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SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE STATE DINNER IN HONOUR OF
HIS EXCELLENCY FIELD MARSHAL
TUN THANOM KITTIKACHORN,
PRIME MINISTER OF THAILAND AT
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, KUALA LUMPUR ON
23RD MAY, 1966.

Your Excellency, Field Marshal Tun Thanom Kittikachorn, Toh Puan Kittikachorn, Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Government of Malaysia, to welcome you, Your Excellency, and Toh Puan Kittikachorn to Malaysia. I would also like to extend our sincere welcome to Madame Khumying Prappatt to your distinguished colleagues, His Excellency, Tun Thanat Khoman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and His Excellency, Mr. Sunthorn, Minister of Economic Affairs, and other distinguished members of your delegation.

Your Excellency, although we have had the pleasure of welcoming you and Toh Puan Kittikachorn on a few occasions before to our country, this is the first time we have the privilege of welcoming you since you assumed the high office of Prime Minister of your great country. Our Prime Minister, the Tunku, has asked me to express his regret for being unable to welcome you personally here tonight, but he will be joining you tomorrow to be with you during the rest of your stay in our country.

Your Excellency, it always gives my colleagues and me, and indeed all the people of Malaysia, the greatest pleasure to welcome you or any of your colleagues to our country. Your visit here at this time is indeed of great significance in view of recent developments in this region of Southeast Asia. As you know, Your Excellency, President Marcos of the Philippines has announced his intention to normalise relations with Malaysia, and as a result it has been possible for us to revive and reactivate ASA, a concept of regional

cooperation which is dear to both our countries. Also, the new Indonesian Government has expressed its wish to bring an end to Indonesia's confrontation against Malaysia, and has agreed to discuss with us ways and means of bringing this about. We, on our part, have of course readily responded, and it is expected that a meeting between the Indonesian Foreign Minister and myself will take place in the very near future. We in Malaysia hope and pray that, with the assistance and cooperation of Thailand and other friendly countries in Asia, it will be possible to bring a speedy end to this confrontation, and that Indonesia and Malaysia as close neighbours will be able to work together in friendship and cooperation, for the progress and happiness of our respective peoples, and also for peace in this region.

Your Excellency, Thailand and Malaysia have always maintained the closest and most cordial relations, and we here have a real and genuine affection and regard for you and your colleagues. I have no doubt that, under Your Excellency's wise leadership, ably supported by your distinguished colleagues, your great country, Thailand, will continue to progress and prosper, and that the close and friendly ties between our two countries will be further sustained and strengthened.

I, on my part, Your Excellency, and almost every one of my colleagues here, have had the privilege and pleasure of visiting your great country; and we have always cherished happy memories of our visits to Thailand. You and your colleagues, and officers of your Government, have never spared any effort to make our visits and our stays in your country pleasant and memorable.

Your Excellency, we in Malaysia still remember, with special pleasure and pride, the visit of Their Majesties, the King and Queen of Thailand, to Malaysia. Their Majesties, during their visit here, won the affection and esteem of our people. Your Excellency, the close and cordial relations between our two countries have been sustained and refreshed, by constant and continuous exchanges of visits, not only by their leaders (the present visit by you and your distinguished colleagues is an outstanding example) but also by the peoples of our two countries from all walks of life.

Your Excellency, I cannot stress too strongly how close the ties

are between our two countries. Thailand has remained Malaysia's staunchest, and most loyal, friend and neighbour for many years in the past. Whatever stress and strain might have been in international relations in this part of the world, Thailand has always been willing, and ready, to help Malaysia, in any way she could, and at any time. To quote one obvious instance: During the last few years, there have been strained relations between us and Indonesia, and to some extent, between us and the Philippines. Thailand has, in this time, endeavoured, in every way possible, to bring us back together – to bring to an end Indonesia's confrontation against us, and to have normal diplomatic relations re-established between us and the Philippines.

Your Excellency, during the early days of confrontation, your able and distinguished Foreign Minister, Tun Thanat Khoman, with his undoubted wisdom and great diplomacy, successfully brought Indonesia and Malaysia together to the conference table to settle their differences. This he did in the face of overwhelming difficulties; and the great restraint he exercised in doing so was obvious to all. Although some of the meetings, regretfully, did not end in agreement, your Foreign Minister showed that he was prepared to go to any extent, with patience and endeavour, to assist friendly countries, and to bring peace to this region.

Your Excellency, your great country and ours share the same ideals and aspirations. We believe in international cooperation and peace among nations, respecting each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. That is why our two countries came to be founder members of ASA – an outstanding example of regional cooperation that is now beginning to show results. Our two countries, as neighbours, are working closely together in meeting Communist aggression and subversion, particularly at our common border. The Joint Border Committee, which our two Governments have set up, has done much in our efforts to control, and eliminate, Communist terrorism in our border areas. Our two countries, believing in peace and cooperation among nations, have never hesitated to play their part in the defence of freedom, and in the cause of world peace. It is our common aim to create political and economic stability in our respective countries, so as to counter the corrosive threat of Communist subversion and infiltration. In this field we are assisting each other in a number of ways. We, on our part, are

always willing, within the limits of our ability, to extend assistance to you, in your great effort to wipe out Communist elements in your country, with the experience that we have gained through our twelve-year war against Communist terrorism. Your Excellency, our two countries are fully aware of the danger that the subversion and infiltration of militant Communism poses to our independence and sovereignty; and it is our determination to do everything possible to defend our independence, and our integrity, and to see that peace is maintained in this region of Southeast Asia.

Your Excellency, your visit to our country is very short, but we do hope you and Toh Puan Kittikachorn, and your distinguished colleagues, will enjoy your stay with us and that you will be able to see our country and meet as many of our people as possible.

I am pleased to say that, between the very strenuous official activities during your present visit, you and your colleagues will be able to relax in our hill resort of Cameron Highlands from tomorrow. Our beloved Prime Minister has arranged for a few games of golf with you and your colleagues, and I trust that, in addition to leaving happy and fond memories of your stay here, you will also leave us with some golf balls. I believe the Southern has brought a large stock of golf balls when he intend to distribute to us. He has regained his generosity now that he is no longer the Ministry of Finance.

Your Excellency, your great people and our people cooperate closely not only in the political, economic, social and cultural fields, but also in the field of sport, particularly golf. I see you have with you Tan Sri Thitinat Na Ranong, your former Ambassador to our country, who, besides being an able representative of your great country, has also been golfing partner to our Prime Minister¹. I have to say that, since he left us, our Tunku's game of golf has gone down very much, and instead of a handicap of 21, he now has a handicap of 24. So you can see, Your Excellency, how much we in Malaysia depend on you, your help, your assistance, your understanding and cooperation, even in golf!

Once again, Your Excellency, I do hope that you, Toh Puan Kittikachorn, and all your colleagues, will enjoy your short stay with us; and I would like to assure you that you, and every one of

your colleagues, are always welcome to Malaysia at any time. Our homes and our hearts will always be open for you, your colleagues and the people of Thailand.

Now, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I ask you to rise and join me, in a toast to His Excellency Tun Thanom Kitikachorn, Prime Minister of Thailand, and to wish him good health and success in this great and high office.

¹ Y.T.M. Tuanku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj.