

SPEECH BY: DATO' SERI DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
(PRIME MINISTER)

EVENT: THE DINNER IN HONOUR OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR. LI JONG OK,
PREMIER OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE

VENUE: PARLIAMENT HOUSE, KUALA LUMPUR

DATE: 11 FEB 1982

TIME:

Your Excellency Premier Li Jong Ok;
Gentlemen.

Let me first of all take this opportunity to extend to Your Excellency and members of your delegation a warm welcome to Malaysia. This is the first time that a Premier of the Administrative Council of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is visiting Malaysia. We are indeed honoured by your visit. I hope that the few days stay that Your Excellency will have with us will be both pleasant and memorable.

2. Your Excellency's visit is an important milestone in the development of our bilateral relations. Indeed, it will provide us with another useful occasion for our two countries to follow up on the contacts that have been developed since we established diplomatic relations in 1973. There have been several exchanges of visits between Malaysia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at different levels and these have contributed to enhancing closer understanding and friendship between us. Your Excellency's visit, no doubt, will further enhance these friendly ties and in so doing foster closer cooperation to our mutual benefit.

3. We in Malaysia are happy with the development of our relations. As Your Excellency is aware, Malaysia has always followed a consistent policy of establishing friendly relations and mutual cooperation with all countries, irrespective of ideology or political systems, based on the principles of respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and of non-interference in one another's internal affairs. We believe that the adherence to these principles as well as the principle of peaceful co-existence is vital if we, particularly the smaller nations of the world, are to enjoy peace, security and stability which are so essential for the economic development, prosperity and well-being of our peoples.

4. In the development of our bilateral relations, I am mindful of the potential that each of our two countries has to offer. I recall my visit to your

beautiful country in June 1979 when I was the then Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, during which I had the opportunity to see some of the achievements attained under the able and dedicated leadership of His Excellency President Kim Il Sung and yourself. Your country, in your own ways, has attained significant achievement in developing your agriculture, energy resources and heavy industries. I was indeed impressed by your efforts towards the development in these areas. In the agricultural field you have come close to achieving self-sufficiency in food. You have successfully harnessed your rivers for hydro-electric energy, irrigation and flood control. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea possesses vast potential in this field. I also noted your efforts in your four "Nature-Remaking" projects which are the reclamation of tide-lands, the cultivation of new land, the construction of the Nampo lock-gate and the Taechon Power Station. Your country has also been successful in the industrial sector where industrial activities represent as important a part as agricultural development. Apart from these we had the opportunity to explore areas of cooperation between our two countries, particularly in encouraging direct trade and economic cooperation for the development of our two countries.

5. Malaysia, like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, is a developing country whose economy is agriculture based but with a rapidly increasing industrial and manufacturing sector. To sustain the momentum and to further encourage the development of this sector the Malaysian Government is committed towards establishing new markets for its industrial and manufactured products while sustaining the growth of the market for its primary produce like rubber, palm oil, tropical hardwoods and tin. Our government is also committed to improve the livelihood of all Malaysians and to increase their standard of living.

6. The prospects for cooperation between our two countries are therefore bright and I am optimistic of the future. One area is certainly in the promotion of our two way trade. Malaysia has much to offer to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in terms of our rubber, palm oil, tin and tropical timber products. On the other hand, we require building and construction materials like cement and steel, light industrial machinery, non-ferrous metals like zinc, lead and aluminium, chemical fertilisers and even coal, which are important for our industrial development and which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea could make available. We could therefore cooperate in this area more closely. It would be to our mutual benefit to work for an increase in the volume of our trade.

Excellency,

7. Your visit to our part of the world is taking place as important political developments evolve around us.

Southeast Asia and the Korean Peninsular are strategically sensitive areas which have been the theatres of two major wars in the second half of this century. Although these wars are over, the geo-political factors that contributed to them are ever present and are still causing instability in the two regions. The exploitation of these geo-political factors can be hastened if the states within these regions should become themselves vulnerable through their lack of trust and cooperation and cohesion. We in ASEAN have benefited from mutual cooperation and understanding and are working to extend these benefits to the rest of our region through our relentless pursuit of the concept of Southeast Asian Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality. What has occurred in Kampuchea is indeed deplorable. The military intervention and occupation of Kampuchea by foreign forces not only violates international law but constitutes a setback to the principles of ZOPFAN. Indeed, the continued occupation of Kampuchea would further invite major power involvement and interference by outside forces in the region causing further instability in the process. That is why we are actively involved in seeking a political solution to the Kampuchean problem. Such a political solution must be based on the Declaration and Resolution of the International Conference on Kampuchea and consistent with that Declaration, it is our desire to see the emergence of a coalition government that is truly representative of the people of Kampuchea. It is our hope that the parties concerned will work towards the early return of peace and stability so that the countries in the region can embark on national development and build a new era of friendly and cooperative relations for our mutual benefit.

8. As non-aligned countries, both the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Malaysia can play a constructive role in bringing about the peace that we so desire in our respective regions. In this regard it is incumbent upon the non-aligned countries to continue to adhere steadfastly to the goals and founding principles of the Movement so that its credibility can be preserved and further enhanced. It is therefore the duty of all Non-aligned members more particularly the members of the Coordinating Bureau of which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is one to pursue this objective.

9. Before concluding, may I once again welcome Your Excellency's visit to Malaysia. Your visit indeed is a testimony to the common wish of both our governments to work together and cooperate wherever possible to develop our respective economies and improve the standard of living of our respective peoples. Malaysia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea share similar aspirations in this regard. It is our hope that the individual endeavours undertaken by our respective countries will bring about peace and economic development in our two regions for the general well-being of our peoples.

10. On that note, may I now invite all of you to join me in a toast to His Excellency the President of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to His Excellency the Premier of the Administrative Council of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to the progress, prosperity and well-being of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and her people and to the friendship between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Malaysia.