

THE INAUGURATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH DENTAL ASSOCIATION
PUTRA WORLD TRADE CENTRE, KUALA LUMPUR, 25 APRIL 1991

On behalf of the Malaysian Government, let me wish foreign delegates "Selamat Datang" or welcome to Malaysia. I am pleased to be present here, at this inauguration of the Commonwealth Dental Association. I am proud that Malaysia has been chosen as the venue of this very auspicious occasion and feel honoured to be the Commonwealth Prime Minister to officiate at this inauguration.

2. Like the medical profession, dental practitioners make an important contribution towards uplifting the health of the community. In Malaysia, it is our intention to provide adequate dental health services to the people. This is in view of the realization that the well being of the people are very much dependent on their good health. With the improvement in the living standard of the people, demand for better dental health care will also increase. To meet this growing demand, it is important that dental practitioners continually upgrade their professional services and keep abreast of the latest development in knowledge and technology in dentistry.

3. As knowledge in health and dentistry is ever increasing and changing, the role of this Commonwealth Dental Association is particularly significant in the area of continuing education. In this respect, an association such as this can provide the right forum for the exchange of information and experience amongst member countries.

4. In our effort to address the worldwide problems confronting oral health, we must remember that we are dealing with countries with different needs and different capabilities. For this reason, the objective of the coming together of the National Dental Associations of Commonwealth countries in the establishment of this Commonwealth Dental Association must be clearly defined, deliberated upon, documented and actively pursued.

5. The formation of this association should bring benefit not only to the more advanced countries with greater influence, but equally so to the smaller nations striving to achieve a better standard of oral health for their countries. The more than one billion population within the member countries must ultimately derive some benefit by the coming together of their National Dental Associations to form this Commonwealth Dental Association. Otherwise, this whole effort would not be worthwhile.

6. On this brief note, I now have the pleasure to declare that the Commonwealth Dental Association be officially inaugurated.