

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

EVENT: AT THE OFFICIAL DINNER GIVEN IN HONOUR OF THE VISITING  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY HIS EXCELLENCY,  
MR. BULEND ULUSU

VENUE: PRIME MINISTER DEPARTMENT

DATE: 05 SEP 1983

TIME:

Your Excellency Prime Minister Uluşu  
and Madame Uluşu;  
Members of the Turkish Delegation;  
Excellencies, Distinguished guests;  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

At the very outset, may I say, Brother Prime Minister,  
how deeply delighted and happy we are to be able to receive  
and welcome you, Madame Uluşu and members of your delegation  
to Malaysia.

2. In recalling the fond memories of my visit to your  
great country in May this year, I find it indeed difficult  
to match the fine hospitality so characteristic of Turkey  
and its people that was extended to me, my wife and my  
delegation during my visit to your beautiful country. Your  
visit, the first by a Turkish Prime Minister ever to this  
country, gives us the long-awaited opportunity of  
reciprocating, in a small way, the kindness accorded to us  
during our recent visit to Turkey.

Your Excellency,

3. Turkish-Malaysia relations have always been warm and,  
Inşya-Allah, will continue to be so. This is not only  
expressive of, or owing to, our common Islamic heritage, but  
also due to the fact that we have, in the recent past, tried  
in whatever way we can to establish contacts and to work  
together. I underline this for no other reason but that  
relations between Muslim countries today, more than ever  
before, must be placed on a plane that is commensurate with  
their historic and cultural relations. It is otherwise  
pointless to speak of Islamic solidarity and cooperation.

4. We in Malaysia are, therefore, most pleased to note  
that some definite progress have already been made in our  
bilateral relations, especially over the short span of the  
last decade. In fact, during my recent visit to Turkey, we  
have not only broken new grounds in the areas of aviation,  
education and culture, but have also reaffirmed our

determination to broaden the scope of cooperative endeavours, particularly in the areas of increased and diversified trade exchange and investments, joint-ventures in the construction industry and in shipping. Also, in our discussion this evening, we have agreed to take all necessary steps to intensify activities in these and other areas that would bring mutual benefits to both our peoples.

5. The new meaning and depth in terms of our bilateral cooperation augurs well for both countries. We indeed take comfort in the fact that various cultural contacts between our two countries have expanded. We have our students in both countries by way of Government sponsored exchange, and Turkish academics have been in Malaysia for some years now. Trade, though still relatively small, has however doubled. If we keep this momentum in our bilateral contacts and collaboration, I am sure Your Excellency would agree with me that the coming years would be much more propitious.

Your Excellency,

6. As Turkey is an integral part of the Islamic world and had in the past contributed tremendously to the enrichment of human civilization, we in Malaysia are confident that the important role currently played by Turkey would continue to contribute to greater international development and progress. Not only have you played host to a number of important economic and other Meetings of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, but in addition your country is the seat of the Headquarters of two important subsidiary organs of the OIC, namely the Centre for Research in Islamic History, Art and Culture and the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre. Indeed, Turkey is best placed as well as eminently qualified to steer the fraternity of Islamic nations to not only hasten the process of economic development, but also to give practical shape in developing a sense of unity as much as in strengthening cultural links between members of the OIC and Muslims at large.

7. Indeed, we in Malaysia are convinced that it is only through the establishment of variegated institutional links either on a bilateral basis or multilaterally can there be true dialogue and understanding among Islamic countries. This in turn would not only lead to greater stability among the Ummah but also quicken the process of reversing the state of general backwardness in Islamic and Third World countries. Your country's efforts, therefore, in fostering solidarity and cooperation among Islamic and Third World countries are highly commendable. Your Excellency can be assured of Malaysia's full cooperation and support always.

Your Excellency,

8. While Islamic and Third World countries are going through a very difficult period, it is also true that the

opportunities for enrichment and development have never been greater. Allah in His Wisdom has granted the Islamic world in particular immense wealth and strategic importance. All that remains is for the peoples of the Islamic and Third Worlds to reduce internal bickerings and conflicts with neighbours, and focus their attention to development and the strengthening of relations between them. Of course this is not likely to happen easily, but at least those countries that have achieved some degree of stability, such as Malaysia and Turkey, should continue to strive seriously towards this objective. We are sure if this is done on a scale that is not too ambitious, success will crown our efforts. Eventually of course the rest will follow.

9. In this context, I must state Malaysia's regret that the OIC Peace Committee, of which both our countries are members, have not been successful in bringing an end to the wasteful conflict between Iran and Iraq. The struggle for the liberation of Palestine is even further from solution, as the freedom fighters squabble on the question of leadership and strategy. The reported success of the Mujahideen in Afghanistan is the only bright news, but even there victory is not about to be achieved. Elsewhere, the Muslim world is never quite free from struggles for power, irrespective of whether the situation justifies the overthrow of the current Governments or not. All these can result in only one thing -- the satisfaction and gleeful enjoyment of the enemies of Islam, particularly the Zionists.

Your Excellency,

10. Geographically much closer to our shores, Kampuchea has for nearly five years now been militarily a victim of Vietnamese aggression and occupation. We, together with our ASEAN partners, are saddened that the gentle and peaceful Kampuchean people had been forced to live under extreme hardship with their inalienable rights denied them in spite of being in their own country. We have furthermore been concerned that the continued Vietnamese aggression and military occupation of Kampuchea pose a serious threat to the peace and stability of the Southeast Asian region, as well as to international peace and security. This is why we and our ASEAN partners are deeply committed to the pursuit of a comprehensive political solution which will restore the dignity of the Kampuchean people while taking into account the legitimate security concerns of all countries in this region. Such a solution would constitute an important step towards the realisation of the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in Southeast Asia which indeed has been the basis for ASEAN's principled stand on the question of Kampuchea.

11. We are gratified that your Government has been extending your valuable support to all our efforts. I am sure that Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the President of Democratic Kampuchea is even more gratified for your support

to his government and to the sacred cause of his people that he now leads towards restoring their human dignity and the independence of Kampuchea. With the continuing support of your Government and the rest of the international community, we believe that a political solution would eventually be found to the question of Kampuchea.

Your Excellency,

12. We in Malaysia are deeply shocked and grieved at the recent incident of the shooting down of a Korean Airline passenger aircraft by Soviet aircraft causing the death of 269 innocent passengers and crew members. One of the victims is a Malaysian national. Malaysia abhors such irresponsible act which is in complete disregard for human lives and a violation of international convention, committed by a member of the international community. The guilty party owes the world an apology and an explanation for having caused the tragic loss of hundreds of lives. Malaysia joins the international community in calling for a thorough investigation into the incident and for appropriate steps to be taken to guarantee that the safety of air travellers will never again be threatened.

Your Excellency,

13. Malaysia had at the last United Nations General Assembly urged the world body to focus its attention on Antarctica. It is not our intention to create instability or disturb the ecology of that continent. But we feel deeply that no nation, however strong and however good the intention, should continue to practise any form of colonisation. The open, uninhabited spaces in this world are the common heritage of mankind. If there is any benefit to be derived, the whole of mankind should be entitled. Antarctica must therefore be regarded as an international and common heritage. If most countries are quite incapable of being directly involved in safeguarding Antarctica, those who are capable should only be entrusted with this task by consent of the United Nations in which we are all represented. This principle must be upheld because it is both just and right.

Your Excellency,

14. We live in a very inter-dependent world. Distance is no longer the barrier that it used to be. The world economy is undergoing a prolonged crisis and the call for more cooperation among nations is greater than ever before. The seeds for more fruitful cooperation between our two countries have not only begun but have shown results. Through mutual cooperation and understanding of each other's aspiration, and through our moral strength and steadfast pursuit of peace and stability, our two countries will, with the blessing of Almighty Allah, forge ahead in our endeavour to provide a fuller and better life that we all are entitled

to and aspire towards. In this regard, Malaysia looks forward to working closely with Turkey and we are confident that our combined effort will produce positive results for the Ummah. While at this point, I wish to commend Your Excellency's Government's interest and efforts in fostering and nurturing Islamic solidarity and cooperation, particularly your support for the International Islamic University which we have just set up.

15. Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now invite you to join me in a toast to the continued good health of my dear brother Prime Minister Bulend Ulusu and his charming wife, and for the further consolidation of the bilateral relations between the Republic of Turkey and Malaysia.