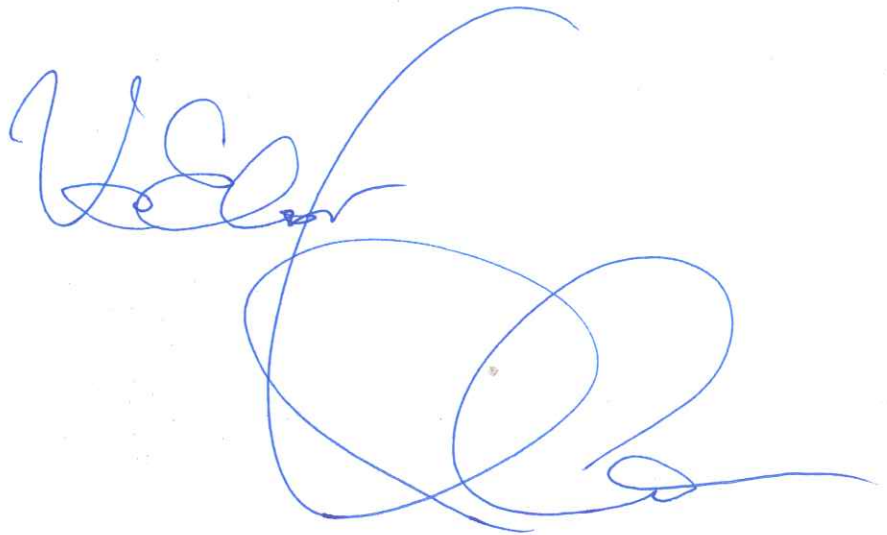
Growing trade exchange shows a great amount of trust and mutual understanding and refers to the quality of the relationship between our two nations.

I am pleased to highlight our cooperation in education. In recent years an increasing number of Malaysian students have been arriving in the Czech Republic, seeking their degrees at our universities. The Czech Republic with its more than 600 years of experience in higher education has a lot to offer and I hope your students will continue to participate in various academic programs at Czech universities.

We believe that the cooperation between the EU and the ASEAN could bring mutually beneficial results also in the future. The EU has already finalized the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with a few ASEAN member states and we very much welcomed the launch of the PCA negotiations between Malaysia and the EU. Since its entry into the EU, the Czech Republic has become an effective part of this multilateral partnership.

Both of our countries play an active role in the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM). The ASEM as the most important EU-Asia cooperation platform represents a valuable forum for exchange of views on current global as well as regional topics and for informal discussions among European and Asian countries.

All in all, one can say that our countries have been enjoying 40 years of prosperous amicable relationship. The occasion of our common anniversary is a special moment to celebrate the past and primarily to look ahead and continue working together closely. I am confident that in the decades to come our relationship will extend and deepen in many respects and always remain friendly and beneficial for both countries.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end, positioned in the lower half of the page.