

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

EVENT: THE OFFICIAL DINNER IN HONOUR OF HIS EXCELLENCY LI PENG,  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE PEOPLE

VENUE: SRI PERDANA, KUALA LUMPUR (K.L)

DATE: 10 DEC 1990

TIME:

Your Excellency, Prime Minister Li Peng;  
Madam Zhu Lin;  
Distinguished Members of the Delegation;  
Ladies and gentlemen.

May I, on behalf of the Government of Malaysia and my wife, welcome Your Excellency and your wife and your delegation to Malaysia. We are delighted to have this opportunity tonight to express the friendship and respect which we have for each other as neighbours in the Asian-Pacific community. I wish you could stay with us longer than the three nights scheduled. Nevertheless in your short stay we hope that you will be able to see some significant aspects of the development in Malaysia, the social and cultural life of our multi-racial society and share an understanding of our national aspirations.

2. We are a small country which is young in history and young in development. However we are imbued with an eagerness to come quickly of age, through education and stable economic growth. To that end we are prepared to be diligent and receptive to the experience and knowledge of the more advanced nations. As no country can live in isolation Malaysia needs also to develop friendship with neighbouring countries and the world at large. Our primary objective is to secure peace and Malaysia is willing to shoulder this responsibility together with the international community. In this regard, Malaysia shares common ground with the People's Republic of China.

3. In the last two decades Malaysia, with our strong faith in ASEAN, has devoted a great deal of effort in strengthening ASEAN. Concomitantly we continue to promote the concept of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in the region. ASEAN's success in economic development and regional cooperation might not have come about as easily if we had not earned the cooperation and understanding of big powers like the People's Republic of China, a close neighbour. We are happy to see China's commitment to the principles of peaceful co-existence and non-interference in each others internal affairs often re-affirmed by China. This has been

a vital factor in the building up of confidence between the People's Republic of China and Malaysia.

Excellency,

4. Your visit to Malaysia comes at a propitious moment in the historic relationship of our two countries. It occurs at a time when we have developed sufficient confidence and trust in each other to enable us to have a frank exchange of views on current global issues. In this regard I look forward to our meeting tomorrow.

5. The confidence Malaysia has of a China that is committed to the five principles of Peaceful Co-existence in