

Dr M calls for new world order based on common prosperity, mutual regard

Chance now for global economic system

By Saiful Azhar Abdullah and A. Kathiresan

PENANG, Sun. — In a speech described as compelling and persuasive, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called for a new international mindset and crusade to establish a single global commonwealth founded on the principle of co-operative prosperity.

The Prime Minister also called for a new world order securely grounded not only in the idea of common prosperity but also in mutual understanding and mutual regard.

He also urged everyone to "welcome, engage, persuade and drag the entire world into the making of the future prosperity of East Asia" as this will be good not just for East Asia but for the whole world.

Dr Mahathir made the call in his keynote address at the Pacific Dialogue jointly organised by the Washington-based Asia Pacific Policy Centre, Institute of Policy Research and Institute of Strategic and International Studies (Isis) at the Penang Mutiara Beach Resort here. (Full text on Page 14.)

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim led the Malaysian delegation to the dialogue. Penang Chief Minister Dr Koh Tsu Koon and Youth and Sports Minister Abdul Ghani Othman were also present at the opening.

Others present included Singapore Minister for Information and the Arts George Yeo; Philippines National Security Council Secretary-General Jose T. Almonte and former Japanese International Trade and Industry Minister Eiichi Nakao. Also present were six United States senators led by Senator Christopher Bond.

The Prime Minister said the world community had been presented an opportunity to build a single global economic system following the end of the Cold War.

Dr Mahathir said: "Given time and with the forces of globalism, this is in fact inevitable.

"What farsighted and enlightened leadership should ensure is that there is a single global economic system as soon as possible. We need to ensure as much prosperity for everyone as possible.

"We need to ensure that we create a prosperous global commonwealth," he added.

The Prime Minister said many were extremely worried about the increasing attraction of beggar-thy-neighbour attitude that there were regions that were so internally pre-occupied and too busy to see others running fast and past.

"There are regions in danger of turning inward. There are dangers of inward-looking trading blocs," he said, stressing that he did not condemn re-

gionalism.

Dr Mahathir said after a quarter century, the Asean community was all too aware of the remarkable payoffs and equally remarkable indirect consequences of the entire Asean experience.

He emphasised that so long as there was the commitment to open regionalism and the opening of the regions was adhered to, every region had the right to organise itself and to co-operate among themselves.

"Indeed, if there is this commitment to open regionalism and this attempt to open regions, regional states do have a duty to co-operate and thus contribute to open globalism."

He said in the 1930s, the beggar-thy-neighbour policy ran rampant while the prosper-thy-friend and beggar-thy-foe policies held sway in the Cold War.

"It is time for all of us to adopt prosper-thy-neighbour policies. This is what we in Asean are trying to do with the wider Southeast Asia. We are working very hard at it."

The Prime Minister asked the participants to imagine the consequences if prosper-thy-neighbour policies and ideology of co-operative prosperity were to run rampant.

"The 20th century will be mankind's most bountiful, greatest century," he said.

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A secure peace but the way ahead is still long, says Dr M

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He added that as an Asian, he was very proud of the achievements that East Asia had been able to realise in recent times.

"We have a peace that is more secure than at any time in the last century and a half. Nevertheless there is a long distance to go," he

said.

As for Malaysia, Dr Mahathir said: "We are a democracy, giggles and cynical smiles notwithstanding.

This multi-ethnic and multi-religious country, with all its difficulties and challenges, could not have made it without a healthy and sustainable democracy."

He said Malaysia, however, could not have made it without peace, political stability and a secure rule of law.

The Prime Minister said: "Nor could we have made it if we are as corrupt as we are reported to be. Corrupt countries do not achieve

eight per cent growth and political stability. I will say nothing of the record in the countries of the erstwhile critics.

"The Government can take some of the credit. But let me say that this country could not have achieved what we have achieved if not for the fact that our

people have been willing to shed their blood in the struggle for their peace and their future.

"The people have been willing to toil and sweat to build this nation. What Malaysia is today is largely the result of the genius, the grit and the sweat of the Malaysian people."
