

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

EVENT: DINNER IN HONOUR OF HIS EXCELLENCY YON HYONG MUK  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE

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

DATE: 04 FEB 1991

TIME:

Your Excellency Prime Minister Yon Hyong Muk;  
Distinguished Members of the Delegation;  
Ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the government and people of Malaysia, I wish Your Excellency a warm welcome. We are indeed delighted to be your host tonight. We hope that during your stay here you would be better able to see the cultural wealth and variety that is Malaysia.  
Excellency,

2. We hope that through this visit the peoples of our two countries will have a greater awareness of each other's political and economic systems. It is not an exaggeration to say that most Asians know less of each other's countries than they know of places in the West. However I quite believe that given the changes taking place in the global economy, the time has really come for developing countries to integrate into the regional and international trading and payment systems. It is for this reason that we regard an Asian country like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with a warm sense of kinship and a sincere hope that in the coming decade of development in this region, our two countries will share similar aspirations.

Excellency,

3. All countries, big or small, hope to create a political environment in their neighbourhood that is conducive to good and mutually beneficial relation. Being a small country we must live in harmony with all, beginning with countries in our immediate neighbourhood. Hence we have two basic aspirations which I feel would be whole-heartedly reciprocated by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We aspire for regional peace and regional prosperity.

4. On the first aspiration - regional peace - I am glad to say that we are on firm footing for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Malaysia have always been friends and there was never any contentious issue to cloud our bilateral relations. We trust that this happy state of relations will continue and by extension relate to other countries in our

neighbourhood. We see with a sense of reassurance that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea herself has lived in peace with her neighbours in the last quarter of a century. With your fraternal neighbour, the Republic of Korea, you continue to hold a constructive dialogue at the highest levels. We note too that the larger states around the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have already established a new understanding with both the Koreas, based on closer economic cooperation and assistance. Indeed rapprochement has taken a discernible form in the northern area of the Asia Pacific Sea board, which is seen to dovetail with developments in Southeast Asia where ASEAN countries have built a measure of stability over a period of twenty years. The security which ASEAN states work jointly to achieve are premised upon improving the standard of living of their peoples through economic development and the concept of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in the region. In addition, ASEAN is committed to the concept of keeping Southeast Asia free of nuclear intrusion.

Excellency,

5. When we reach a solution to the Cambodian problem, which we hope will be in the near future, our part of Asia which includes our two countries, will see genuine peace and political stability.

Excellency,

6. Regarding the second aspiration which I have mentioned, that is regional prosperity, one could say that there can be little prosperity anywhere without peace. Even as we sit here now we know that blood is being shed, unnecessarily shed in the gulf region. In the war that rages there, countless lives will be lost, and massive damage will be incurred. The irony is that billions of dollars of precious fund will be expended to kill and destroy. And what will be the end result - nothing that is of benefit to anyone. The Malays have a saying for this sort of wasteful war - If you win all will turn to charcoal, if you lose all will turn to ashes. How much more worthwhile it is to live in peace and build our nations, small though they may be. We in Malaysia are committed to peace and peaceful solutions to the problems of international relations.

7. I sincerely hope that the friendship between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Malaysia will continue and will see many days of fruitful cooperation for peace and economic prosperity in this East Asian region.