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PERDANA MENTERI MALAYSIA**

Venue : **SINGAPORE**

Date : **03/06/2011**

Title : **10TH IISS ASIA SECURITY SUMMIT**

1. Let me first thank Dr John Chipman for his kind words of introduction and for inviting me to speak with you this evening. I'm delighted to be here in Singapore; to be joined by so many distinguished Government representatives, policy makers, business people and opinion leaders; and of course to mark ten years of fruitful and productive dialogue here at the Shangri-La Hotel.
2. The first time I was here, back in 2002, I was Defence Minister. A lot has changed since then... for one thing I'm now Prime Minister, which I'm afraid means I get to come between you and your dinner!
3. In June 1963 President Kennedy, delivering the commencement address at the American University in Washington, spoke at length about peace in a thermonuclear age. He said, and I quote: "What kind of peace do I mean? What kind of peace do we seek? Not a Pax Americana enforced on the world by American weapons of war. Not the peace of the grave or the security of the slave. I am talking about genuine peace—the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth living—the kind that enables man and nations to grow and to hope and to build a better life for their children –not merely peace for Americans but peace for all men and women—not merely peace in our time but peace for all time."
4. The thing that strikes me most about his words is that, rather than succumbing to an expedient vision of world peace, he chose not to compromise and to continue to strive for a better world. Three decades later the end of the Cold War, rather than producing the peace dividend we all expected, has instead given rise to a new set of complex, multi-dimensional security challenges. The elimination of Osama bin Laden and now the capture of Ratko Mladic serve as a reminder of the security threats we face, albeit threats of a different kind to those faced by the world back in the 1960s.
5. Today, we cannot and we must not return to the old bipolarity of that Cold War era – an era of stalemate and stand-off that crippled the world for far too long – and we have no choice but to rise to these new challenges together.
6. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century our economies are so integrated and interdependent, and production processes are so dispersed across borders, that it no longer makes sense for global powers to go to war: they simply have too much to lose. National interest is becoming more and more about collective interest, and our task now is to reflect this in a multilateralism that is both hard-headedly realistic and progressive.
7. Because the way ahead, I have no doubt, must be built on co-operation and not on confrontation – and for that every region, every country, every leader here today must play their part.

8. The cynics thought that Asia and the West could never truly come together as a cohesive whole, that we had too little in common, that life in Surabaya was simply too far removed from life in San Diego. The last ten years have proved them wrong.
9. Yes, we come from many cultures and we speak many languages. But, as US Defense Secretary Robert Gates – and I wish him well in his retirement! – said in this room last year, the Pacific Ocean is not a barrier that divides but a bridge that unites us.
10. The United States has long been a modernising and a moderating force within our region, supporting democratic institutions, improving governance and fostering respect for human rights. Barack Obama has described himself as America's first Pacific President, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has spoken of the need to find "strong partners" here.
11. Such warm words are welcome, but they are just the latest in a long exchange of ideas and views between the United States and Asia – and I am pleased that America, and of course Russia, will be taking part in the East Asia Summit for the first time later this year.
12. Next month will see the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Henry Kissinger's secret mission to China ahead of President Nixon's historic visit in 1972. Coming in the midst of the Cold War, Nixon's visit shocked many in the United States – how could the fervently anti-communist leader of the Western world possibly sit down with his ideological adversary? The answer, of course, is that US saw in China the potential to become a counterweight to the Soviet bloc, but this new alliance went much further than that.
13. Nixon's visit wasn't just about the US opening itself up to China, it was about China opening itself up to the US. It is a relationship that has benefited both countries ever since, but such productive dialogue can only take place if there is an openness to engagement on both sides.
14. It would of course be quite wrong to suggest that China's actions in the early 1970s were somehow uncharacteristic; that they represented a change in stance and attitude towards the wider world.
15. Since the time of the Ming dynasty China has been a great and growing power. And today, as the focus of the world's economy has shifted from West to East, from the nations of the Atlantic Ocean to those of the Pacific, China has grown still more assertive, opening up and engaging with its neighbours and competitors.
16. We should see this as a cause for optimism rather than concern. China may be expanding – it has enjoyed spectacular economic growth of 9.5 per cent a year for the last twenty years – but it is not going to dominate the globe in the way the biggest economic forces of the past once did. In the late 1940s the US not only had the largest GDP of any nation, it also accounted for more than half of the world's wealth. When, as predicted, China becomes the world's largest economy in around 30 years, it is likely to account for less than a quarter of global GDP. Wealth will be much more evenly spread, with the US, Europe and Japan acting as a balance to Beijing's rapid growth.
17. Nor should China's growing military capacity cause us undue alarm. Despite rapid increases in Chinese military expenditure the United States will continue to be by far the pre-eminent military power and by far the biggest spender. And Minister Liang Guanglie may oversee the

world's largest standing army, but in Malaysia we know well that China's first commitment is to peace.

18. Six hundred years ago the great Chinese admiral Zheng He visited Malacca. He brought with him 300 ships and 35,000 troops, an armada that could easily have conquered the region if his heart had been set on violence. But Zheng had come not to invade by force of arms but to extend the hand of friendship. A hundred years later the Portuguese came with 800 troops and only around a dozen ships and conquered Malacca for the next 130 years, but we don't like to talk about that!
19. Today, China is our partner. The US is also our partner. And this evening I say clearly to our friends from America, from China, from Russia, India and beyond: we in ASEAN share your values and your aspirations, and we urge you: work with us. It is not about taking sides. We must replace the old bilateralism of the Cold War not with a new bilateralism but with a multilateralism that can rise to the task ahead.
20. Because war between nations is no longer the greatest threat scenario in the region or the world. Instead, we face a new set of asymmetric and non-traditional security challenges – and human trafficking, terrorism, drug smuggling and nuclear proliferation cannot be resolved in isolation or through the old security structures of the past.
21. We in ASEAN know this – which is why we have in place a range of security structures and not just one. Intra-Asian trade is now valued at around \$1 trillion. Linking our economies together in this way is in itself a means of actively reducing conflict, and trade and investment are the building blocks to peace. After all, why would you wage war on your biggest market?
22. But as our economies come together, so too do our people. New communications technologies and the advent of low-cost airlines are breaking down borders, allowing more people to integrate with their near and not-so-near neighbours.
23. In my country, Malaysia, integrating many cultures, many tongues, many religions is simply what we do. It is what we have done for more than half a century since independence – and out of that unity comes stability, security and peace.
24. My heritage lies with an ethnic group called the Bugis. Our family tree has many branches, wrapped around the islands and peninsulas of Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore – a geographical spread that came about in part because of our passion for seafaring and exploration, but also because of the way we conducted ourselves once we arrived in a new land.
25. Throughout history races and peoples have sought out new territory through conquest and oppression, but the Bugis have always taken a very different approach – 'Falsafah 3 hujung', or the philosophy of the 'three tips'. It is one that I believe still resonates today.
26. Physical conflict – invasion, violence, war – was always the most desperate last resort. Long before taking up arms, the Bugis would first use diplomacy. They would talk to their new neighbours, get to know them, try to come to a mutually acceptable conclusion.

27. The next step involved integration, strengthening bonds between the Bugis and the other parties through friendship and family. Sometimes this would literally involve marriage. That's not quite what I'm proposing today – for one thing, I already have a lovely wife! – but in our globalised economy the financial relationships between countries bind us together almost as closely as wedding vows.
28. Today, for example, the same waters that my ancestors crossed a thousand years ago and that Zheng sailed back in the 15<sup>th</sup> century are some of the most important trade routes in the world. Every year almost 100,000 ships travel down the Strait of Malacca and more than a quarter of the world's traded goods pass through the South China Sea.
29. So if transportation links are the lifeblood of international trade, South East Asia has become its beating heart and we have a collective responsibility to ensure businesses can operate here in safety and security. That is why Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia are already working trilaterally through the 'Eye in the Sky' initiative to combat the menace of piracy in the Straits of Malacca – an effective response in comparison with the escalating situation in the Horn of Africa.
30. But the areas where we need to work together are not confined to trade. Post 9/11 we are facing a new and uncharted security landscape with multiple threat scenarios. We must meet these challenges comprehensively, with resolve and decisiveness and with no option off the table. We need to start with every nation playing their part in securing their own internal borders. And this must be followed with a willingness to work together on a bilateral and multilateral basis.
31. Malaysia has and will continue to play its role as a responsible global citizen. And we have shown and will continue to show that our commitment is not merely rhetorical but is backed up by action. In working to secure world peace Malaysian peacekeepers have served under the umbrella of both the United Nations and NATO, and from Somalia to the Balkans Malaysian security personnel have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of global stability.
32. But ours is not simply a peacekeeping role. Malaysia contributes in many, sometimes rather unexpected ways – for example in Afghanistan, where we are playing our part in the country's rehabilitation by sending much-needed female Muslim doctors.
33. In the fight against global terrorism we have also been an active player, pro-active in ensuring Malaysia becomes neither a hotbed nor a transit point for terrorist operations. And either actively or through the sharing of intelligence with regional security apparatus, we have helped with the apprehension or elimination of terrorists like Mas Selamat, Dr. Azhari and Nordin Mat Top.
34. In the Southern Philippines, Malaysia has put in an international monitoring team and acted as an intermediary by hosting peace talks between the Philippines government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. This has at times been a sensitive issue for us, but we are committed to taking the lead in the interests of wider stability and peace.
35. And in southern Thailand we have signalled our willingness to help with the socio-economic development of the four provinces with substantial Muslim populations.

36. Bilaterally, we are working with the United States to combat crimes like drug trafficking, terrorism and fraud, and with Australia to tackle the issue of asylum seekers and to foster stability right across our region.
37. Multilaterally, we are working to enforce the United Nations Security Council resolution on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction through our new Strategic Trade Act. I am determined that we will play our part as a responsible member of the international and regional community and that, in the spirit of the 1995 declaration, we will together make ASEAN a nuclear free zone.
38. We simply cannot allow our important work together to be derailed by tensions or destabilised by disagreements and disputes – and with Thailand and Cambodia currently at the Hague, our region knows only too well how deadly such clashes can be. In this there is of course good and bad news. The bad news is that 16 people lost their lives. The good news is that both sides are now talking – and I think we all have high hopes of an imminent resolution.
39. Of course difficulties between neighbours will flare up from time to time, but in our region significant progress has in fact been made in settling some of these disputes over the years. China and Russia were able to resolve their land border – at 4300km the longest in the world – in 2008. Vietnam and China completed their land border demarcation in that same year.
40. In Malaysia we have long tried to negotiate our border disputes in a spirit of consultation. With Thailand, for example, we created a joint development area with both countries agreeing to share mineral resources. With Singapore, a peaceful and diplomatic appeal to the International Court of Justice resulted in an amicable ruling that was accepted by both sides. And with Brunei, a solution was found on the basis of a mutually beneficial formula, with a production-sharing agreement put into place.
41. I would hope that all border disputes can be resolved in that same spirit of mutual respect and co-operation. I am also optimistic that ASEAN and China will soon be able to agree on a more binding Code of Conduct to replace the 2002 Declaration of Conduct in the South China Sea.
42. The overlapping claims in the South China Sea involving six parties are particularly complex, but they have generally been managed with remarkable restraint. We must never allow our disagreement on this issue to escalate beyond the diplomatic realm. All parties must remain steadfast in their resolve to find a peaceful resolution of this dispute. And yes, while I remain fully committed to a common ASEAN position in terms of our engagement with China on the South China Sea, I am equally determined to ensure our bilateral relationship remains unaffected and in fact continues to go from strength to strength.
43. This is the way forward. Dialogue. Engagement. Consensus. Those are the values enshrined in the declaration of the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality signed by the founding ASEAN member states in 1971, when my father was Prime Minister of Malaysia, and in the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation since then.
44. Let me share with you my thoughts on six practical principles that might underpin the notion of effective co-operation in our region.

45. First, it is extremely important for such multi-state engagement to fully recognise the role of each member state, rich or poor, small or big.
46. Second, we must appreciate that every member country is different in terms of history, culture and economic position.
47. Third, confidence-building measures need to be put in place to foster a deeper dialogue and understanding between partners.
48. Fourth, we need a web of different forms of security architecture, not only regional and with the co-operation of extra-regional powers but also within the context of bilateral arrangements.
49. Fifth, there need to be institutional relationships – relationships not just at the highest levels but between our *institutions*.
50. A significant degree of regional and global co-operation already exists, and building upon this will draw the major powers closer towards each other. Indeed, regional processes such as the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus 8 are already actively exploring co-operation in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance – and I would like to call today for the establishment of a regional humanitarian body, a new Rapid Response Team with the ability to respond to disaster when it strikes.
51. These activities are especially relevant because they foster direct interaction between the defence and security agencies of different countries, going beyond formal declarations and high level dialogues to coordinated operations on the ground.
52. Establishing the ARF was one of the most far-sighted and bold initiatives our regional community has taken to strengthen peace and foster stability – inclusive in nature and embracing countries of all political hues.
53. We have been a little slow, though, in making progress on our agenda of building confidence and security contacts and of preventive diplomacy. So it is clear that the ARF, complemented by the AMM plus 8, has to make greater haste and show stronger political resolve on all sides – but in building new alliances and forging new security contacts we should not forget the old ones like the Fire Power Defence Arrangement.
54. As I said earlier, we should not be surprised when we encounter problems – which brings me to my sixth and final point: that far from letting these difficulties knock us off course we must build on all we have achieved together to not only manage such disputes but to resolve them. Now more than ever we need to focus on the bigger picture and not become blinkered by our own concerns.
55. In Islam we have a concept, “wasatiyaah”, which means moderation or ‘justly balanced’. It is this spirit of moderation that has made Malaysia the country it is today, and that I believe will now be key to overcoming the challenges we face together as a region.
56. That is why, at the United Nations last year, I called for a new global Movement of the Moderates that would see government, business and religious leaders around the world face down extremism wherever it is found. Because just as you cannot make the world a better

place by passing a law proclaiming that it will be better, you cannot rid the world of extreme views simply by making them illegal – and I have no doubt that we can best foster tolerance and understanding not by silencing the voice of hatred but by making the voice of reason louder.

57. Since our early discussions and deliberations ten years ago, this forum has always been a lot more than a talking shop. It has been about fostering clear-headed, practical security and defence co-operation – and I believe the Movement of the Moderates can be a similarly constructive expression of our common values.
58. The great challenge before us as nations is how to secure the blessings of liberty and prosperity for our people in an uncertain world. How do we chart a better future for our children? How do we advance the welfare of our people and solve the great problems of our times? The answers lie in coming together and in collectively bringing our will and resources to bear.
59. As responsible leaders we cannot squander the opportunity before us to help build a new world order where a just and equitable peace predicated on the rule of law is the norm rather than the exception – and we know that governments who do not practice good governance are existing on borrowed time.
60. We must ensure peace and stability at all levels: national, regional and global. To achieve that goal, let us continue to engage each other in a constant dialogue – for in the words of Winston Churchill, “jaw-jaw is better than war-war”.

**Thank you.**