

THE FIRST ISIS NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL SECURITY
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Yang Berbahagia Pengerusi Majlis; Dif-Dif Kehormat; Tuan-tuan dan puan-puan,

Saya berasa sukacita kerana dapat hadir merasmikan Persidangan Kebangsaan Pertama ISIS pada hari ini. Saya juga gembira bahawa Persidangan Kebangsaan Pertama ISIS ini adalah bertemakan Keselamatan Kebangsaan Menyeluruh.

2. Penekanan terhadap keselamatan menyeluruh amatlah tepat kerana dalam dunia moden masakini khususnya bagi negara-negara kecil, pertahanan tidak seharusnya menjadi tugas tentera sahaja tetapi sepatutnya dipikul oleh kesemua agensi Kerajaan dan tidak kurang pentingnya oleh orang awam. Segala tanggungjawab dan bebanan yang perlu dipikul janganlah hendaknya diserahkan bulatbulat kepada pasukan keselamatan, Jemaah Menteri atau jentera pentadbiran Kerajaan sahaja. Sebaliknya, seperti yang telah saya sebutkan di masa-masa yang lepas, pertahanan negara adalah menjadi tanggungjawab setiap warganegara.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. When we talk about National Security, the picture that usually comes to mind is that of armed soldiers manning border posts or fighting in the jungle. The more sophisticated and knowledgeable will talk of strategies when confronting the enemy, of arms and equipment and of military strength.

4. But security is not just a matter of military capability. National security is inseparable from political stability, economic success and social harmony. Without these all the guns in the world cannot prevent a country from being overcome by its enemies, whose ambition can be fulfilled sometimes without firing a single shot. All they need really is to subvert the people and set up a puppet regime.

5. In military terms, apart from the communist guerillas, we really do not have enemies at the moment. But we do have forces or nations which, whether consciously or otherwise, are undermining our security. Let us take the economic field for a start.

6. Malaysia has been doing extremely well economically, achieving growth of between 6% to 8% yearly. In practical terms this means more money for more people all the time. It also means a more contented people, less responsive to subversion and agitation. They are not likely to cause security problems through activities which demand the time, money and attention of law enforcement bodies. They are also unlikely to cooperate with foreign Governments or their agencies to overthrow their own Government and to set up a puppet regime.

7. But now there is a foreign generated or possibly foreign engineered recession. It is difficult not to suspect manipulation by undeclared enemies. How does the

price of palm oil fall from \$1400 ringgit a ton a year ago to \$550 ringgit now? Palm oil is the cheapest edible oil in the world. If it is low then the price of its main competitor must be reduced by at least the same margin. Yet we know that it is impossible for the production cost of soyabean, for example, to be lowered considering the high labour cost and the appreciation of the American dollar against the Ringgit.

8. Subsidies may be the reason. It must be a massive subsidy if the price is to be so low. The humanitarian and charitable aspect of an aid scheme is appreciated. But if the producers in Malaysia are made to lose because of a rich country's desire to do charity, then in reality it is the producers of palm oil who are paying for this 'charitable act'. It is obviously a case of 'robbing Peter to pay Paul'. One is reminded of the Arabs having to compensate the Jews by giving up Palestine because the Europeans and Americans feel guilty about the crimes of the Germans.

9. But then it is not only palm oil which has gone down in price. Every commodity has suffered a serious fall in price. With this the economy of the producers has suffered. Unemployment is rife. Suppliers and petty traders and all kinds of services suffer. There is less money for everyone and a general sense of dissatisfaction prevails.

10. In many cases the people turn against the Government. Strikes and riots take place, aggravating the economic decline. Opportunistic politicians then move in, seeing in the general unhappiness, possibilities for seizing power legally or illegally. Suddenly a law and order situation arises and the security of the nation is threatened.

11. Clearly economic difficulties are a serious threat to national security. Failure to understand this threat may result in a cycle of recession followed by political insatibility, security threats and even greater recession. skillful management of the economy and clear thinking are therefore an integral part of the strategy for national security.

12. Political stability is the sine qua non of National Security. In a less sophisticated age politics was confined to a small elite at the top. They had their intrigues and their quarrels but because there were only a few of them, political instability did not affect the people much. Of course, every so often a tyrant would emerge whose rule would lead to rebellion and insecurity. The solution was simple although often it was costly. The solution was to force the demise of the tyrant.

13. The modern world is against autocracy. It believes in democracy on the assumption that the majority, even if it is illiterate and not well versed in politics, must always be right. The problem is that opportunists, rogues and foreigners also have access to the minds of the electorate. In the end it is not so much the wishes of the majority that count. It is their perception of things presented to them by frequently unscrupulous and ambitious politicians who may or may not be in league with various foreign ideologues or agencies.

14. In many countries the politicians divide the people into so many parties that none can be big enough to rule. All are minority parties, dependent on ad hoc support by other parties in order to rule. In other instances a two party system may emerge. If they are evenly matched, a see-saw effect can result with one party ruling only for one term. Nothing can be planned and carried out. Nothing will show results as each new Government tries to prove the previous one wrong. Whatever the situation with the parties, political stability is difficult to achieve. Preoccupied with the politics of personal or party survival, security will be neglected. Obvious crimes can be attended to but disruptions of public order is not so easy to control. Who can tell whether a peaceful demonstration will not turn ugly? Who can cope with a multitude of pressure groups bent on promoting dissent and disenchantment even with the best and sincerest of Government schemes? Who can deal with disruptive rumour mongering started for no apparent good reasons?

15. The modern political environment is clearly instability prone. Unless the Government is strong enough to take unpleasant measures to maintain law and order, a security situation will arise. In some cases, the enforcement agencies may even be rendered ineffective. Efforts at maintaining law and order merely create new issues which unscrupulous politicians can exploit to further destabilise politics. An escalation will take place. Outside interest will help aggravate the situation further. In the end the security situation becomes untenable.

16. Social problems too can lead to security threats. If a country is peopled by different ethnic groups or religious adherents, segregation tends to take place. Similarly the rich and the poor do not live side by side. Misunderstandings and confrontations go on all the time. Champions will appear who will only aggravate matters in their attempts to gain popularity. Eventually there will be instability and a threat to security.

17. The response of the Government to a potentially dangerous internal security threat and its ability to ensure National Security is no longer simple. Too early a response might elicit criticisms for heavy handedness. Yet it is at the early stages that positive results can be obtained. Usually a democratic Government hesitates until the situation has obviously developed into a security situation. Then when it does move, the amount of force that it will find necessary to restore law and order will expose it to widespread accusations of brutality, etc. Often, of course, the Government acts too late and a really serious security situation will develop.

18. When one says that security is not a matter for Government alone, one is not just repeating a cliché. Security is really a concern of the people. Of course, some would interpret this as meaning that the Government should not act without consulting the people, meaning the anti-Government activists. But the real meaning of security being a concern of everyone is that they should not allow a security threat to arise. This we can do by avoiding disorderly behaviour, by obeying not just the letter but also the spirit of the laws.

19. The law may be an ass but if you flout it simply because you disagree with it

then orderliness in life cannot be achieved. Similarly if you flout the law because you think you can get away with it, there will be no orderliness either. The fact is that if everybody flouts the law, that law will be unenforceable. If, for example, all the people in this country decide to undress in public, the equally undressed policemen cannot arrest anyone.

20. Laws, ethics and behaviour are determined by the people. They must therefore obey and follow them. If some erred the rest can act to curb them. Minority rights must be respected but so must the rights of the majority be respected by the minority. Only mutual respect can lead to a harmonious society. And only a harmonious society can be a secure society. Social forces are therefore as relevant to national security as are politics and economic well-being.

21. But there is still the threat from outside. In modern times invasions and conquests are no longer fashionable. If you want to take over a country you instigate internal unrest and rebellion in order to install a Government that is friendly to you. Therefore, military defence against conventional invasion is only rarely needed. Sometimes the military is needed only psychologically to give a sense of security.

22. It is not my intention to dismiss or downgrade the role of the Police and the armed forces in ensuring National Security. The role of the Police has certainly expanded beyond that of dealing with common crimes. Demonstrations and riots and the detection of early evidence of civil disorder now occupy much of the time and manpower of the police. Riot squads, special forces and bomb detection and disposal have to be updated all the time to keep pace with the sophistication of the politicised criminals and terrorists. Such is the role of the police that it becomes more and more difficult to distinguish them from the military.

23. As for the military role in security, that is determined by the perception of the security situation that the country has. It is not often that a country, especially a small developing country like Malaysia, can afford to have extensive development as well as maintain a powerful defence force. Usually a choice has to be made in terms of emphasis between development and armaments.

24. In Malaysia we think that the contentment of the people is a major factor in determining security. In any case as the cost and sophistication of arms and military equipment escalate beyond our reach, we have no choice but to scale down our budget for the armed forces. Reliance has to be placed on cooperation with friendly countries and neighbours. Foreign relations are conducted with a view to making as few enemies as possible.

25. Alone Malaysia has little chance of defending itself against a more powerful enemy in a conventional war. But the Malaysian security forces are capable of bloodying the nose of any one who tries to attack this country. After that guerilla warfare would leave the enemy no time to gloat over their gains.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

26. I have been able to talk only on a few factors that affect National Security as

I perceive it. There are other factors such as food security, fuel, etc., which also play important roles. I am sure your conference will take up all these matters in a more professional way.

27. As leader of the Government I am avidly interested in the contents and results of your discussion. Academics and professionals will no doubt have much to say about the conduct of our security that will prove useful. I hope it will not become a political forum for attacks on the Government with other objectives in mind.

Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan,

28. Sekali lagi saya mengucapkan terima kasih kepada ISIS kerana sudi menjemput saya memberi ucapan ini. Saya juga mengucapkan selamat bersidang.