

THE RETURN DINNER FOR THE MR VO VAN KIET AT CPV HALL HO TAY
CPV HALL TAY, HANOI, VIETNAM, 20 APRIL 1992

Your Excellency Mr. Vo Van Kiet, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam; Madame Cam, Excellencies Ladies and Gentlemen.

I have now spent more than one day in this beautiful city of Hanoi, experiencing your hospitality. I feel most at home as not only is the climate approximately similar to that in Malaysia but your hospitality and friendliness makes me and my wife very welcome and comfortable.

2. Both Vietnam and Malaysia once suffered the indignity of being under european rule. We had no chance to develop. We had to act at the supplier of raw materials and markets of all that they produced.
3. Our education was retarded and our skills were limited by them so that we may not prosper and become independent.
4. But through the efforts and bravery of our independance fighters we managed to release ourselves from our European colonial masters. The Vietnamese people fought bloody battles in order to receive independence.
5. Today we are free. We are masters of our own destiny. We are responsible for our own well being. We cannot blame anyone if we fail to develop and give our people a better life.
6. We are not anti-European. Just hating others, will not get us anywhere. But on the other hand we must have pride in ourselves, in our abilities, in our achievements. No one should look down on us.
7. Malaysians and Vietnamese are asians. Asian civilization is older than any other civilization in the world.
8. But we must recognise that to achieve greater heights we must know the human character, the systems and the policies and the skills in administration, in trade and in technology. Other Asian countries have shown that they can master all these skill.
9. Malaysia believes we can do the same, and Vietnam, I am sure believes in the Vietnamese capacity to rise to greatness.
10. We cannot achieve this overnight. The mere adoption of democracy and the free market system will not make us successful and prosperous. The adjustments must be gradual. Our people must understand the workings of these systems step by step making progress as they go along.
11. But we can follow those Asian countries which have successfully developed. I am quite sure given the enlightened leadership of Vietnamse leaders and the willingness to cooperate with East Asian countries, Vietnam can develop as

Malaysia has developed.

12. Malaysia pledges to work together with Vietnam for the mutual development of both countries. Together we can make our countries and this region stable and dynamic.

13. Once again I thank the government of Vietnam and in particular H.E. Mr. Vo Van Kiet for the kind hospitality and friendship extended to us. Thank you.