

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

EVENT: THE DINNER GIVEN BY HIS EXCELLENCY POUL SCHLUTER,
PRIME MINISTER OF DENMARK

VENUE: 25 APR 1985

DATE:

TIME:

Your Excellency Poul Schluter,
Prime Minister of Denmark;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like, at the outset, to extend the sincere thanks of the Malaysian delegation to the Government and people of Denmark for the very warm and generous hospitality extended to us since our arrival in your charming capital city. I would also like to extend my gratitude for the generous remarks you have just made.

2. Relations between Malaysia and Denmark have been close and cordial. There exist an inherent goodwill on both sides and our Governments have rightly seized the opportunity to forge a mutually beneficial relationship. Indeed, Denmark is a country familiar to many Malaysians, since several well-known Danish business houses have been established in Malaysia for a long time. The closeness between our two countries may also be attributed to a certain similarity that exists between us. I am reminded especially of your geographic and strategic situation which has played a predominant role in your country 's perception of the international situation and which has guided your policies and positions on specific world issues.

3. Indeed our discussions today were based on our respective perceptions of international issues and given the fact that Malaysia too is situated in another strategic area of the globe, not surprisingly our views coincide on the most outstanding problems that plague the world arena. The discussions have been more than fruitful and judging from the commonality of our postions on issues of common concern, I have no doubt that my visit will help further the cause of Malaysia-Denmark relations.

4. A matter of particular satisfaction to my Government, Your Excellency, is Denmark's consistently positive attitude towards the developing countries, like Malaysia. In this regard, the initiative undertaken by some Danish citizens to establish an ASEAN Business Club here in Copenhagen in 1982 with the express intention of forging close business links

with the ASEAN member countries is indeed a commendable move for it provides yet another avenue to foster and pursue Malaysia's interest in Denmark and vice-versa.

5. It is not surprising therefore that the emphasis in our relations with Denmark has been in the spheres of trade and economic cooperation. Denmark remains Malaysia's second largest trading partner among the Nordic countries. In 1982 and 1983 total trade between our two countries amounted to M\$172.6 million and M\$119.1 million respectively. For the first ten months of 1984, total trade registered was M\$132.6 million. It would be noted that there appears to be a fluctuating trend in our bilateral trade. With the fostering of increased bilateral relations between our two countries, I am confident that a more balanced trade will be come established, one that should show an ever increasing trend.

6. In my view a lot more can be achieved in increasing the existing bilateral trade between our countries. Denmark with a total population of 5.2 million is arguably a small market in terms of size. But we Malaysians are cognisant of the fact that small though your market may be, the Danish people are sophisticated high income purchasers. Furthermore, your geographic location in Northern Europe makes Denmark a natural centre into the Nordic countries of some 23 million high income people from Continental Europe. It is therefore, pertinent for our respective entrepreneurs and investors to consider these facts carefully for herein lies the key to furthering the existing bonds of friendship and cooperation for our mutual benefit.

7. In the spectrum of investments, towards the end of 1984 a total of 18 projects with Danish participation have been approved and out of these 12 companies are currently already in production. I am happy to note that Danish investment in Malaysia has increased significantly in the last few years, to about M\$70.8 million in 1983. The figures do not bear out the real potential in the field of investment, but nevertheless we hope that there will be more Danish participation and investment in Malaysia in future. We, on our part, have sought to achieve this through regional seminars on investment opportunities in Malaysia that were held here in Copenhagen and also in Aarhus in collaboration with the Confederation of Danish Industries. I must add that Malaysia would welcome Danish investments coupled with some transfer of technology particularly those pertaining to high technology industries for which Denmark is internationally renowned.

Your Excellency,

8. In the area of international issues, there exists a remarkable coincidence of views between our two nations. I had referred earlier to Denmark's strategic location and the effects that has on your perception of the world situation. Precisely because of your situation, the question of

detente, security and east-west relations remain major priority items in your foreign policy options. Denmark was one of the early exponents of a European Security Conference and your Government played an active and constructive role in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Your participation, albeit as an observer, at the current negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Forces Reduction (MBFR) speaks of your commitment to disarmament as an indispensable prerequisite to a durable world peace.

9. Malaysia fully endorses the Danish position on disarmament. As a nation that is still striving for growth and development for its people, we find it disheartening to witness the vast sums of money spent on developing more and more lethal weapons. If we, the peaceloving nations of the world, do not voice our fears and do not take constructive measures to halt this blind race towards a nuclear catastrophe, we would be guilty of failing in our duty to future generations. It is in this context that Malaysia welcomes the resumption of the Geneva Talks on Strategic Arms Reductions, for herein lies that little ray of hope which may bring into fruition a complete and comprehensive disarmament.

10. Unfortunately, it is not just the danger of the development and deployment of nuclear weapons alone that plagues us all. The prevailing international situation continues to be wrought with conflicts and contentious issues.

11. The situation in Kampuchea is a cause of serious concern. The independence, hopes and aspirations of the Kampuchean people have been denied to them with scant regard for the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. No responsible and right-minded nation can stand idly by to witness and accept this gross violation by brute military force of a country and the rights of the people. Malaysia is deeply concerned for the welfare of and future of the Kampuchean people and will continue its untiring efforts to find an durable political solution so that the Kampuchean people may once again be free. In this regard, Malaysia in particular, as well as the other ASEAN member states are appreciative of the very positive role played by Denmark at the UN and other international fora towards the solution of the Kampuchean problem. Let me express the hope that with the constructive and positive role of our friends we may yet find an acceptable political solution to the Kampuchean problem within the provisions of the relevant resolutions of the UN and the International Conference on Kampuchea.

12. The problem in the Middle East and the future of the Palestinian people remain as intractable as ever. For some 40 years the Palestinian people have been allowed to suffer the indignity and the ravages of war. It is manifestly clear that we have the responsibility to assist in the search for a solution to the Middle East crisis so that the Palestinians may regain their legitimate homeland. Indeed

self-determination for the Palestinians is the crux of the issues at hand.

Your Excellency,

13. Another area of concern to Malaysia is the question of Antarctica. It is the last unsettled frontier in the world and it remains our view that all Mankind has a legitimate interest in the continent. Antarctica should not be the exclusive preserve of only a few nations. Malaysia is ready to cooperate with the member states of the Antarctica Treaty with a view to finding an acceptable system wherein all nations may cooperate to preserve that vast cold continent and sustain its environment until such time when exploitation of its resources can be done without pollution and damaging the ecological system.

Your Excellency,

14. Allow me once again to say how appreciative my delegation and I are for this opportunity to visit your picturesque country and the hospitality extended to us.

15. May I now request you, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, to rise and join me in a toast to the good health of His Excellency Poul Schluter, Prime Minister of Denmark and to the further strengthening and consolidation of the closer relations between Malaysia and Denmark.