

AT THE OFFICIAL DINNER GIVEN IN HONOUR OF THE VISITING
PRIME MINISTER OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA, HIS EXCELLENCY MR.
MICHAEL T. SOMARE AND MRS. SOMARE
THE PRIME MINISTER

19 NOVEMBER 1983

His Excellency, Prime Minister Michael T. Somare, Mrs.
Somare, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and
Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government and people of Malaysia I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you, Mr. Prime Minister, your charming wife and members of your distinguished delegation. Your visit gives me the opportunity not only to renew our friendship but also to reciprocate the generous hospitality shown by you and the people of Papua New Guinea during my visit to your country last October. We are indeed honoured and delighted to have you with us and we hope that you and your delegation will feel at home during the short stay in Malaysia.

2. The growing bond of friendship between Papua New Guinea and Malaysia is made manifest by our increased bilateral interaction both at the official and private sector levels. Malaysia's diplomatic presence at Port Moresby has enabled us to keep in direct and close touch with Papua New Guinea. In our talks this morning, Mr. Prime Minister, you indicated that Papua New Guinea intends to establish a mission in Kuala Lumpur soon. We welcome this and look forward to receiving your first resident High Commissioner to Malaysia.

3. Like other developing countries, Malaysia continues to face economic difficulties and uncertainties arising from the current depressed international economic situation. Being producers of primary commodities, Papua New Guinea and Malaysia have to tackle similar problems to ensure that our products receive fair and stable prices and not be at the mercy of unscrupulous manipulators or speculators at the commodity exchanges. Malaysia firmly believes that developing countries can overcome the obstacles in their way and achieve higher levels of economic development and growth through meaningful and effective cooperation.

4. The Malaysian Government is fully committed to the concept of cooperation among developing countries, or South-South cooperation and we have extended modest offers of technical cooperation with fellow developing countries including Papua New Guinea. I am glad that Papua New Guineans have found some of our training programmes useful and that our traders and businessmen have met and confirmed the potential for direct bilateral trade and investment. Contacts made, and friendships established between the people of Papua New Guinea and of Malaysia will no doubt contribute towards the understanding, esteem and goodwill we have for one another. Tomorrow, Mr. Prime Minister, you will have the opportunity to visit some of Malaysia's socio-economic development projects. Should some of the practical aspects of our agricultural or land schemes be of relevance to Papua New Guinea in your own development efforts, we would only be too happy to share our expertise and experience with you.

5. Papua New Guinea is a close friend not only of Malaysia satisfaction Papua New Guinea's Special Observer status in ASEAN and the decision taken at the recent ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok for Papua New Guinea to work closely with ASEAN's Technical Committees to derive the fullest advantage of any cooperative efforts. This represents yet another milestone towards the promotion of closer relations between ASEAN and Papua New Guinea. We appreciate that in the South Pacific region, Papua New Guinea is also a strong advocate of regionalism and an active member of the South Pacific Forum.

Mr. Prime Minister,

6. As we share similar hopes and aspirations for our national stability and development in particular, and for our region in general, we are indeed mindful that national resilience and regional peace cannot be taken for granted. In Southeast Asia we have had our share of political problems and unrest, mainly due to big power rivalries and conflict. Convinced that the region must, and can be freed from the menace of any form of external big power rivalry, the ASEAN countries in 1971 adopted the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the establishment of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN). The realisation of ZOPFAN remains our cherished goal.

7. As you are aware, ASEAN's untiring efforts for a comprehensive political solution for the Kampuchean question is part and parcel of our commitment to the objectives of peace and stability in Southeast Asia. The search for a comprehensive political solution in accordance with the International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK) Declaration and principles of the UN Charter is imperative so that the Kampuchean people could be free to decide their own future and live in peace. At the same time, resolution of the Kampuchean problem would remove the present pointed threat of big power rivalry and intervention in Southeast Asia.

8. Recently, the international community once again gave overwhelming support to the ASEAN inspired resolution at the United Nations General Assembly for the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea, the restoration of its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and the right of the Kampuchean people to determine their own destiny free from outside interference. Malaysia is indeed heartened by the continuing valuable support of Papua New Guinea and we thank you for it.

Mr. Prime Minister,

8. Malaysia is not only concerned about the peace and stability of our immediate Southeast Asian region, but we are also concerned about peace and stability in other parts of the world. Indeed we share your concern and anxiety over continued nuclear testing in the South Pacific and support your regional efforts to rid the South Pacific of such undesirable activities.

9. Consistent with Malaysia's concern for international peace and stability, we have initiated the inscription of an item on Antarctica at the United Nations General Assembly now meeting in New York. Our initiative stems from our belief that because of the Continent's political, strategic and economic importance to all of us, and that future acrimony in, or over Antarctica, could be preempted by the removal of any inequities there, it must be brought to the attention of the international community. Malaysia's objective is to secure the agreement of member states for the United Nations Secretary General to undertake a comprehensive study of Antarctica, encompassing all points of view. We hope that our efforts towards widening international cooperation on this little known but

important Continent would receive the support of the world community.

Mr. Prime Minister,

10. I have found our discussions this morning extremely interesting and have benefitted from your views and perception on a range of issues of mutual interest and concern. I feel sure that the friendship and cooperation between Papua New Guinea and Malaysia will be mutually rewarding and beneficial.

11. May I now express once again our pleasure at having you here in our midst, as our honoured guest. I hope that you, Mrs. Somare and members of your party will find your visit to our country enjoyable.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. May I now ask you to join me in a toast to the good health of the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Michael Somare and Mrs. Somare and to the prosperity and well-being of the people of Papua New Guinea.

Thank you.