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MRANTI Opens New Pathways for Malaysian Technologies to Enter Central Asian Markets

Malaysia–Kazakhstan collaboration to expand real-world technology testing, accelerate commercialisation and explore smarter solutions for urban communities.

BARCELONA, 4 November 2026 – The Malaysian Research Accelerator for Technology and Innovation (MRANTI), an agency under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), is strengthening opportunities for Malaysian technologies to be tested, validated and commercialised internationally through a strategic collaboration with Kazakhstan.

Formalised through a tripartite Memorandum of Cooperation between MRANTI, the Malaysia Smart Cities Alliance Association (MSCA) and the Alatau City Authority Special Management Organization (SMO), the collaboration aims to establish a two-way innovation corridor connecting Malaysian innovators with testing environments and market opportunities in Central Asia, while opening pathways for Kazakh innovators to enter Malaysia and the wider ASEAN market.

The partnership was highlighted at the Smart City Expo World Congress (SCEWC) 2026 in Barcelona, Spain, where representatives from MRANTI and Alatau City Authority SMO convened for a bilateral engagement to explore opportunities for implementation.

Ahmad Rizal Azwir, Lead, National Technology and Innovation Sandbox (NTIS), MRANTI, said the collaboration represents an important step towards connecting Malaysia's innovation ecosystem with international testing environments and commercial opportunities.

“Innovation cannot reach its full potential if it remains confined to the market where it was developed. The collaboration with Alatau City Authority SMO creates opportunities for Malaysian innovators to test and validate their technologies in new environments, while establishing pathways for market access beyond ASEAN.

“Through NTIS' international arm, the Global Testbed & Sandbox Alliance (GTSA), we aim to connect real-world testing environments across borders, reduce barriers to technology adoption and accelerate the journey from innovation to commercialisation. Ultimately, our focus is on ensuring Malaysian technologies have the opportunity to compete, scale and create value in international markets,” he said.

NTIS is an initiative under MOSTI, with MRANTI serving as its Lead Secretariat alongside key agencies, including MIMOS, Futurise and the Malaysian Technology Development Corporation (MTDC). In this capacity, MRANTI coordinates the implementation of NTIS, bringing together innovators, industry players and regulators to facilitate real-world technology testing and validation. This supports MRANTI's broader mandate to accelerate technology commercialisation by helping innovations progress from development towards market readiness and adoption.

Complementing its technology commercialisation efforts, MRANTI Innovation Park provides infrastructure and an innovation ecosystem to support technology development and real-world applications. Through GTSA, MRANTI further extends its international connectivity, linking Malaysian innovators with overseas testing environments, strategic partners and potential market opportunities.

The collaboration will focus on emerging technologies with practical applications for urban communities, including artificial intelligence (AI), smart city solutions, urban digital twins, autonomous mobility and drone technologies. These solutions have the potential to improve how cities manage public infrastructure, mobility, energy consumption and essential urban services.

For Malaysian innovators, access to Alatau City's emerging smart city ecosystem could provide opportunities to demonstrate their technologies in new operating environments, gain insights into different market requirements and build relationships with potential international partners. Such opportunities are important in helping homegrown solutions progress beyond pilot projects towards wider adoption and commercial deployment.

At the same time, the collaboration seeks to facilitate reciprocal access to Malaysia's testing and validation ecosystem, allowing innovators from Kazakhstan to explore applications of their technologies within the Malaysian market and establish connections with regional industry partners.

Bayan Konirbayev, Chief Digital & AI Officer, Alatau City Authority, highlighted the importance of international collaboration in advancing smart city development and technology adoption.

“Building a smart city requires more than adopting new technologies. It requires an environment where innovative solutions can be tested and deployed to address real urban challenges. Our collaboration with MRANTI and the Malaysia Smart Cities Alliance Association provides an opportunity to exchange expertise and explore practical applications in artificial intelligence, urban mobility and digital infrastructure.

"We see strong potential for Malaysian technology companies to contribute to Alatau City's development, while opening new pathways for innovators from Kazakhstan to access markets and establish partnerships in Southeast Asia," he said.

As part of the bilateral engagement, the Alatau City Authority SMO delegation was introduced to Malaysian technology solutions showcased at the MRANTI Pavilion, covering smart city technologies, AI and data analytics, autonomous mobility, and green energy and smart infrastructure.

By expanding opportunities for Malaysian technologies to be validated and adopted internationally, MRANTI seeks to translate research and innovation into broader economic opportunities, while supporting the development of practical solutions that can improve the way people live, work and interact with technology.

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ABOUT MRANTI

The Malaysian Research Accelerator for Technology and Innovation (MRANTI) is Malaysia's central research commercialisation agency that fast-tracks the development of technology innovations from ideas to impact.

MRANTI serves as a connector, incubator and catalyst to enable early-stage ideation to mature entities; to commercialise and scale. MRANTI offers innovators and industry access to world-class integrated infrastructure, interventions & programmes, partnership and a suite of resources. In doing so, MRANTI aims to expand Malaysia's funnel of innovation supply, and unlock new R&D value by ensuring effective transitions in the commercialisation lifecycle. It will also link academia with industry and the public sector to streamline market-driven R&D efforts for mission-based outcomes.

MRANTI is headquartered at MRANTI Innovation Park, an extensive 686 acre 4IR innovation hub in Kuala Lumpur, supporting the growth of smart manufacturing, biotech, agritech, smart city, green tech and enabling technology clusters.

For more information, please visit http://mranti.my/

About National Technology and Innovation Sandbox (NTIS)

The National Technology and Innovation Sandbox (NTIS) was first announced as part of the Short-Term Recovery Plan (PENJANA) in June 2020 and subsequently launched on 19 August, 2020 by the Prime Minister.

NTIS is a programme that allows researchers, innovators and entrepreneurs to test their products and services in a live environment and qualify for grants to bring those products and services to market. NTIS relaxes certain regulatory requirements to accelerate the development of innovation from the R&D stage to being commercially ready. With an RM100 million allocation, it was tasked with fast-tracking the nation's aspiration to become an innovation-driven economy.

Spearheaded by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), with MRANTI as the lead secretariat, NTIS aims to create high-skilled job opportunities to increase Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross National Income (GNI) and social inclusion, as well as to enhance the participation, investment and collaboration in research by the private sector.

For more information, please visit https://sandbox.gov.my/

Media Enquiries:

MRANTI Strategic Communication

Farhana Syed farhanasyed@mranti.my (+6019-2220292)

Rastam Khairudin rastam@mranti.my (+6012-3280980)