

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

EVENT: RESPONSE SPEECH AT THE WELCOMING CEREMONY AT THE NATIONAL  
MONUMENT GROUNDS

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TIME:

Mr. Secretary, allow me first of all, on behalf of my wife and members of my delegation, as well as on my own behalf to thank the Government and the people of the United States for this kind invitation to visit your country. I wish also at the outset to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the warm welcome and the generous courtesies and hospitality accorded me, my wife and members of my delegation.

2. I have visited your country on several occasions in the past in different capacities, and have benefitted from discussions I have had with prominent American leaders from different fields, as well as the opportunity to see at first hand many of the interesting aspects of the United States. All of these past personal experiences have of course helped me immensely in widening my knowledge and understanding of the United States, and significantly also in better appreciating the close relationship which exists between our two democratic countries.

3. My current visit to the United States, Mr. Secretary, is aimed at reinforcing this friendly cooperative relationship. I, therefore, look forward to the fresh opportunities during my current visit in Washington to have free and frank exchange of views with President Reagan and members of his Government as well as with other American leaders, including those from the business sector.

4. Coming at a time when the international environment is pregnant with possibilities of serious tension, conflicts, even unthinkable catastrophes for mankind, it is my sincere hope that our discussions, aside from contributing towards a better understanding and appreciation of our respective policies, interests and concerns, will also help towards safeguarding and preserving global peace and stability. We hope that we will be able to bequeath a safer, spiritually and economically prosperous and just world to the future generations.

5. Both our countries have enjoyed a close and cordial relationship as manifest in the wide ranging cooperation and collaboration at a variety of levels for mutual benefit. It is my belief, Mr. Secretary, that my official visit to the

United States will further strengthen the existing ties of mutual respect and cordial friendship which our two countries happily enjoy in the many different fields, for the benefit of both our democratic free-enterprise societies.

Thank you.