

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

EVENT: SIGNING OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN USAHASAMA PROTON - DRB SDN.

VENUE: HILTON HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR

DATE: 12 SEP 1995

TIME:

I am pleased to witness the agreement of yet another undertaking that promotes the transfer of technology to Malaysian shores.

2. Technology is clearly the cornerstone of progress. Malaysia, as a newly emerging industrialised nation, should certainly strive to acquire technology. The determination to acquire new technologies and specialised skills will pave the way for development of our industries and our economy.

3. Today's signing of various agreements between Usahasama Proton - DRB Sdn. Bhd., Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Sdn. Bhd and Automobiles Citroen marks a historic milestone in our nation's journey towards industrialisation.

4. Not only does it herald another step forward in the development of the national car, but more significantly, it is the beginning of a new and exciting future for the Malaysian automotive industry; a promising future spiced by the infusion of European automotive technology.

5. Experience has demonstrated how the acquisition of knowledge and skills can be achieved through collaborative ventures. In fact, in just ten short years, the Malaysian automotive industry has advanced to a very high degree of competency.

6. One shining example is Proton. It pioneered the evolution of the local automotive industry way back in 1985. Having captured more than 70% of the local passenger car market, Proton has now advanced to a level where it can play a significant role in the automotive world. That this is so is evidenced by the number of well-known foreign automakers seeking to collaborate with Proton.

7. Another milestone was achieved when Proton teamed up with DRB to form USPD. Through their collaborative ventures, USPD has successfully produced almost entirely with Malaysian expertise a three-door Wira model - the Satria. And very soon, the public will

have the choice of another innovative car.

8. Today, we are witnessing the progress of such productive partnerships.

9. Essentially, collaboration between progressive corporate entities acts as a catalyst for the growth of core industries. In turn, this spawns a multitude of economic activities including:

- The emergence of support industries and vendor development programmes;
- The enhancement of local design, research and development capability; and
- The access to regional and global trading and capital networks.

10. I am confident this new venture will thrust us into the next millenium with confidence. It will also provide us the opportunity to acquire new skills, explore new markets and help us to compete on a global footing.

11. The level of technology transfer agreed upon by all parties is highly commendable. Automobiles Citroen, renowned the world over for its innovative approach to automotive engineering, will surely add a new dimension to the development of our national car.

12. In closing, I wish to congratulate all parties for the initiative and insight shown in undertaking such a bold and exciting venture and I wish them every success for the future.