

**THE OFFICIAL DINNER IN HONOUR OF PRIME MINISTER OF THE
REPUBLIC OF POLAND**

SRI PERDANA, KUALA LUMPUR, 22 MARCH 1996

It is an honour for me, on behalf of the government of Malaysia, to welcome Your Excellency and Mrs Cimoszewicz, and members of your delegation to Malaysia. We are deeply honoured by your acceptance of our invitation to visit Malaysia soon after assuming the premiership of your country. This visit, being the first undertaken by the Head of Government from the Republic of Poland to Malaysia, marks an important milestone in the relations between our two countries.

2. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1972, Malaysia and Poland have enjoyed cordial and friendly relations. The recent increase in bilateral contacts between our two countries has added further impetus towards the strengthening of the relationship. Your visit here today and the discussions between our two delegations will enable us to better acquaint ourselves with each other's policies and views on a wide range of topics. This will certainly pave the way for greater and new co- operation between Malaysia and Poland.

3. The end of the Cold War had brought about historic changes to the countries in your region, ushering in an era of transformation and change that encompasses diverse spheres of human activities. Poland is one of the countries at the forefront of this dramatic transformation. We are impressed by Poland's high growth rates and greatly admire Poland's success, in particular, the vast strides forward in the establishment of a free-market economy and its integration into the world economy.

4. As developing nations, Malaysia and Poland share common aspirations in achieving development and prosperity for the good of our people and nation. In Malaysia's efforts towards greater economic progress through industrialisation and developing new trading partners, foreign investment plays an important role. In this context, Polish participation in Malaysia's economy is most welcome and would be an important element in the overall relationship between our two countries. The potential and opportunities for economic co- operation are there for both sides to actively explore and tap.

5. Malaysia notes with keen interest the programmes of economic transformation in Poland through privatisation and liberalisation. The Malaysian private sector, over the years, has gained considerable experience and developed expertise in investments and business overseas. They would be encouraged to participate in joint-ventures with their Polish counterparts for mutual benefit. We are therefore very happy that Your

Excellency has also brought along with you leading Polish businessmen.

6. Malaysia is ready to work closely with Poland and would be happy to share with Poland the experiences gained in the field of privatisation, banking, management and administration. At the same time, Malaysia would welcome Poland's invaluable co-operation in the area of science and technology for which Poland has great expertise and know-how, including precision and civil engineering. The development of joint projects in these areas could provide yet another firm link for the intensification of bilateral relations.

7. Last year, a liaison office was established in Krakow by one of Malaysia's leading companies to secure trading opportunities for Malaysian products and services. This was in recognition of Poland's central location as a springboard to the regional markets as well as to complement the overall efforts to increase trade links with Poland and with the surrounding countries. Likewise I would like to invite Polish companies to increase their presence in Malaysia and also to expand their trade links with us and the neighbouring countries, using Malaysia as a gateway to the ASEAN and East Asian markets.

8. At the multilateral level, both Malaysia and Poland are committed to international co-operation and the promotion of peace and stability. Malaysian and Polish soldiers are participating in IFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina to help implement the military aspects of the Peace Agreement. We hope that the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina will be able to enjoy true peace and rebuild their shattered homes and lives.

9. In European history, the Polish people too had experienced much of the bitterness of war, destruction, massacres and foreign occupation. The exceptional determination and courage of the Poles to reconstruct and resuscitate the nation in the face of great trials and difficulties, will surely serve as a shining inspiration to the Bosnians as they begin their own process of healing and reconstruction.

10. In conclusion, let me once again express our great pleasure in having you, Mr. Prime Minister and Mrs. Cimoszewicz, and other members of your delegation with us this evening.