

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

EVENT: A DINNER IN HONOUR O F MR. TOMIICHI MURAYAMA PRIME MINISTER
OF JAPAN

VENUE: SRI PERDANA, KUALA LUMPUR

DATE: 27 AUG 1994

TIME:

I would like to extend a warm welcome to you, your daughter Mrs. Nakahara and the distinguished members of your delegation to Malaysia. We are deeply honoured by your visit which signifies that the Government of Japan, despite the changes of leadership, remains true to the friendship between Malaysia and Japan. Your visit will undoubtedly strengthen further the friendly relations and cooperation between our two countries.

2. We have looked towards Japan as one of the outstanding models of economic development in the East, in particular the ethics and technology that fueled your success. The continuation of our 'Look East Policy' which has brought a better understanding between our two peoples attest to the success of our mutual cooperation. We are grateful to Japan for the assistance and resources which have been extended so generously to us over these years.

3. I am glad to say that the excellent bilateral relations between Malaysia and Japan have greatly enhanced Japanese trade and investments in Malaysia. The cumulative sum of Japanese investments and business in Malaysia today is in fact the highest from abroad. I would like to mention here that our people are ready to benefit more directly from the presence of Japanese investments in Malaysia in terms of technology-transfer, management training and technical skills. After many years of collaboration, we now seek a real economic partnership with Japan where benefits are equally shared.

4. We have noted that in Your Excellency's policy speech last month before the 130th session of the Diet, your government expressed a desire to play an active role in the international community as a nation of peace. We fully welcome Japan's aspiration in that direction. As a developing nation we have emphasized the need for socio-economic developments as against any politico-military arrangements as the foundation of peace and security in the region. Japan has played an exemplary role in this respect, contributing much to the economic growth of the region and acting as a source of development assistance.

5. We believe that Japan as a major global economic power should assume a greater international role in the

maintenance of peace and security within an improved UN system. There is a need now to strengthen the protection and promotion of multi-culturism and pluralistic societies around the world and turn back a rising tide of racism in various parts of the world, particularly in Western Europe and North America. The unprecedented increase in the number of peace-keeping operations around the world signify the emergence of new crises after the Cold War. These substantial increases in demands and costs on the UN peace-keeping operations are breaching the limits of UN resources. In the face of discernible reluctance of the major contributors among the OECD countries to give support to new peace-keeping operations either in terms of manpower and financial resources, Japan's role and commitment would make a crucial difference. In this respect we hope that Japan would not waver in her financial support for peace-keeping operations. And of course as a major player in the international arena Japan must be prepared for peace-keeping duties directly.

6. We may not see a clash of civilizations notably between the Eastern and Western cultures as postulated by the erudite Mr. Samuel Huntington but we are certainly seeing a rise in regionalism with three regions dominating the world economy -- the European Union, NAFTA and the East Asian countries which includes ASEAN. In an attempt to halt the trend towards exclusive economic groupings we in ASEAN have adopted, as Your Excellency knows, the concept of EAEC which will promote open regionalism and the multilateral trading system. The EAEC is a gathering of East Asian economies in a consultative process. We hope that Japan in her wisdom and foresight will see the benefits of the EAEC. Being a natural member of the region, Japan's participation in the EAEC will contribute greater dynamism to the region's economic development.

7. In our desire for greater political stability in the region as well as economic development for all, ASEAN countries have done all they could to provide assistance and share their resources with other countries in Southeast Asia, particularly those which have been subjected to internal conflicts and economic stagnation. The decision of the Japanese Government to send its troops on peace-keeping mission to Cambodia two years ago under United Nations' auspices contributed to the process of establishing an elected government in Cambodia today. However, further assistance from other countries are required to sustain the viability of the Cambodian state and its economy. For those who had earlier committed themselves to helping Cambodia find its feet and this includes Japan as well as Malaysia, there is a need now to go the distance to strengthen Cambodia's economic situation through grants, investments, trade and human-resource development. Japan's contribution in that respect would make a welcome and critical difference. Cambodian peace is one of the very few success stories of the U.N. We cannot let this achievement come to nothing in the end.

8. I sincerely hope that the relationship between Malaysia and Japan will continue to flourish under the emerging new leadership in Japan. In particular, I hope for a closer friendship and understanding between the young peoples of our two countries.

9. We wish you and members of your delegation a pleasant and enjoyable stay in Malaysia.