

Penyampai : TAN SRI DATO SERI AHMAD SARJI BIN ABDUL HAMID
Tajuk : THE DINNER FUNCTION HOSTED BY DR. ANDREW CHEW, HEAD OF THE
SINGAPORE CIVIL SERVICE
Lokasi : THE ORIENTAL SINGAPORE
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Firstly, I would like to thank Dr. Andrew Chew and the Singapore Civil Service for hosting us this year. We meet again in the true spirit of neighbours and friends. The present program of the exchange of visits, centering on informal discussions and on golf has represented an invaluable form of interaction between the senior civil servants of both Malaysia and the Republic of Singapore. The culture of having a wide network of contacts is just as important in the civil service as it is in the corporate world. We cannot deny the fact that personal relationships can go a long way in solving as well as overcoming problems. As neighbours we need to co-operate with each other, especially at the civil service level. Good neighbourly relations must be fostered. A man cannot touch his neighbour's heart with anything less than his own.

We have chosen golf as the game to be indulged in during the two days that we are here in Singapore. We all know that golf is a difficult game. In fact, there is a humorous statement which says that golf is a sport which a small white ball is chased by men who are too old to chase anything else. Nevertheless, we chose to play this game because there is one good thing about golf - a man does not get into any holes he can't get out of! On behalf of my wife and the other ladies, I would like to thank Mrs. Andrew Chew for her kind hospitality. As usual, we bring our wives along with us. This is because most husbands want a wife they can love, honour, and display. If we do not bring them along, then we have to answer a lot of questions on our return to our homes. Some wives have such memories that they can even remember things that never happened.

The civil services of our countries have a common origin. The old-guard in our service today would probably remember those days when they were in school and university together. The personal relationships contributed significantly to our inter-service networking. That breed has now dissappeared. We have to look to other means for developing a bond between our civil services. I would like once again to thank Dr. Andrew Chew for his participation at the recently concluded ASEAN Conference on Civil Service Matters held in Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia's proposal for an "ASEAN Strategic Leadership Seminar: Networking In The Decades Ahead" at that seminar is designed to realise our common concern of ensuring linkages amongst brother civil services in ASEAN, not only at the highest levels of managers, but also at the second echelons who will lead the services in the future. This strategic development of networking in turn will ensure that ASEAN public services will be able to respond effectively to the changes that occur. INTAN, our premier public service training institute will be organizing this program next year.

We look forward to the informal discussions among counterparts, and enjoyable golf matches. May the ladies also develop strong bonds of friendships between each other.

Thank you.