

By : DATUK SERI SYED HAMID ALBAR
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Title : CLOSING STATEMENT AT THE 9TH MEETING OF THE MALAYSIA-THAILAND JOINT COMMISSION

Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand

Members of the Thai and Malaysian delegations

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have just successfully concluded the 9th Joint Commission Meeting between our two countries. The congenial and expeditious manner in which we were able to conduct our discussions is a clear manifestation of the resoluteness and commitment of both our delegations in working towards the strengthening and upgrading of bilateral relations. As a result of the positive and constructive attitude that we have displayed in the last two days in dealing with the subject matters before us, we have been able to make substantial progress in our efforts to address the issues that we are entrusted with.

2. On behalf of the Malaysian delegation, I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to my colleague, H.E. Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai and members of the Thai delegation for their cooperation and contribution in enabling us to conclude this JCM.

Excellency,

3. Malaysia believe that the Joint Commission remains a viable mechanism to review the progress that has been made in bilateral relations as well as identify new areas of cooperation. Even though the Joint Commission has not met for the past 3 years, this did not, however prevent both sides from undertaking numerous consultations not only at the level of the Prime Ministers and Ministers but also at officials levels, for the benefit of our countries and peoples.

4. As neighbours, there are bound to be many issues and problems in our relations. We have managed to conduct our relations in an amicable and brotherly manner. Despite the myriad of issues involving our two countries, I am happy to note that in the spirit of friendship and close cooperation, we were able to achieve commendable progress on a number of issues that have impact on our bilateral ties. For instance, the Land and Boundary Committee have resolved some of the critical issues relating to the longstanding international border demarcation between Malaysia and Thailand. I am also confident that given the sustained political will at the highest level, we would be able to resolve the remaining issues amicably including the Bukit Jeli issue. Both countries were also able to promote several significant cooperation efforts in

the border areas among the various government agencies and local authorities of both countries. It is with this in mind that Malaysia had suggested the establishment of the Sub Committee on Cooperation along the Border Areas to look into issues affecting the people living along the border.

(Refer to Joint Press Statement)

Excellency,

6. Malaysia is satisfied with the outcome of this JCM. What is important however, is to ensure that the necessary follow up action is taken to implement the understanding reached during the Meeting. It is important that we continue to demonstrate the viability and usefulness of the JCM mechanism in improving the quality of our relations.

7. I wish to assure your Excellency that Malaysia is committed to further enhancing bilateral relations with Thailand in all fields. The Agreed Minutes in this regard will certainly serve as an authoritative source of reference to enable both sides to proceed to successfully achieve our desired objectives.

8. I must say that our agreement to hold the JCM alternately between Malaysia and Thailand at the Ministerial level is a clear manifestation of our common desire to stay engaged and to continue to work together in order to review the state of our relations to resolve common problems and to discuss new areas for mutually, beneficial cooperation. I am confident that with your Excellency's continuing support and cooperation, relations between our two countries will be brought to new heights in the years ahead.

Excellency,

9. Finally, may I once again take this opportunity to thank the officials of both sides as well all the staff of the Secretariat for their diligence and hard work over the past two days so as to ensure the success of this 9th Joint Commission Meeting between Malaysia and Thailand.

Thank you.