



Opening Notes by

YB Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Tengku Abdul

**Fireside Chat Stage Session: The Intelligence Grid:
Building Bridges Through Sovereign AI Collaboration**

ASEAN-GCC-China Economic Forum

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Assalamualaikum wbt.

Good morning, Your Excellencies Prime Ministers, Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

1. It's a great honour to welcome all of you to this very important opening session of our forum. The topic is something that has been very much on everyone's minds lately. We're here to discuss: *"The Intelligence Grid: Building Bridges Through Sovereign AI Collaboration."*
2. A weighty topic like this requires the most distinguished panellists. We are, therefore, **most fortunate to have our conversations today informed as well as guided by**

some of the most influential voices, none of whom needs much by way of introduction.

3. They are our very own **YAB Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim**, Prime Minister of Malaysia – whose name's acronym is – interestingly – 'A' and 'I'. We also have **His Excellency Pham Minh Chinh**, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam; and **Mr. Peng Xiao**, Group Chief Executive Officer of G42.
4. Gentlemen, **thank you all for taking time out of your very busy schedules** to share your insights with us.
5. As we all know, **artificial intelligence is no longer just a technological tool**. Rather, it has arguably become **the next great enabler of economic competitiveness, national resilience, and even geopolitical influence**.
6. In many ways, **AI has already disrupted how we work, search for or present information—even how we live, interact and entertain among ourselves**. I would imagine that **sometime in the future, the success of individuals, companies and nations** could be measured by **how effectively they deploy and use AI**.
7. Still, there is no shortage of voices who will warn us about **the challenges and dangers** of this latest gamechanger. We cannot, for example, easily dismiss the **possibility of AI**

aggravating increased polarisation, xenophobia, racism or propensity for war.

8. But in a world often framed by binary rivalries, **this session is choosing to take an alternative path.** What we hope to explore today is how middle powers — like those in ASEAN and the Gulf—can shape a new model of **sovereign AI collaboration**: one that **respects sovereign interests**, while **promoting shared development, mutual trust, and inclusive progress.**
9. We are lucky to have a **distinguished trio of two leaders and a global corporate captain** to deliberate these **weighty questions** before us. So, with that, let's dive in.
10. Allow me to begin by inviting YAB Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar to share his views on **how regional partnerships in AI can secure digital sovereignty for developing nations, without being ensnared in global tech rivalries.**