

The Opening Ceremony Of The New Building Of The Malaysian Embassy

Berlin, Germany 19 March 2002

It is a great pleasure for me to be in Berlin. When I was last in Berlin in 1988, the wall had not yet been dismantled. Then the 'Berlin Wall', as it was known to the world, stood as an ominous reminder that not merely was Berlin divided but Germany too was divided physically and ideologically.

2. Following the tumultuous events that unfolded with the collapse of the Soviet bloc, Berlin is once again free and Germany reunified.

3. Now, revisiting Berlin almost 12 years after the dismantling of the wall, it is such a pleasure for me to see a new, vibrant Berlin, which has once again become the capital of a united Germany.

4. I note the obvious signs of renewal and hope everywhere in Berlin. From the construction of modern new buildings like those in the Potsdameplatz, to the restoration of the splendid old buildings along the Unter Den Linden and elsewhere in the city. The museums, opera houses, concert halls and the theatres of Berlin distinguish the City as a cultural metropolis.

5. The Reichstag (Parliament) building with its distinctive new glass dome truly represents the aspirations of the German people.

6. It has been hardly two years that the capital moved from Bonn to Berlin but already Berlin appears very comfortable in its role as the capital.

7. In the space of less than two years, Berlin has also won the acceptance not merely of the German people but of the whole world as the capital of the Federal Republic of Germany.

8. I wish to congratulate the people and the Government of Germany in the successful transformation of Berlin.

9. It is clear that the Germany today is profoundly committed to a prosperous, peaceful, just and stable world, with a major role in Europe and the world at large. While the wall may have been consigned to the pages of history, I am sure the German people will never forget what the wall symbolises and the lessons of history.

10. Over the years the German economy has grown from strength to strength. Today it is the third largest global economy. It is a remarkable achievement considering the almost total destruction of Germanic industrial capacity during the war.

11. German industry has also played an active role in the Global economy, through its off-shore investments. As a matter of fact, Germany has recently emerged as Malaysia's biggest investor and trade partner from Europe, having displaced the United Kingdom with which Malaysia has had a long association since colonial days.

12. I wish to thank German companies for their confidence in Malaysia. I am sure you know Malaysia is a safe and profitable place to put your money in, otherwise you would not. I would like to assure you that Malaysia will continue to be a safe and stable place for you to invest in.

13. It is now my pleasant duty to declare open this new building of the Embassy of Malaysia. It is our modest contribution to the architecture of the new Berlin.