

SPEECH BY: DATO' SERI DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
(PRIME MINISTER)

EVENT: AT THE DINNER IN HONOUR OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR. YASUHIRO NAKASONE,
PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN

VENUE: PARLIAMENT HOUSE

DATE: 08 MAY 1983

TIME:

Your Excellency Prime Minister Nakasone,
and Madame Nakasone;
Excellencies;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Government and people of Malaysia I would like to extend to Your Excellency, Madame Nakasone and the distinguished members of your delegation, a very warm fraternal welcome to Malaysia. I am most delighted at the opportunity of playing host on this occasion and I hope your stay with us will be a pleasant and memorable one. My only regret is that your visit is so short that it will not be possible for me to fully reciprocate the hospitality extended to me and members of my delegation when I visited Japan last January.

2. During my last visit to your country, we had had a very fruitful exchange of views covering a wide range of issues that are of mutual interest and concern to our two countries. I am looking forward to continuing that exchange of views with you tomorrow morning. I am confident that through these exchanges there will emerge greater understanding and cooperation between our two countries.

Your Excellency,

3. In our talks in Tokyo, I was deeply impressed, by the frankness and sincerity with which Your Excellency expressed your views, and I was very happy that there was a great deal of concurrence in our perceptions of the political and economic situations of the world, particularly the situation in Southeast Asia. In this respect, we are highly appreciative of the understanding and support given by Your Excellency's Government towards the efforts of ASEAN in promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the region and in strengthening our national as well as regional resilience through economic cooperation and development.

4. I cannot over-emphasise the importance that we attach to socio-economic development to ensure the prosperity and well-being of our people. However, to achieve our objectives, Malaysia, as a developing country, has to seek the assistance and cooperation of the industrially advanced nations. We believe that the benefits of such cooperation

and assistance will be mutual.

5. We have not forgotten that Japan has extended meaningful cooperation and has participated very actively in our economic development efforts to date. During my recent visit to your country, the Japanese Government had agreed to extend to Malaysia a Special Yen Credit amounting to Yen 50 billion, in addition to the annual yen credit, for the development of Malaysia's infrastructural facilities. We are very grateful to you, and to the Japanese Government for your confidence in us, and for your continued co-operation.

Your Excellency,

6. I had also the opportunity to acquaint Your Excellency with Malaysia's Look East Policy during my recent visit. It is most unfortunate that at the time when we launched our Look East Policy, the developed countries which are trading partners of Japan had become bitterly hostile to Japan. Consequently the Look East Policy has attracted resentment among western nations. They think that the policy will benefit Japan. They also think of the remote danger of Malaysia actually succeeding in being more competitive through the adoption of some of the methods and discipline of Japan.

7. There is now an obviously concerted attempt to discredit the Look East Policy. Not only is the antagonism of foreigners being aroused, but Malaysians themselves are being urged to reject the Policy. Words are put into the mouth of Malaysians, or are twisted, so as to give a picture of their distaste of the Policy and by extension, of Japan. Definite racial overtones have been injected into this campaign. There are even attempts to play members of the Malaysian Government against each other. Lately the attacks have turned personal with all kinds of innuendos and insinuations.

8. I regret this spill over of anti-Japanese feelings into Malaysia and the irresponsibility of the culprits. But we are more convinced than ever that the Look East Policy is the right policy for us and we will continue to be close and cooperative with Japan.

9. When we launched the Look East Policy, we were only thinking of eastern nations, particularly Japan and the Japanese as models. We did not expect extra aid from Japan as a result of the Policy. But Your Excellency had pledged Japan's readiness to extend its utmost cooperation in this matter. We are very thankful for this gesture. Since then, the first batch of 135 industrial trainees have already completed their six-month training, and the second batch of 226 trainees have now arrived in Japan to begin theirs. At the same time, 24 trainees from the first batch are staying back in Japan to continue their studies in Japan's Technical Colleges. I would like to take this opportunity to express

our deep appreciation for all the cooperation and assistance extended by the Japanese Government to the Government of Malaysia in making this programme a success. Malaysia is seeking further assistance from Japan to implement projects under the Fourth Malaysia Plan and I hope it is possible for the Japanese Government to continue to extend assistance to us on terms and conditions no less favourable than in the past. Development assistance for improving the livelihood of our people and the peoples of ASEAN will not only contribute to our well-being, but also to our security. Since a large portion of your supplies either come from or passes through South-East Asia, peace and security in this region is no doubt of vital interest to your country.

10. It is clear that through cooperation and development, Malaysia and the other ASEAN countries individually, or as a group, are contributing not only to the stability, peace and security of this region, but also to that of neighbouring countries, including Japan. Poverty and disparity in development opens the door to all kinds of agitation and subversion. On the other hand prosperity not only lessens the opportunities for subversion but creates greater prosperity. This prosperity in turn benefits the people of the region concerned as well as the trading partners for whom there will be a rich market. In fact the whole world will benefit if developing countries like Malaysia and her ASEAN partners succeed in their programme to industrialise. There is no call therefore for disparaging and undermining the so-called NICS or Newly Industrialising countries.

Your Excellency,

11. The conflict in Kampuchea arising from the continued foreign military occupation of that country is, to say the least, destabilising. The conflict has generated big-power involvement in the region and posed a serious threat to regional peace and security as well as an obstacle to the creation of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia. Vietnam's intransigent attitude on this problem is unacceptable, and its recent attacks on Kampuchean civilians and on Thai territory are nothing less than acts of unprovoked aggression. We demand that Vietnam should cease all such hostilities and withdraw its forces from Kampuchea. On this matter there can be no compromise and we are grateful to the Government of Japan for giving its full support to ASEAN in our continuing efforts to bring about a comprehensive political settlement to the problem based on the total withdrawal of all foreign troops from Kampuchea, respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kampuchea and the right of the Kampuchean people to determine their future in a freely-held election in accordance with the ICK Declaration and other relevant United Nations resolutions which have been endorsed and supported by the international community. In this connection, Malaysia welcomed and supported the establishment of the Coalition Government of Democratic

Kampuchea under the Presidency of His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk as a positive step towards implementing the ICK Declaration and the relevant UN resolutions. I am confident that Japan will continue to assist the Coalition Government of Prince Sihanouk and to extend the same strong support to ASEAN in our quest for a speedy settlement of the Kampuchean problem.

Your Excellency,

12. Malaysia and Japan have enjoyed very warm and close relations for many years. Fruitful cooperation between our two countries in various fields of activities is progressing steadily both at the governmental and private sector levels. There have been increasing exchanges of visits between our peoples. Recently, both Governments successfully concluded an arrangement concerning the reciprocal waiving of visas between Malaysia and Japan in order to promote further exchanges between our peoples. I am heartened to learn that Your Excellency is also proposing to promote greater exchanges of intellectuals, scholars and teachers for cooperation in science and technology so that we do not fall behind in these fields. I would like to welcome these developments which, in consonance with Malaysia's Look East Policy will, I am confident, result in greater mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of Malaysia and Japan.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

13. May I now ask you all to join me in a toast to the health and happiness of His Excellency Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone and Madame Nakasone, to the Government and people of Japan, and to the close friendship between our Governments and peoples.