

By : DATUK SERI SYED HAMID ALBAR
Venue : SHERATON IMPERIAL, KUALA LUMPUR
Date : 20 SEPTEMBER 2004
**Title : REMARKS ON THE OCCASION OF FAREWELL LUNCHEON IN
HONOUR OF THE AMBASSADOR OF ALGERIA H.E RACHID
BLADEHANE**

HE Rachid Bladehane
Ambassador of Algeria,

Our Guest of Honour and the outgoing Dean of the
Diplomatic Corp and madam,

Her Excellency Adi Litia Samanunu Q.T. Cakobau
High Commissioner of Fiji and the
incoming Dean of the Diplomatic Corp.

Excellencies/Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi wabarakatuh and a very good afternoon to all of
you,

It gives me great pleasure today to host this farewell lunch to H.E Rachid Bladehane,
Ambassador of a brotherly country of Algeria and the Dean of the Diplomatic Corp for
the past one year. Ambassador Bladehane has served in Malaysia for the past six
years and would be returning to Algiers at the end of this month. I am sure you have
gained many friends here and hope that you would bring home with you fond
memories of Malaysia.

I would also like to welcome the High Commissioner of Fiji, Her Excellency Adi Litia
Samanunu Q.T. Cakobau as the new Dean of the Diplomatic Corp. I am confident
that she will continue the excellent tradition set by previous Deans, including
Ambassador Bladehane in serving the interest of the diplomatic community in
Malaysia.

Excellencies/Ladies and Gentlemen,

During his tenure here, Ambassador Bladehane has done very well indeed. Relations
between Malaysia and Algeria have never been better. Last year, we were glad to
welcome twice His Excellency Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of Algeria to Malaysia.
President Bouteflika led the Algerian delegations to both the NAM Summit in
February 2003 and the OIC Summit in October 2004. Last year, we also witnessed
the first-ever official visit by any Malaysian Head of Government to Algeria when
YABhg. Tun Dr. Mahathir made the trip in August 2003. The exchange of visits
makes us more aware of the opportunities that are waiting to be tapped by the
private sectors of the two countries.

Bilateral trade has been encouraging with a total value of RM292.1 million in 2003. Algeria is our second largest trading partner in North Africa after Egypt. I am glad to note that Petronas is now investing in Algeria and a few companies such as Jawala and Ranhill have shown keen interest to invest in infrastructure development there.

I am personally happy that relations are strong and on forward momentum, thanks largely to your effort, Ambassador. We will certainly encourage more exchange of visits and look forward to the possibility of convening the first Joint Commission Meeting between our two countries.

On that note, Ambassador, you will be missed by all of us but this is part and parcel of diplomatic life. We wish you, madam and the family, all the best and every success in your future endeavours. In addition to my own Ambassador, I believe I can count on you for an additional voice favouring Malaysia in the Foreign Ministry of Algeria.

Thank you.