

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE UNITED NATIONS BALL
IN KUALA LUMPUR ON 3RD DECEMBER, 1971

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish, first of all, to thank you Mr Campbell and Tan Sri T. H. Tan for your kind words of welcome and also to say how grateful I am for your presence tonight on the occasion of the United Nations Day.

About a year has now passed since the last United Nations Ball was organised. I remember that occasion very well, especially the glitter and sparkle of the colourful international costumes. This year, although the setting is different, I am sure the evening will be equally memorable and enjoyable; judging from the round of drinks that has been consumed already!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year we are celebrating the 26th anniversary of the United Nations. I think it is worth while to ponder a moment and reflect on some of the events that had taken place since the intervening months of 1971.

For us in Malaysia, the most significant event in the year is the launching of the Second Malaysia Plan. The dual objectives of the Plan, which I am sure are familiar to you, is to eradicate poverty, irrespective of race and place, and to restructure our Malaysian society with the aim of reinforcing our national unity. The ultimate goal of development must be, after all, to bring about a sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual and share the nation's wealth fairly. In this respect, equality of opportunities should be as much the prerogative of nations as of individuals within a nation. Given determined effort, vigour and sincerity of purpose on the part of everyone, we are confident the Second Malaysia Plan will attain its objectives.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the international plane, I feel greater effort must be made by the developed countries to assist the developing ones. I can no

more than quote the preamble of the International Development strategy, which states that no matter how great the efforts of developing countries like Malaysia, for instance, this will not be sufficient to enable them to achieve the desired development goals as expeditiously as they must, unless they are assisted through increased financial resources and more favourable economic and commercial policies on the part of the developed countries. This is truly relevant within the present context of increasing interdependence among countries in the world.

Let us hope that this broadened outlook will provide the necessary commitment and determination to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Second Development Decade. The Pearson Commission has succinctly put the issue at hand in one simple question: "Who can now ask where his country will be in a few decades without asking where the world will be?"

This is also the case in the field of international relations. Dark clouds continue to loom over us. Our world today is still beset with the perennial problems arising out of fundamental suspicion and rivalry among nations. The Indo-China area has been the arena of political conflict for the past many years while armed adversaries face each other across the Suez Canal and lately along the Indo-Pakistan border. Peace is at stake and it is the duty of everyone of us to strive to maintain it. Only a few days ago, we witnessed the signing of the historic Declaration expressing the desire of two hundred million people in this region to make this an area of peace, freedom and neutrality.

I am much heartened by recent developments which augur well in our quest for peace, prosperity and freedom. I refer here to the growing detente—and dialogue—between the big powers. We wholeheartedly welcome this and I sincerely hope that this trend will bring fruitful results.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I realise this is an evening for merry making and I shall not dabble too long in serious talk. However, I wish to underline the importance of and the continued commitment of my Government to the ideals of the U.N. Charter. This is amply borne out by my recent visit to New York. At the first available opportunity, I

personally renewed my country's pledge of support to the United Nations and its system in all its endeavours to secure for mankind a safe, just and prosperous world order.

On our part, we have assumed an even greater role, within the limits of our ability, in the work of the United Nations. We are a member of several committees, the notable ones being the ECOSOC, the Special Committee on Apartheid, the Trade and Development Board, the Statistical Commission and the Commission on the Status of Women. Besides, Malaysia has made voluntary contributions to the efforts of the U.N. to speed up the progress of decolonisation through its educational programme, its humanitarian and development efforts.

We all agreed that the United Nations is the one organisation which endeavours to harmonise the action of states transcending national interest for the betterment of mankind. What is required to make it a stronger and more effective instrument of peace as envisaged by its founding fathers is the political will and commitment of all its members. Presently, the U.N. is in a financial predicament which, according to the Secretary General, U Thant, tantamounts to a crisis. If this is allowed to continue, it would have far reaching consequences on the world body. I, therefore, would like to associate myself with the appeal made by the Secretary General to assist the United Nations in its hour of need and to give it unqualified and sincere co-operation. Malaysia stands ready to do her part.

In another sense, the United Nations is truly a people's organisation. Each individual member government receives its mandate from the people. The people, therefore, must play their part in furthering the goals and objectives of the United Nations and should identify themselves closely with its progress.

I am pleased tonight to see such manifestation, especially the keen involvement of so many people in organising the U.N. Day this year. Although the event occurs during the Fasting month, the organisers have arranged it in such a way so that the activities took place either before or after Ramadhan. I was informed that the U.N. Day Big Walk lived up to its name. It attracted various people from all sections of the community. In fact, I understand

it turned out to be the biggest walk of the year. I am encouraged to see that the people are walking together with the Government in support of the U.N.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Having said all these things, may I conclude by calling on you all to dedicate yourselves to the Charter of the United Nations. Let us propagate its understanding, and support its activities and tasks. Let us work towards the ideals and purposes that it sets forth.