

**SPEECH BY**  
**YAB DATO' SERI ABDULLAH BIN HAJI AHMAD BADAWI**  
**AT THE LAUNCH OF THE BOOK "MALAYSIA: 50 YEARS OF DIPLOMACY,**  
**1957-2007"**  
**AT THE RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR**  
**10 DECEMBER 2007**

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

I can confirm what Tan Sri Ahmad Kamil Jaafar just said:

- that he came to me in July last year with an idea that he and some of his former Wisma Putra colleagues had;

- about commissioning a Book to be written concerning Malaysian foreign policy and diplomacy;

- as a contribution to the celebrations of our country's 50th Anniversary

2. I readily agreed to give my support and blessings to the book project, with the usual trust and confidence that I have in the veterans of Wisma Putra to deliver what they say they would deliver. I am very pleased therefore that I am able to say today, one more time, that Kamil and his friends have delivered. In the short span of 18 months, the author Dr. Chandran Jeshurun, with the advice and support of the Advisory Panel, has produced a book any author can be proud of.

3. And, equally important symbolically, the book has been successfully published on schedule in 2007, the year that marks 50 years of Malaysia's independence.

4. My congratulations to everyone involved in coming out with this important book, "Malaysia: Fifty Years of Diplomacy, 1957-2007".

5. I say important because the book has successfully captured the essence of 50 years of Malaysian foreign policy and diplomacy. It is a proud record of Malaysia's achievements in the realm of international relations. It will serve as a reminder of what we did right and how we did it. The book also records occasions where we did not do well and what went wrong. The book will be a useful companion to all Malaysians who have an interest in world affairs, especially the professionals in the Malaysian Foreign Service who have the task of negotiating with other well trained practitioners of the same profession from other countries. Malaysian diplomats must master the best practices in the art of diplomacy .

6. The best diplomats are those who are able to secure for their country the best possible deal, with the other side also feeling good about what they get in the same process. After all, nations are made up of people. Taking care of the feelings of other countries is always an important aspect of effective diplomacy. Making sure that no one loses face is as important in inter-state as it is in inter-personal relations, in fact even more so.

7. Dr. Chandran informs us, in the Preface to his book, that this work is based entirely on published documents, supported by personal insights and recollections of

political leaders who are still with us and the professionals who had been involved in the formulation and execution of Malaysia's foreign policy. The author, of course, missed the opportunity of speaking to our early leaders such as Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Abdul Razak and Tun Hussein Onn who have all left us. But Dr. Chandran was able to interview in person many officials who served and worked with these leaders. By seizing the opportunity given to him and capturing the results in his book, Dr. Chandran must be commended for his valuable contribution in putting into writing our country's diplomatic history. This book will certainly provide a very good basis for further, detailed study of the subject, especially one based on an examination of the unpublished official documents.

8. It will be readily seen in this book that Malaysia, as a nation, have always stood steadfast in the pursuit of world peace premised upon a just and equitable international order. Malaysia has always sought to bring about better understanding among peoples and nations in the interest of the common good. Starting with our humble beginnings as a small, newly independent nation in 1957, we can be justifiably proud that our Foreign Service has played a vital role in our evolution as a model of national development at home with a credible reputation at the international level. The author has correctly paid tribute to those brave pioneers of the Malaysian Foreign Service who had indeed truly served the country well and did it proud.

9. In the best tradition of academic enquiry, this book records and analyzes the growth and progress of Malaysia's foreign policy and diplomacy. At the same time, it provides any person with interest in politics, history or current affairs a very readable work of scholarship to source their understanding of international relations and their relevance to national development and the people's wellbeing in general.

10. I have a personal attachment to this subject because I have myself served 9 years as Foreign Minister and now, 4 years as Prime Minister. That makes a total of 13 out of the 50 years under review by Dr. Chandran. As you now know, I was informed about this project from the very start. But the author, Dr. Chandran, true to the intellectual tradition of a disciplined historian, has not accorded me any special treatment. I note that he has given me "pass marks" and not an A-1. Thank you Chandran !

11. I am certain that today's launch of this publication entitled "Malaysia: Fifty Years of Diplomacy, 1957-2007" will remain, for a long time, as one of the most important events that took place in the celebration of our country's 50th birthday. Let me say congratulations once again to the author and the others directly involved in one way or another in the timely publication of this significant work.

12. This book should inspire all Malaysians to be looking into the future and thinking ahead, about what Malaysia should become and where Malaysia should stand, among the international community of nations, say 50 years from today.

13. It is with much pleasure that I now launch this book by Dr. Chandran Jeshurun, "Malaysia: 50 Years of Diplomacy, 1957-2007"

Thank you.