

SPEECH BY DATIN SERI DR. SITI HASMAH BINTI HAJI MOHD. ALI
PUSPANITA HOUSE, KUALA LUMPUR
THE ASEAN LADIES CIRCLE
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1. Bersyukur kita ke hadrat Ilahi kerana mengizinkan kita berkumpul dalam majlis ini dalam keadaan penuh mesra dan persahabatan.

2. Saya mengucapkan terima kasih kepada ASEAN Ladies Circle kerana menjemput saya ke bazaar amal bakti ini dan memberi peluang kepada saya berjumpa dan bermesra dengan puan-puan hadirin sekalian.

3. I am aware of the various activities that the ASEAN Ladies' Circle had organised in the past which had contributed immensely to the feeling of solidarity and comradeship among its members. This is indeed laudable, representing a valuable contribution at the non-governmental level to the respective national efforts to strengthen relations between the countries of ASEAN. The role of ladies in national development is well recognized internationally. Your efforts at fostering international understanding adds another dimension to what women can positively contribute to. The holding of this bazaar provides an excellent opportunity for members of the Circles as well the public to be exposed to the rich variety of regional and international handicrafts and cuisines.

4. I am happy to know that the proceeds from the bazaar will be donated to the Puspadara Foundation for the purchase of breast cancer detection machines for the benefit of women in rural areas. This is indeed a worthy cause. The incidence of breast cancer that had gone undetected until at the very late stage, especially among the rural women, is relatively high in this country. Your contribution to the Puspadara Foundation will certainly bring cheer and hope to countless others who may otherwise not have the opportunity for early detection of breast cancer. I would therefore like to thank and congratulate all members of the ASEAN Ladies' Circle for the efforts they have put in to organise the bazaar. I hope they will continue to make their contribution to society by carrying out more programmes of this nature in the future.

5. As ASEAN membership grew from the original five to seven, so has the membership of the ASEAN Ladies' Circle. Further expansion is expected by July, 1997 as more Southeast Asian countries are likely to join ASEAN. Such expansion, no doubt will provide added strength and vigor to the Circle to undertake new activities and projects that will enhance its role as the promoter of goodwill and understanding among ASEAN ladies. I have no doubt that as ASEAN celebrates its 30th Anniversary next year, your association will also make a significant step forward in terms of its contribution to your members as well as to society in this country.

6. The presence of ladies from the other ASEAN countries - namely Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam - has given Kuala Lumpur added colour, diversity and vibrancy. We welcome you in this

country and hope that all of you will have an enjoyable stay here.

7. With that, once again, I would like to thank members of the ASEAN Ladies' Circle for inviting me to the Charity Bazaar and for the warm reception accorded to me.

8. Dengan harapan Charity Bazaar ini akan menghasilkan kutipan yang lumayan, saya dengan sukacitanya merasmikan pembukaan ASEAN Ladies Circle Charity Bazaar.