

THE OFFICIAL DINNER IN HONOUR OF HIS EXCELLENCY CONSTANTIN DASCALESCU
PRIME MINISTER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF ROMANIA
SRI PERDANA

10 MAY 1985

Your Excellency Constantin Dascalescu, Prime Minister of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania; Excellencies; Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am happy indeed to welcome Your Excellency, Madame Dascalescu, and members of your delegation to Malaysia. I trust you will have a pleasant and enjoyable stay. I recall my own visit to Romania in May 1983 and would like once again to extend my sincere thanks to Your Excellency and members of your Government for the kind hospitality accorded to me and members of my delegation.

2. Your visit to Malaysia is most timely as it affords us the opportunity to continue the useful and extensive discussions we had had in Bucharest in May 1983. Indeed your visit to Malaysia is a manifestation of your Government's desire to further strengthen our bilateral relations and expand the scope of cooperation between our two countries.

3. Since the inception of diplomatic ties between Malaysia and Romania, our relations have always been warm and cordial. It has steadily progressed over the years and I am delighted to note that economic and trade cooperation between our two countries have been intensified with the very active high level exchange of visits in the recent past. The Malaysia-Romania Joint Commission for Economic, and Technical Cooperation and Trade has provided the vehicle for the realization of the desire of our two Governments to cooperate meaningfully for our mutual benefit.

4. Geographical distances and socio-economic systems have not hindered the expansion of our relations. The desire of both our countries to widen relations with all countries irrespective of their socio-political systems on the basis of respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity and the non-interference in internal affairs have all contributed to the growing relations between Malaysia and Romania.

5. As economic relations between our two countries is a relatively new phenomena there remains a certain amount of caution amongst our business sectors due largely to a lack of understanding of our respective economic backgrounds and policies. Therefore, it is necessary for us to find ways and

means of better exposing our economic sectors to each other in promoting trade and economic cooperation successfully. The intensification of exchange of trade delegations, and the holding of exhibitions and seminars would contribute towards a greater awareness of each other's products and technology as well as capabilities. While there is already meaningful cooperation at the government to government level, enterprises in Romania should also seize the opportunities offered by the private sector in Malaysia in the fields of trade, and joint venture investments.

Your Excellency.

6. Malaysia and Romania are relatively small countries which believe in establishing friendly relations and cooperation among the countries in our respective regions. My Government's support of Asean as a viable economic organisation stands testimony of Malaysia's commitment towards regional cooperation. We firmly believe that regional cooperation would not only strengthen national and regional resilience but would also contribute towards international understanding. In this regard your Government's efforts at developing cooperation and friendly relations among the Balkan states deserve the fullest support of the international community.

7. We in Asean are conscious of the fact that for many decades this region has been an arena of superpower rivalry, with far reaching political implications to us all. There fore, Asean has embarked on the creation of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality or ZOPFAN in Southeast Asia to prevent all forms of external interference. However, the prevailing situation in Kampuchea poses a threat to peace and stability in our region and represents a retrogressive step in our efforts towards peaceful collaboration among all the states in the region irrespective of political ideology.

8. The blatant occupation of Kampuchea by Vietnamese troops is without question a violation of Kampuchea's national sovereignty and territorial integrity. So also is the encroachment into Thai territory by Vietnam. Malaysia and her Asean partners are appreciative of the unequivocal support of Romania to the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea under the Presidency of His Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Romania's support has strengthened the resolve of the Asean countries to further intensify efforts towards a political solution so that the independence and non-aligned status of Kampuchea could be restored and our quest for a durable peace and stability becomes a reality.

9. While being preoccupied with the situation in the region, Malaysia is not oblivious to developments elsewhere in the world. Malaysia shares Romania's concern of increased armaments in Europe as we believe the instability in the continent would also have wider political implications. The enormous sums of

money and resources being allocated to the development of both nuclear and conventional weapons could better be used to serve the cause of humanity.

10. All states should renew their commitment towards a comprehensive programme of general and complete disarmament. In this regard Malaysia hopes that the present negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union in Geneva will culminate in an agreement that would prevent the escalation of the arms race. We also hope that the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, which Romania is actively involved in, would contribute to the strengthening of security in Europe. 11. Let it be remembered that the security of the world or any continent is not the concern only of the big powers. The small countries whose security is the subject of negotiations also have a role to play. They must be given the right to voice their thoughts and ideas so that the security of the big powers will not be at the sacrifice of the smaller nations.

Your Excellency,

12. The plight of the Palestinian people remains the crux of the problem in West Asia. The years of untold suffering and enormous hardship have not deterred the Palestinian people from continuing their just struggle to achieve their national aspirations and rights. I wish to reiterate once again Malaysia's support for the Palestinian cause. Only a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian problem, taking into account the right of the Palestinians to self determination, including their right to establish their own home land, could guarantee a just and lasting peace in the region.

13. The war between Iran and Iraq, continues with no immediate signs of the cessation of hostilities. The war has already caused great human and material losses to both countries. The recent escalation of the fighting increases dangerously the possibility of foreign involvement. Malaysia together with the Islamic Peace Committee and the Non-Aligned Movement will continue to work towards a negotiated settlement of the conflict. 14. Afghanistan, on the other hand, a non-aligned nation, is still being subjected to foreign military occupation. Malaysia supports the role of the United Nations in finding a political solution to the problem. The flagrant violation of national independence must be condemned by all nations which value world peace.

15. The situation prevailing in Antarctica is another area of concern to my Government. Antarctica, the last uninhabited continent on earth is a vast land with a fragile eco-system. Malaysia has no wish to exploit the resources of Antarctica or to politicise its status. But it is wrong that a few countries should lay claim to this vast continent to the exclusion of others. Such uninhabited land should rightly belong to everyone, to all humanity, whether capable or

incapable of making their presence physically felt. There should therefore be a reexamination of the administration of this continent so as to find a more just and equitable system which will be acceptable to the whole world.

16. Malaysia too shares Romania's concern at the present world economic situation. The plight of all developing countries in having to cope with the problems of high interest rates, the high level of foreign debt, and the continuing trend towards protectionism are problems with which Malaysia is deeply concerned. The lack of commitment on the part of the developed countries to see these problems in their proper perspective have contributed towards the prolongation of the economic crisis. The recent Bonn summit meeting has not resulted in anything that can contribute towards the economic recovery of the world. In the face of this and the disappointing results of the North-South dialogue, it is imperative that the South promote greater South-South cooperation while each of us apply stringent measures to stabilize our domestic economic situation. In this regard Malaysia, within her limited resources, has extended technical and other assistance to other developing countries through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme or the MTCP.

Your Excellency,

17. It is always a pleasure to welcome friends to our shores. In the limited time that you have at your disposal, I do hope you will see for yourself as much of Malaysia, and take with you fond memories of your experiences here. 18. Excellencies, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now invite you to join me in a toast to His Excellency Constantin Dascalescu, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Romania, to the Government and people of the Socialist Republic of Romania, and to the close and friendly relations between our two countries.