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(PRIME MINISTER)

EVENT: THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY OF MALAYSIA CRIME PREVENTION
FOUNDATION

VENUE: CROWN PRINCESS HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR

DATE: 12 JAN 1993

TIME:

Firstly may I welcome all the foreign delegates to Malaysia with a sincere 'SELAMAT DATANG'. I would like to express my thanks to the organising committee for giving me this opportunity to address you in conjunction with the inauguration of the Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF). I hope this Foundation will achieve its objective of contributing towards crime prevention.

2. I am indeed overwhelmed to see so many people from so many organisations, gracing this occasion. I see over a hundred from the Asia Crime Prevention Foundation. Japan is well-represented with its Shizuoka branch, the United Nations Far East Institute, Tokyo and the Japanese judiciary and media. I am also informed that there are guests from Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, China, Hong Kong and Korea, amongst others. I would like to once again bid all of them a warm welcome and hope that they will spend some time to see as much as they can of our country and its people.

3. Historically, one of the earliest forms of cooperation in law enforcement between sovereign nations had involved efforts to control piracy on the high seas. By the 19th century, however the industrial revolution in the western world had inadvertently triggered an urban crime explosion which became a matter of widespread concern. Reformatories and penal institutions proliferated and experts and professionals from various nations were soon brought together to compare notes on criminal justice techniques. The establishment of the League of Nations in 1919 broke new ground in that this fore-runner of the United Nations took an active interest in penal reforms to bring about a more humane approach to the treatment of offenders. Every five years a congress was held for this purpose.

4. When the United Nations was formed after the second world war, it took over the responsibilities for holding the quinquennial congress but the United Nations approach has slowly expanded to balance the need to rehabilitate offenders rather than merely to incarcerate them as a measure to protect society from criminals, protect the interests of victims as well as to develop and train all segments of

the criminal justice system to function professionally according to more humane universal standards.

5. The Malaysian government since independence has striven to eliminate the kind of crime caused by people who are denied the proper means to keep body and soul together. Although action for equitable distribution of wealth gives equal opportunities to everyone, this is not easily achieved in a multi-racial and multi-cultural society with its attendant sensitivities. But we have managed to do it fairly well and we will continue the policy to achieve more socio-economic equality in the future so that there will be greater unity, equality and cohesiveness in a caring society where all the people are equally subjected to the rule of law.

6. In a world of increasing crime, particularly heinous and violent crimes, as is so evident in some of the developed societies, I am pleased to note that the approach taken towards crime prevention in this country is an integrated one. This is premised on the government's recognition of the need to involve all its ministries and people, resulting in a relatively low rate of reported crime. By the standard set by Interpol, Malaysia averages not much more than 70,000 index crime a year. By the standard set by the United Nations Crime Commission, Malaysia averages only 100,000 reported incidents of crime yearly in a population of 18 million people with a strong element of immigrant labour and illegal immigrants. Of course we are not satisfied with these rates. We must strive to protect our society from any form of crime, and we must get all our people involved. Towards this end, we need to inculcate strong moral and ethical values in our people right from their childhood. It is imperative that we develop this value early among the young. Experience has shown that a prosperous nation need not necessarily experience a reduction in crime. Prosperity in fact provides opportunities for more crimes to be committed, particularly commercial crime and petty theft.

7. The United Nations charter recognises a diversity of cultures and communities, other people's ways and desires may not be in consonance with our own. All of us have not developed to the same degree and standards economically and politically. The mere imposition of the standards of the so-called advanced countries need not necessarily yield good results. In any case the crime records of advanced countries do not seem to speak well of the effectiveness of their standards. You must therefore forgive us if at times we feel the need to question the motive behind some of the concerted efforts by the western world to force us to adopt its values and standards. We suspect, and we have reason to suspect from the events which have taken place and the many examples available that some of the efforts are not all that altruistic.

8. The Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation is established

with the aims of contributing towards crime prevention and the treatment of victims and offenders in order to achieve the ultimate goal of peace and stability in the country and the region. This is to be done by way of survey, research, education and other programmes on the basis of solidarity and mutual co-operation among persons interested in or involved with the criminal justice system, particularly those in Asian countries. The Foundation hopefully will promote public awareness of and participation in crime prevention in tandem with the coordinated efforts of government and private organisations interested or involved in crime prevention and the criminal justice system.

9. It is hoped that criminologists and other experts in related fields working in government agencies will continue to contribute their experience, knowledge and energy towards a more peaceful and crime free environment. They should impart their knowledge and service through the Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation activities. It is also my hope that the Foundation can galvanize members of our society and marshal some of its corporate economic resources as well as the expertise and acumen of its individuals and group organisations in the search for that ideal of prosperity without crime and social justice for all.

10. The social and economic changes that have accompanied the process of global development have given rise to parallel changes in criminal patterns. Conditions conducive to the articulation of new crimes have emerged and been exploited. New and old types of criminality have tendencies to transcend national boundaries.

11. Modern technology may be a boon to our society but its application by the criminally inclined has made it possible for offenders to move their criminal operations swiftly across frontiers and take advantage of the differences in laws, their enforcement and their jurisdictions. No single law enforcement agency from a single country can respond adequately and effectively to this new challenge. International cooperation and integrated efforts by national and regional law-enforcers, prosecutors and judiciaries have become absolutely necessary.

12. The global war against the scourge of crossborder crimes and the illicit drug trafficking needs genuine and determined efforts by all countries. The speed of modern transport and communication, coupled with criminal ingenuity, make accessibility to the markets and avoidance of detection much easier. The international narcotic syndicates which appear to be beyond control, constantly evolve new methods of trafficking to evade the arms of law. They also take advantage of shortcomings in national laws and governmental laxity, particularly in areas of banking, to enable them to launder their ill-gotten profits.

13. As we enter the last decade of the 20th century, we

note that commercial and fraud-related crimes are becoming more and more sophisticated due to the rapidly-developing computer and telecommunication technology. Like the drug trade they are increasingly transnational in character. Thus, international cooperation in this area must be equally pursued.

14. The prevailing attitude that crime prevention is the sole responsibility of the law enforcers must also change. The public must realise that crime is a social problem involving every member of the community. The involvement of all members of society is needed to realise an effective crime prevention programme. Moral education that starts at an early age at home must form the very foundation of crime prevention. Responsible behaviour should be instilled early among the young and impressionable age groups. Compliance with most laws should depend upon the acceptance of norms and concerns for the feelings of others, and not so much upon the likelihood of punishment in accordance with the laws. In this sense a family, with strong ties and positive social values, plays a crucial role in controlling deviant behaviour of its members. A break in the traditional family structure and control, is one of the contributory factors for the increase in the occurrence of crime. That is why we in Malaysia reject hedonism, licentiousness and unbridled individualism as a way of life.

15. Finally, I hope this Foundation will work closely with other institutions of the United Nations and sister organisations elsewhere. We must work together, pool our resources and share our professional knowledge, experiences and expertise for a better and more secure society.

16. With that, I hereby officially launch the Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation.