

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TO THE
THAI COUNCIL OF WORLD AFFAIRS AND INTERNA-
TIONAL LAW, IN FEBRUARY 1964

Mr. President, Your Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished
Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very grateful indeed to the Chairman of the Thai Council of
World Affairs and International Law, His Excellency Tun Thanat
Khoman, the distinguished Foreign Minister of Thailand, and also to
the Thai Council of World Affairs and International Law for their kind-
ness and confidence in inviting me this afternoon to give a talk on South-
east Asian affairs to the members and friends of the Council. This is
indeed a great honour to me personally and to my country, Malaysia.

I always look forward with pleasure to visiting Thailand and this is
actually the third occasion I have been here within a month. In fact,
Thailand has long since become my second home. I am always happy in
Thailand because I know I am among friends and well-wishers here.
Therefore, I have always enjoyed and greatly appreciated the friendship
and hospitality extended to me and to other leaders of Malaysia by the
Government and people of Thailand.

In this connection, I would like particularly to express my deep
appreciation to His Excellency Tun Thanat Khoman for his warm friend-
ship to Malaysia, to me personally, and also especially for his untiring
efforts and assistance to help maintain peace in Southeast Asia. His
Excellency Tun Thanat Khoman is highly regarded in my country, and
our people are most appreciative of the role he is playing to sustain
peace and to bring about reconciliation between Malaysia, Indonesia
and the Philippines.

Malaysia hopes the present revolutionary turmoil in Afro-Asian
countries will bring political consciousness to all emerging peoples, and
also help to bridge the gulf that separates Afro-Asian nations from
Western countries which are already in the forefront of prosperity and
economic growth.

As I see it, the main problems relevant to the questions of peace and
security and stability in our region of Southeast Asia today are com-
munism, poverty and disharmony among nations in the area.

Though Communism terrorism was decisively defeated in Malaya after an armed struggle lasting twelve long years, and despite the fact that there is no longer a Communist military threat in Malaysia, we still have to be on our guard against them. The Reds are still fighting us, but the battle-ground has shifted from the jungles into political and social fields — our schools, political parties, trade unions and other organisations. However, we in Malaysia have great confidence from our past experience that if we are given time and peace we can hold the Communists in check, as we do now.

We are grateful for the cooperation and assistance we have always obtained from the Thai Government in our efforts on joint action to eradicate the remaining few hundred communist terrorists who still lurk in the jungles along the Malaysia/Thai border. With greater cooperation and renewed determination, I am sure our two Governments will very soon completely clear these areas from Communists menace.

The Communists Party of Malaya — I suppose now they have changed the name to the Communist Party of Malaysia — failed because it had no roots among the indigeneous people. Communism can only hope to succeed in Malaysia if it gets massive assistance from outside. We know that the Communists in Malaysia are looking forward to greater assistance from the Parti Komunis Indonesia (P.K.I.). It is a fact that the Communists and their front organisations in Malaysia do receive intellectual and moral support from their colleagues in Indonesia and China.

Newly independent countries in our region can easily be exposed to the dangers of Communism because of relative backwardness in economy, education and social conditions, and also because of the absence of true nationalism resulting from their colonial heritage. The great Kingdom of Thailand never experienced these pangs, because she was never colonised by any foreign power. The history of other nations in Southeast Asia is not as impressive nor as fortunate as that of the Thai people.

The yearning of the masses for early realisation of high civil standards, the difficulties often encountered by Governments concerned in meeting basic economic needs in the absence of responsible, stable and popular administrations, these may well be the cause of apathy and erosion of popular resistance. These factors facilitated the growth of Communism, and can still do so anywhere, for to many Asians, Communism is still a mystic and dynamic force.

The fights against poverty, hunger, ignorance and disease are arduous tasks facing any emergent nation, particularly a nation like Malaysia

with a multi-racial population. It is the responsibility of Government not only to provide for the basic economic and social needs of their peoples, but also to achieve higher living standards, full employment and a climate of all-round progress, for these indeed are necessary for healthy development.

Hence in Malaysia, one of our cardinal principles of economic policy is to uplift the standards of living of the people in the rural areas, the vast majority of the population. In Malaysia we have spent an average of \$570 million a year on development works alone in the past few years to give a new deal to our rural population, thus assuring them of some measure of progress and happiness.

Communism thrives in adversity, and on poverty in particular, that is why in Malaysia we try to remove this breeding-ground of Communism by concentrating our resources and efforts on rural development. The fostering of economic and social growth in any country is not only the special responsibility of the Government concerned to its own people, but also becomes by its very nature an international obligation as well to ensure the promotion of peace, security and stability in the surrounding region.

In the economic sphere, Malaysia sets her sights on a high level of productivity, employment and prosperity for the nation, and more particularly on the economic and social elevation of the living standards of the rural people. We know that through our free market economy and the stability of our administration, Malaysia has successfully attracted investment from all over the world. Capital has flowed in from many countries in the West, and other Asian countries, including Thailand, also cooperate in our economic development by exchanging capital with Malaysia. We find that this policy is both beneficial and fruitful, springing as it does from mutual respect, confidence and trust.

The people of Asia, especially those in this region, must strive increasingly to bring their national life, ambitions and aspirations more in line with present ideals and revolutionary fervour in the area. Southeast Asia, together in unity, can and must provide stronger leadership in seeking universal peace and prosperity in a world repeatedly threatened by crisis, destruction and war. In order to achieve these objectives there must be peace and tranquility in the world and in Southeast Asia. The present clouds of war in our region must be removed and the sooner this is done the better for all concerned.

In Malaysia our primary policy in foreign affairs is to promote and maintain friendship and close relations with all countries, and parti-

cularly with our neighbours in Southeast Asia. We have repeatedly declared our willingness and desire to play an active part in the cause of peace and understanding throughout the world in every possible way within our power resources.

In this connection, if Southeast Asia is to go forward in a friendly atmosphere of peace and harmony, it is essential that all countries in this region should respect each others integrity and sovereignty, and on this basis endeavour to find ways and means of cooperating with each other for the benefit of all our peoples and for the peace and enlightenment of the region. There should be established a machinery embracing countries of this region where there can be regular consultations and discussion, not only for the purpose of finding ways and means of achieving closer cooperation but also for resolving any differences or difficulties that may lie in the way of achieving closer understanding and cooperation among these countries. After all, the nations of Southeast Asia which have so many things in common and of mutual interest will gain much by such cooperation and understanding.

Our new nation, Malaysia, was established just over five months ago. It was created as a result of the free expression of the views of the peoples of Sabah, Sarawak, Singapore and Malaya to unite together to form a much larger country. We felt that since the wishes of the people of these territories have been clearly expressed in favour of forming by the United Nations Secretary-General's investigating teams, it was surely a matter solely for the peoples of these territories — and not the concern of others outside — to decide their own future destiny.

Therefore, it is indeed strange that while the whole world recognises Malaysia our two closest neighbours, Indonesia and the Philippines, refrain from doing so. The actions and the attitudes of these two countries have led to the present tension in Southeast Asia.

None with peace and goodwill in his heart would wish for a crisis to occur. All will admit that it is better that the countries of Southeast Asia should strive to live in peace and goodwill and try to work together in harmony and cooperation to ensure peace and happiness throughout our region.

We in Malaysia are very conscious of our duty and responsibility in this regard. That is why despite dissension and the differences of view taken by our neighbours, Indonesia and the Philippines, and despite the active policies of confrontation and actual aggression adopted by Indonesia against Malaysia, we agreed to discuss together around the table

in the hope of finding a peaceful solution to the present dangerous situation.

As a result the Foreign Ministers of the three countries met recently in Bangkok, a rendezvous made possible especially by the friendly mediation of Tun Thanat Khoman. At the Ministerial talks was agreed that there should be further discussions between the Foreign Ministers. In fact the talks are only in recess and are to be resumed.

We in Malaysia will do our best in a constructive way to ensure that there will be a peaceful solution, but it is not possible to discuss the larger question of political settlement at present unless there exists an appropriate atmosphere of mutual goodwill and sincere friendship.

It must be obvious to everyone, and certainly to us in Malaysia, that to bring about such a climate of trust and goodwill the cease-fire that already exists must be made effective. Both sides must agree to confine the activities of their troops to within their own borders. The armed forces of Malaysia have never crossed the Indonesian border. The Indonesians, however, still have their forces inside the territory of Malaysia, and in the last few days these forces have made a number of incursion into our territories. In one instance they attacked one of our Police posts and killed two of our men. These incursions provide clear instances of deliberate violations of the cease-fire.

We have now asked for a meeting of the Foreign Ministers to discuss the cease-fire arrangements in view of these violations. We are in recess, but at the last meeting the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr. Subandrio, undertook to clear the cease-fire with his Government in view of the reservation I had made in the joint communique. It is very necessary now that this matter should be cleared, and that the cease-fire be made fully effective with the armed forces of both Governments confined within their own territories. It is only possible to discuss a political settlement when the cease-fire is truly a cessation of hostilities, thus creating the proper conditions for a conference.

Already in Southeast Asia three countries - Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines - have demonstrated what it is possible to achieve by friendly cooperation. The Association of Southeast Asia was natural growth of affinity of minds and ideals of three countries. A.S.A. was progressing very well indeed, and at every step we were conscious that A.S.A. was our own creation, owing nothing to external influences, and demonstrating many possibilities of practical development. Unfortunately A.S.A. is temporarily in abeyance owing to the break between Malaysia and the Philippines. Malaysia and Thailand, however, are still

working along these lines, because we both have faith in the future of A.S.A. and we both hope that the time will come soon when A.S.A. can grow and flourish again in fruitful promise.

By contrast, however, we have the concept of Maphilindo which, through no fault of Malaysia, was strangled at birth by the action of two of its foster-fathers in breaking off relations with Malaysia. Maphilindo can only come to fruition if these countries prove by words and deeds that they really desire it. One cannot achieve Maphilindo by repeating the name of the concept as a kind of totem to show that it already exists. Action and cooperation are practical necessities to achieve the concept of Maphilindo. The development of A.S.A., another exercise in cooperation in Southeast Asia, has already proved the potential for constructive effort in our region of the world.

If Indonesia and the Philippines will only see the real prospects of progress ahead, think always in terms of our region, and develop a determination for harmony and cooperation, then there will be a real possibility of permanent peace in Southeast Asia.

That is the wide horizon of opportunity which we in Malaysia believe can open out before all nations in Southeast Asia. We are fully prepared to dedicate ourselves to the achievement of this great goal. It is our hope that our neighbours will share our spirit of goodwill and cooperation to bring about prosperity, happiness and lasting peace throughout the region of the world in which we live and where the shaping of our destiny can be our own.

I have spoken at length today of problems, of dangers and difficulties facing us in Southeast Asia. Dark clouds of dissension, and hostilities loom across the horizon. However, against this sombre background, the friendship, the understanding and fraternity between the people of Thailand and Malaysia provide a gleam of light. It is the earnest hope and prayer of all of us that this gleam of light will break through and disperse the dark clouds of discord and dissension so that when these troubled skies are cleared, we in Southeast Asia can look forward to an area of peace, progress and enlightenment.