

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

EVENT: DINNER GIVEN BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR ALI HASSAN MWINYI
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

VENUE: DAR-ES-SALAAM

DATE: 23 OCT 1991

TIME:

Your Excellency President Ali Hassan Mwinyi,
Madame Sitti Mwinyi,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am indeed very happy to be here in Dar-es-Salaam today. May I express my sincere appreciation to you, Mr President, for the warm welcome and generous hospitality accorded to my wife and I and to the members of my delegation. I recall with fond memories my first visit to Tanzania during the Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Harare in 1986. The overnight stay, in Dar-es-Salaam, however was too brief to enable me to get a good glimpse of your country and its people. Time also did not permit us to hold discussions on matters of mutual interest.

2. My present visit to Tanzania provides me with that opportunity to have a closer look at the rapid development taking place in Tanzania today and to savour some of the natural beauties and splendour of this fascinating country. The discussions that we have had this afternoon encompassing every facet of bilateral relations, and the similar perceptions that we shared on regional and international issues of mutual interest certainly help to enhance our relationship and marks a new era of mutually beneficial cooperation between our two countries.

3. Although formal diplomatic relations between Malaysia and Tanzania have been established only recently, bilateral contacts have been increasing steadily. As members of the South, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth, our two countries have worked closely together to ensure the success of our shared vision, belief and ideals. Bilateral trade, though negligible, provides a basis for expanded cooperation. Given our new resolve for an enhanced relationship, our mutual commitment to South-South Cooperation, and the abundance of natural resources at our disposal, I am confident that our two countries would be able to work more closely in the promotion of greater bilateral economic interaction.

Mr President

4. May I also commend the determined efforts undertaken by the Government of Tanzania under Your Excellency's able

leadership to liberalise its economy and promote social services for the benefit of your people. These encouraging developments offer potential for concrete bilateral cooperation between our two countries. While Malaysia could perhaps participate in Tanzania's developments in certain areas in which we have the necessary expertise and technology, such as in the rubber and oleo-chemical industry, Tanzania which has some of the world's most impressive natural tourist attractions provide attractive investment opportunities in tourism.

Mr President

5. The last decade of this century has witnessed rapid changes in the international political scene not least of which is the emergence of the so-called New World Order. While some of these developments offer greater hopes and opportunities, particularly to the developing countries of the South, some have negative impact on us. As members of the South, we continue to face problems in one way or another. Disparity in development, crippling debt burden, environmental degradation, and falling prices of primary commodities, are among our perennial problems. However as we grapple with these problems, we must not lose sight of the opportunities available before us. We recognise the importance of pragmatic economic programmes and constructive engagement with the North in areas of economics, trade and investments. We hope the North will respond to these overtures with similar constructive attitude. The Final Report of the South Commission launched in Caracas recently provided a valuable blueprint on economic development of the South.

6. The successful launching of the Report owes much to Tanzania. We are indeed grateful to Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the illustrious son of Tanzania whose name is synonymous with South-South Cooperation for his invaluable contribution and wise counsel in the work of the South Commission that led to the successful conclusion of its work.

7. As the central message of the report envisages the South must move and find its own way in the world, it is now left to us to take advantage of the potentials for cooperation.

8. I also believe that the fundamental changes currently underway in the African continent are the results in part at least of the spirit of the Report. Rhetoric has now given way to pragmatic resolve. Countries of the region are implementing realistic, albeit tough adjustment programmes to transform their economies and in the true South-South spirit of interdependence look to one another for cooperation and support.

9. In South Africa, the abominable system of apartheid is crumbling and the movement for multi-party democracy is gaining momentum. The positive developments in South Africa have moved the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

which concluded its session in Harare yesterday to endorse the resolution adopted by the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Meeting on South Africa in New Delhi recently on the immediate lifting of people-to-people contacts. You and I, Mr. President are indeed privileged to have been present at the meeting in Harare during the last couple of days and be witness to this historic decision by the Commonwealth.

10. We welcome this development and look forward to the day in the not too distant future when South Africa will be able to join its other fellow sovereign African states to chart its destiny as an independent state and to engage in constructive cooperation not only with its African neighbours but also with other countries in other regions of the world.

11. This encouraging development would not have come about that soon if not for the resolute backing by Tanzania and others to the oppressed majority of South Africa. As a Front-Line State, Tanzania has played an active role in support of liberation movements in Southern Africa and for the cause of freedom, justice and economic well-being of the peoples of this continent. For this Tanzania deserves all praise.

Mr President

12. It is crucial for countries of the South to work towards the strengthening of South-South Cooperation. It is as a manifestation of our belief in such cooperation that Malaysia is willing to share its experiences and whatever expertise it has with Tanzania.

13. Notwithstanding our limited resources Malaysia has extended assistance to several developing countries in Africa. We have trained several Tanzanian officials under our Technical Cooperation Programme. We have also made contribution to Frontline States under the Africa Fund. We would continue to assist our African friends in whatever way we can in the future. At the very least we can learn from each other. As long as there is the political will, our endeavour to achieve a better life for our peoples in the true spirit of South-South Cooperation could be realised.

Mr President

14. The signing of the Agreement on Economic, Technical, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation by our Ministers is therefore timely. It establishes the framework for enhanced Malaysia-Tanzania relations.

15. Before I conclude, I would like to take this opportunity once more to thank Your Excellency and Madame Sitti Mwinyi for the kind and gracious hospitality accorded to my wife and I as well as to the Malaysian delegation. Our programme for the next two days will provide us with the opportunity to visit the charming island of Zanzibar and the world-renowned Ngorongoro Park. I look forward to visiting these important regions of Tanzania and to get to know Tanzania and its friendly people.

Ladies and Gentlemen

16. May I now propose a toast to His Excellency the President and Madame Sitti Mwinyi, and to the everlasting friendship and cooperation between Malaysia and Tanzania.