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SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER DATUK HUSSEIN ONN
AT THE DINNER IN HONOUR OF H.E. MR. TENG
HSIAO-PING, VICE PREMIER OF THE STATE
COUNCIL OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA,
AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE, KUALA LUMPUR ON
NOVEMBER 10, 1978 AT 8.00 P.M.

In May 1974, my predecessor the late Tun Abdul Razak visited your great country. He was warmly received by Chairman Mao Tse-tung, Mr. Chou En-lai and other leaders of your country. It was during that visit that the relations between our two countries were formally established. Your visit to Malaysia is specially welcomed by the Government and the people as it is the first ever made by a senior leader of your country.

We are very glad that Madame Cho Lin is also able to come. Your Foreign Minister Mr. Huang Hua is not a total stranger to us. Although he has never visited us before, it was he and our present Secretary-General of the Foreign Ministry who conducted the negotiations in New York which led to the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries. I followed the negotiations with great interest and read all the despatches. We are also very glad that Madame Ho Li-liang is able to come as well.

We also extend a very warm welcome to the other members of Your Excellency's delegation. We hope that the visit, short though it may be, will be a happy and a memorable one.

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'As Your Excellency is aware, the Joint Communiqué which was signed by Mr. Chou En-lai and Tun Abdul Razak on May 31, 1974 in Peking forms the basis of our two countries' relations today. It represents the conviction that despite differences in our political, economic and social systems, our two countries can co-exist and be friends. Malaysia supports the five principles of peaceful co-existence namely:

- (i) Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty
- (ii) Mutual non-aggression;
- (iii) Non-interference in each other's internal affairs;
- (iv) Equality and mutual benefits;
- (v) Peaceful co-existence.

The acceptance of these principles was mentioned in the May 1974 Joint Communiqué. Our two countries have also agreed that all foreign aggression, interference, control and subversion are impermissible. All these are important principles; they are among the universal tenets which govern friendly relations between countries; they are enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the Bandung Declaration and are the essence of the non-aligned movement. Malaysia will continue to adhere fully and strictly to these principles

Your Excellency, Malaysia sincerely desires peace, particularly in Asia and Southeast Asia. Its policy is to have friendly relations with all countries irrespective of their ideological and social systems. It has carried out this policy not only by words, but by deeds as well. It is a small country. At the same time, it values its way of life, its multi-racial character, its diverse religions and cultures. The people of Malaysia cherish their independence; no sacrifice is too great for them to defend their way of life and their country's independence.

Your Excellency, Malaysia is development oriented. We are justly proud of our achievements so far. We will not spare ourselves to strive harder for the welfare of our people, especially the poor. We welcome countries which are willing to assist us in our development; we welcome countries which are willing to trade with us we welcome countries which are willing to be our friends.

Your Excellency, you and I had a very useful, informative and frank discussion this afternoon. I look forward to having another discussion with you tomorrow. It is very clear that there is great scope to further widen the areas of co-operation between our two countries. Trade is obviously one area. Trade, in fact, has been an important feature in our countries relations, even before we established diplomatic relations. We have regularly visited the Canton Trade Fair. At present, China is one of Malaysia's top ten trading partners. The biggest item of export is natural rubber. Malaysia imports a lot from China. Malaysia always has a trade deficit with China. I am sure that this can be rectified by China importing more of Malaysia's commodities in the future. Malaysia attaches great importance to its trade with China and will encourage its further growth.

Sports and culture have provided further opportunities for the peoples of our two countries to meet in friendship and goodwill. These contacts should continue. As regards technical co-operation, especially for rubber and palm oil, there have been exchanges of visits and knowledge and we hope that they have contributed to a further realization of the potentials for increased trade between our two countries. We hope that you will fully encourage visits of this nature.

Your Excellency, permit me to say that Malaysia was the first country in ASEAN to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. I am glad to say that our bilateral relations have been friendly, correct and proper. As our countries are close neighbours, and further, due to the "accident of history" and unavoidable circumstances, there are bound to be matters which should be looked into by both our countries. I am aware that the solutions to these matters are not easily found. Nevertheless, we should try. It will no doubt take time, that is all right with us; Malaysia, as Your Excellency know, is a patient country. All good things are hard to come by and to get, nevertheless, we do not easily lose hope.

Your Excellency, we greatly appreciate your country's understanding of ASEAN's aims and objectives. It has been said that they are in accord with the interests of the Chinese people and with their desire for peace and stability in Asia. The member countries in ASEAN strongly believe in regional co-operation. This will not only contribute towards peace and stability in Southeast Asia, but in the whole of Asia as well. ASEAN is not a military grouping, and never will be. It is a threat to no one, and never will be. The countries of ASEAN only wish to co-operate with one another in economic, trade, industrial and cultural matters.

Developing countries such as those in ASEAN need such co-operation, without which, development and progress will only remain a dream.

Your Excellency, for development and progress Southeast Asia needs peace and stability. That is the reason for the ASEAN's proposal to declare the Southeast Asian region as a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality (ZOPFAN). I wish to thank the People's Republic of China for supporting the proposal.

Your Excellency, in view of what I have just said, it is obvious therefore that big power rivalries in whatever form or manner, or for whatever reason, will not be to the interest and benefit of the countries in Southeast Asia. Malaysia in particular would like to be left alone in peace, free from any form of interference, subversion or incitement. Malaysia has always maintained a policy of equidistance with all the big powers. It will not abandon this policy. Neither will it allow its territory to be used to influence its people to be for or against any big power.

Your Excellency, I have spoken at some length on matters which are of common interest to both our countries. If I sound to be concerned, it is because the stability and safety of my country are being threatened. I cannot afford to be indifferent when there is so much at stake for my country.

Your Excellency's visit provides both our countries with a great opportunity to develop further mutual understanding and trust consistent with the spirit of the 1974 Joint Communique. Our meetings will no doubt enable us to understand and appreciate the more important problems and sensitivities of our respective countries. While we take note of these sensitivities, we should take positive and effective steps to eliminate them, so that the relations between our two countries can be further strengthened.

Before I sit down, I would like to propose a toast to His Excellency. May I then request all of you to rise and drink with me in a toast to the health, happiness and success of His Excellency Mr. Teng Hsiao-ping, Vice Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. Thank you.



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