

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
TUN ABDUL RAZAK BIN HUSSEIN
AT THE SIGNING OF THE ANTI-SMUGGLING
AGREEMENT WITH THE PHILIPPINES
AT WISMA PUTRA, KUALA LUMPUR
ON 1ST SEPTEMBER 1967

Your Excellency Mr. Ramos, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy, Your Excellency, to be able today to sign the Anti-Smuggling Agreement between our two countries. I hope and pray that this will mark the beginning and will lay the foundation of close bilateral co-operation between our two countries in the future.

Your Excellency, as you know, this subject during the last few weeks had been debated publicly in the press resulting in unwarranted speculation in some circles that there was strained relationship between the Philippines and Malaysia. The occasion this morning shows beyond doubt that our two countries maintain close and friendly relations in that if there is disagreement or difference on any matter, it can always be resolved in a spirit of friendship, goodwill and co-operation. Your Excellency, the fact that we are able to sign this Agreement today has been due to a large measure to your own personal efforts, your skill and your sincerity. As a colleague who has come to know you and to appreciate you well. I would like to congratulate you most warmly for your statesmanship. I trust that the relationship between our two countries in the future will always be guided by the spirit of friendship and goodwill, trust and confidence among our leaders and by a common desire to work together as friends and neighbours.

Your Excellency, it has always been the corner-stone of Malaysia's foreign policy to have friendly co-operation with all countries and, in particular, with all our neighbours, for we firmly believe that it is only in this way can we work together for the benefit of our people to eliminate the menace of poverty and ignorance and to promote stability and prosperity of our region as a whole.

Your Excellency, your country and mine are working closely together, not only in A S A of which the Fourth Ministerial Conference has just been concluded, but also in other regional bodies, such as A S E A N and A S P A C. Both our countries are sparing no efforts to achieve this regional co-operation and friendly relations among countries in this region.

Your Excellency, I wish to emphasize that our willingness to give you the necessary co-operation to suppress what is regarded by your country as smuggling is made in good faith and the sincere belief that relations between our two countries could thereby be enhanced and be strengthened. We do this despite loss of revenue to our country and despite the risk of unemployment to the State of Sabah. This trade has been with us for many decades and as far as Sabah is concerned, it was a legal trade. The traders did not violate Malaysian laws.

However, despite all these, we agree to co-operate with your Government in the belief that as friends and neighbours, we should understand each other's problems and should try to help each other as much as we could and one should not endeavour to prosper at the expense of the other.

Your Excellency, I hope the agreement and the protocol which we have just signed will establish the necessary framework which will regulate trade relations between Sabah and the Philippines on a permanent frame-work and which will bring mutual benefit to our two countries. I would like to wish you and your Government all the success in your efforts to solve this difficult problem of smuggling and that the Agreement that we have entered today will in some measure contribute to this success.

Your Excellency, I would like once again, on behalf of the Malaysian Government, to thank you, your good Lady, and members of your delegation for having come to our country on this auspicious occasion in the history of our young Nation. You have been so good as to stay on until the end of the celebrations. We have been greatly honoured by your presence in our midst during this joyous occasion. Personally, I am also deeply indebted to your Government and to the people of the Philippines for having bestowed upon me the high honour of the Ramon Magsaysay Award for 1967. This honour will long be treasured in my memory and in the memory of my family for all time.

Your Excellency, I wish you a pleasant and safe journey back to the Philippines and we hope we will see you again in our country in the not too distant future.