

**SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE DINNER GIVEN BY SECRETARY RAMOS
ON 15TH DECEMBER 1967**

**Mr. Secretary Ramos, Madame Ramos,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

I have always found myself in difficulties Mr. Secretary whenever we had the occasion to meet and confer with one another whether in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur or elsewhere, when I had to speak after you and to match your fluency and oratory. Tonight I find myself facing the same difficulty, and added to this after having been so lavishly entertained with this array of rich Philippine food and wine typical of the usual overwhelming nature and the spontaneous hospitality of the Philippines, I therefore find it extremely difficult to express in appropriate words our sincere gratitude to you and your Government for your kind invitation to visit your great country and for this sumptuous dinner this evening.

When I received your kind invitation Mr. Secretary, in your words to relax in Manila, I was saying to myself what a dangerous fellow you could be to be able to anticipate me inner mind's desire and intention. I did indeed need a rest and a respite but I certainly do not remember telling you all that. However, Mr. Secretary I can assure you that your kind gesture and of your Governments' to invite me here are most heartily welcomed. I have also noted that you have not forgotten your promise that when I am in Manila I can play as much golf as I like. I am really looking forward to a few rounds of golf with you and I do hope you will be kind enough to play the part of a generous host and let his guest win a few games.

Mr. Secretary, my wife and I are indeed very happy to come to your great country again to meet you and other leaders of your people. We bring with us the goodwill and good wishes of our Government and people to the Government and people of Philippines. Our two countries and our two people have been closely linked together by ties of history, race, culture and geography from time immemorial and it was only by accident of history that it was placed apart to forge ahead to determine our own future motivated by our respective national objectives. I sincerely hope that my visit here short though it is would help in some small way to revive this old tie of past generations and thereby infuse into the hearts and minds of our leaders and people a real sense of perspective and balance in our efforts to work closely together as good neighbours and to cooperate for mutual benefit of our two people and for this region of South East Asia.

Mr. Secretary, during the last several years our two countries have indeed ventured far in fostering this spirit of cooperation. Together with Thailand we

founded ASA which in the past many years have shown every sign of success as a regional organization. Now recently we have gone a step further by together founding a new and larger organization, ASEAN, and I am confident that if the leaders of the countries in this region continue to maintain trust and confidence in one another, ASEAN will grow to be the principal regional organ of cooperation and friendship among countries in this region.

Between our two countries Mr. Secretary, we have recently signed in Kuala Lumpur the Anti-Smuggling Agreement which provides for parallel and joint efforts both by the Philippines and Malaysia to suppress the smuggling menace which has affected the economy of your country for sometime. We cannot deny Mr. Secretary that there are still minor difficulties on the mechanics of the implementation of this agreement which tends to be exaggerated by certain elements so as to cast doubt on the sincerity of our agreement to fulfill our part which we have solemnly agreed under the agreement. As I assured you in Kuala Lumpur when we signed this, that we would be pleased to play our part sincerely and honestly to bring an end to this menace despite the fact that this would be a loss of revenue to us and the possible loss of employment to our people. We agree to undertake all this for the sake of friendship and neighbourly cooperation. I am confident Mr. Secretary that our two Governments would not be swayed by this mischievous and irresponsible elements but will stand firm by our part to establish close mutual cooperation and to continue to build trust and confidence between the leaders of our two Governments and our two people.

Mr. Secretary in our mutual efforts to strive for regional cooperation in this region we shall no doubt have to face many obstacles and difficulties. As I stand here tonight, I recall during my last visit here in 1963 there was an atmosphere filled with expectations and promise but these expectations remain unfulfilled because my country has been subjected to confrontation and acts of aggression by forces extraneous to our region. By the grace of god, with the determination and will of our people to survive we firmly withstood this trial and tribulation; and with the general assistance and help of our friends including your country this unhappy event was brought to an end and peace was restored. Mr. Secretary we are therefore determined to safeguard this peace which was so bitterly won with so much sacrifice and waste of efforts and energy so as to spare this region of ours from adventurism.

Mr. Secretary we cannot also deny the fact that our two countries in endeavouring to achieve our common goal of economic and social progress for our respective peoples will have to face many problems. Problems of building a society into a progressive force, problems of economic development and cooperation and problems that may continue to irritate the growth of good and happy relations. We cannot also deny the fact that both inside and outside our countries there are enough elements that are always ready to generate more such problems. However Mr. Secretary, I can assure you as far as my country Malaysia is concerned, we are determined to overcome these problems with all those forces in our command and I am confident that with the wise and able leadership of your President your country and your people will do the same.

Mr. Secretary in our endeavour to strive for the upliftment of our people and for the promotion of goodwill among countries in the region, my country is

particularly honoured in having received so far three of the coveted awards of the Magsaysay Foundation. Personally I am greatly privileged and honoured that the Magsaysay Foundation has chosen to bestow upon me the 1967 award for Community Development. While I can never thank your country enough for this recognition of the little service I have been able to give to my country and my people, I feel doubly humble at the thought whether I am worthy of the gift. I can assure you however, that I shall continue to try to live up to the noble aims and objectives of the late President Magsaysay in whose memory the foundation was established.

Mr. Secretary in thanking you for the kind invitation to visit your great country and for this sumptuous dinner, may I take this opportunity to congratulate you and through you the present administration and above all His Excellency President Marcos whose able leadership has won the resounding confidence of the Filipino people through the recent elections. We in Malaysia share with you the happiness and pride of this great achievement. We look forward to welcoming His Excellency the President next month on a State Visit to our country. He will be a very welcome guest indeed and we trust that during his stay in our country he would be able to see for himself the efforts that we are making not only for the progress and happiness of our people but also for bringing friendship and cooperation among countries in Southeast Asia. Our homes and our hearts will be open to him, as we in Malaysia sincerely believe in goodwill and friendship among nations, particularly our close neighbours. I have no doubt the State Visit of His Excellency the President will go a long way to strengthen the ties of friendship and goodwill between our two countries and our two people. We would like the President to relax in our country as I am doing in yours.

Mr. Secretary, you and your good lady would always be welcome to our country and I can assure you when you next visit Kuala Lumpur I will let you win a few games of golf if you are kind to me in Manila.

Mr. Secretary, once again I thank you very much indeed for the kind invitation for my wife and myself to visit your great country, for this enjoyable dinner and for the extremely pleasant evening.