

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

EVENT: THE DINNER HOSTED BY MR. KAAROLY GROSZ CHAIRMAN OF
THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

VENUE: BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

DATE: 27 JUL 1987

TIME:

His Excellency Mr. Kaaroly Grosz;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

May I first extend my heartiest congratulations on your recent appointment as Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Under your able leadership, I am confident Hungary can look forward to continued prosperity and stability.

2. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Government of Hungary for the kind invitation to visit your country and for the excellent arrangements and generous hospitality accorded to me and my delegation.

3. The warmth of your welcome and the impact Budapest has had on me promise to make my first visit to Hungary a truly memorable one. Budapest has been reputed to be one of the most magnificent cities in the world and my visit here has only helped to confirm the truth of what generations before me have known. I look forward to seeing more of your beautiful country in the remaining days of my visit.

4. It is indeed remarkable that even though you have a small population you could match the capacities of other bigger developed nations. Your pragmatic approach to planning and fresh perspectives on East-West relations have brought about important changes in the economy. The growth of your industry has been phenomenal and Malaysia would do well to emulate some of your industrial practices. You have adapted your industrial planning to the country's resources where the emphasis has been on the use of few raw materials and greater labour utilisation. This has paid off handsomely and today Hungary can be proud of her achievements in telecommunications, public transport and ship-building, the latter an amazing feat for a landlocked country.

Your Excellency,

5. It is often said that in an attempt at rapid industrialisation a nation loses its soul but I see that Hungary is in an enviable position where many cultures have been fused to ensure a unique Hungarian culture. The artistic and philosophical attainments of the Middle Ages rooted itself in congenial soil where Hungarian values

joined the great stream of medieval Western culture while retaining its own individual colour. Hungary excels in various fields of music, literature, the arts and the sciences. The Hungarian Academy of Science that dates its foundation to the mid-19th century has produced scientists that have few peers. Who, may I ask, has not heard of the Rubic Cube and your famous Herend porcelain?

Your Excellency,

6. Malaysia and Hungary have enjoyed cordial and friendly relations. Although trade between our two countries is relatively small, it does not mean that the situation must remain static. I am confident that we can study various ways by which trade can be improved and increased to our mutual benefit. I believe one way is for Hungary to buy directly from Malaysia rather than through indirect channels.

7. My visit here affords the opportunity for us to examine the future prospects as Malaysian businessmen are even now talking with their Hungarian counterparts on how we can achieve a greater flow of goods between our two countries. I wish them all success in their deliberations.

8. It is also my hope that greater efforts would be made to make our people aware of the various opportunities available for mutually beneficial economic cooperation. The holding of another Hungarian Week in Kuala Lumpur in October this year is a positive step in this direction. I hope a Malaysian week can be held here in Budapest.

9. On the Malaysian side, a train ride out of Kuala Lumpur will help many realise that Hungarians export comfortable coaches. Our cooperation need not begin and end with railway coaches only. As developing countries with common aspirations we can branch out into other fields such as pharmaceuticals, fertilisers, and training in the agricultural sector. We could also look into the possibility of extending technical assistance to each other as from one developing country to another.

10. It is my fervent hope that our bilateral relations will grow from strength to strength given the fact that our two sides are desirous of enhancing the existing ties and building on what we have for greater consolidation in the future.

Your Excellency,

11. Technology is contracting our world. Improvements in modern communications mean that any point on the map is only a flight away. Interdependence has become a necessity in the conduct of relations between states. It is not enough anymore to cooperate among friends within regional groupings. Efforts must be made to reach beyond immediate or adjacent regions in the name of interdependence. My visit here is taken on the premise that no distance or

barriers divide us or stand in the way of our cooperation.

12. Inter-dependence also means a deep awareness of sharing and caring over issues of peace, stability and international cooperation. The records of your country and mine place both of us in the same plane. Although we are small countries we insist that our voices should be heard. We do not believe that giants own this earth and that others have no role to play. In that context, we should express concern over the spiralling arms race and, while present indications with regard to relations between the United States and the Soviet Union give some reason to be hopeful, we must continue to urge early and qualitative progress on disarmament and the abatement of the superpower rivalry which looms in various regions.

13. I believe we should also voice our concern on oppression and repression on our less unfortunate brothers. The plight of the Palestinian people and the valiant struggle of the PLO for their homeland, the unconquerable spirit of Africans fighting against the apartheid regime in South Africa; the endless stream of refugees from the fighting in Afghanistan, and in Kampuchea should continue to occupy the priorities of our foreign policy.

Your Excellency,

14. We are appreciative of Hungary's support for Malaysia at the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Vienna recently. All of us have an obligation to carry out the fight, even those countries that are least affected by drugs. There are no safe havens. There has to be a continuing programme on the basis of the Comprehensive Multi-disciplinary Outline of Action, the document we adopted in Vienna, which all countries should undertake where our national efforts are linked regionally and internationally.

Your Excellency,

15. I am very happy to be in Hungary. My delegation and I have enjoyed your kind hospitality and would like to thank your Government for all the courtesies extended to us. I look forward to returning the compliment. My wife and I would be delighted to receive you, and your charming wife, as our guests in Kuala Lumpur in the not too distant future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

16. May I request you to join me in a toast to His Excellency the President of The Presidential Council, to you Mr. Prime Minister and to the Government and people of Hungary for their continued happiness and prosperity. Thank you.

