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# MALAYSIA

## PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

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INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
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## Introduction

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IN November 1984, 270 scholars, officials, politicians and businessmen met at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts at a two-day 'Conference on Malaysia' organised by the Fletcher School, the Asia Society and the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia.

It was the biggest ever conference on Malaysia to be held in the United States. For the Fletcher School and the Asia Society, it was part of the Asean series. For the Malaysian Institute of Strategic and International Studies, it was part of a programme of action to make Malaysia, the least known of the Asean countries in the United States, better known and understood – warts and all. This book brings together the background papers prepared for the conference.

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# Malaysia's Strategic Vision: Into the 21st Century

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**Datuk Musa Hitam**

*Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia\**

IF A MAN has to predict the future, it would be wise for him to predict at least 15 years ahead. In this way, he can be sure that he is safe. For in 15 years, no one will remember his predictions. I will seek even greater safety, by not even predicting what Malaysia would be like in the year 2000. Instead, I will attempt to describe what my country of 15 million Malaysians is attempting to do and to become by the dawn of the 21st century.

China, as you well know, has embarked upon an ambitious programme of Four Modernisations. By no means can it be said that that huge country is at one as to the goals that are being pursued and the means by which that journey is to be made. Similarly, in a democratic country such as Malaysia, there are differences of views and aspirations, disagreements as to ends and pathways. But it is equally clear that the democratically-elected government of which I am a member, has a long-term programme of Six Modernisations, six modernisations that are at the core of our strategic vision.

For five of those Six Modernisations, we turn to the Rukunegara, the national ideology that was promulgated in the early 1970s, as we emerged from the tragedy of communal conflict, known in our history as the May 13 incident. The Rukunegara proclaims five ideals: first, the ideal of a united Malaysian nation; second, the ideal of a society founded on social justice for all Malaysians; third, the ideal of a democratic society; fourth, the ideal of a liberal and tolerant society; fifth, the ideal of a scientific and progressive society. These ideals arose out of the crucible of conflict. They are the result of a national consensus. They remain the ideals of the present government. They are five pillars of Malaysia's strategic vision. To these five pillars and especially in the 1980s, we have added another: the creation of an industrial society.

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\* Datuk Musa Hitam held the post of deputy Prime Minister from June 1981 to January 1986.