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The University of Melbourne
Grattan Street, Parkville,
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Australia

Impact of University of Melbourne Cybersecurity Training

The Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade), based in Kuala Lumpur, has worked closely with Professor Atif Ahmad from the University of Melbourne to develop greater collaboration and a stronger relationship between Malaysia and Australia in the field of cybersecurity.

Malaysia and Australia have a long-standing and strong bilateral relationship based on shared interests and values, including a complementary and mutually beneficial trading and investment relationship.

In 2021, the relationship was elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP). Commitments to enhanced collaboration in cyber security and critical technologies is key priority within the Strategic Partnership.

Both countries released national cyber security strategies in 2020, and in the following year announced an intention to establish a Memorandum of Understanding on cyber security and critical technology which will underpin enhanced cooperation on cyber affairs.

To demonstrate Australia's capabilities in cybersecurity resilience and capacity building, Austrade coordinated a roundtable in partnership with Malaysia's National Cyber Security Agency (NACSA).

Engineer Mohd Shah Nuri Bin Md. Zain, CEO of NACSA and Dr Tobias Feakin, Australia's Ambassador for Cyber Affairs and Critical Technology chaired this inaugural event. Professor Atif was one of the prominent Australian representatives invited to participant in the roundtable. Professor Atif presented Australian research and training capability with reference to Australia's *Academic Centres of Cyber Security Excellence.*

Discussion focused on how Australia and Malaysia can collaborate to build capacity and skills training to reinforce cyber security excellence and awareness across industry. Professor Atif highlighted his research on improving management practices for cybersecurity in organisations. His experience with Malaysia, including his ongoing work with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia – the National University of Malaysia – demonstrated relevance to, and ongoing active interest from major agencies in Malaysian. The discussion resonated strongly with local government and industry representatives present at the roundtable and assists with practical methods on how to build cyber skills in organisations.

Following the roundtable, Austrade coordinated a training seminar in partnership with Professor Atif attended by twenty senior industry and government executives from Malaysia.

Professor Atif's practice-oriented training encouraged questions and group discussion delivered over a virtual platform. A case study of a real-world program was also us ed during the training and assisted to help contextualise cybersecurity practises.

The success of the training delivered by Professor Atif illustrated the demand for continuous skills training and helped reinforce Australia's cybersecurity excellence to a wide audience of industry and government executives in Malaysia. In an increasingly borderless business and education environment, cooperation and knowledge-sharing is key to achieving greater cyber resilience for both countries.

Building upon the momentum achieved from these cybersecurity and technology focused activities in 2021, Austrade is seeking to develop greater upskilling and capacity building opportunities for Australian education and training providers. Professor Atif's work in this space is critical and appreciated, both to effectively profile Australian cyber education and training capability but specifically in meeting talent development challenges.

Please feel free to contact me directly for further information on the practical value of Professor Atif's research within the context of Austrade's initiatives to promote Australian cybersecurity capability.

Sincerely,

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Paul Sanda
Minister-Counsellor (Commercial) &Senior Trade & Investment Commissioner
Australian High Commission, Kuala Lumpur