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I am very honoured to be invited to address this distinguished gathering of the ladies of Austria and the diplomatic community in Vienna on the drug problem in Malaysia. Let me say how pleased I am to be back in this beautiful city and to join with other delegations to the NGO Forum to discuss the very important subject of drug abuse that has brought us to Austria.

2. Malaysia has not escaped the drug scourge that had swept the world since the 1960s. Drug abuse is a source of great concern and worry for us in Malaysia, and the South-east Asian region, because of our close proximity to the opium-producing areas. Because of our geographical location, good infrastructure and communication infrastructure and communication system, Malaysia is an ideal transit country for the flow and trafficking of heroin into and out of the country for distribution to the Far East Australasia and the West. However, some of the illicit drugs smuggled in on transit have been diverted to create and meet local demand.

3. Unfortunately, this second wave of drug use that swept our country since the 1960s was not initially viewed as dangerous. It was regarded more as a fad as a result of the influence of the "hippie" culture that swept the world in the 1960s. Parents were unaware of the new drug culture that had affected adolescents and youths. Older people, however, remembered the first wave of drug use which could be traced back to as early as the beginning of this century. The only drug used then was opium and cannabis and opium smokers were licensed by the colonial government.

The majority of addicts then were older, and the habit was rampant among the immigrant labour force from China and India who were brought in to work in the tin mines and rubber plantations.

4. Today the situation is completely different. What started as a teenage fad among the affluent urban youth has spread to the rural areas and has affected all racial groups and all strata of society. Our youths are now abusing a variety of dangerous drugs including psychotropic substances. Heroin is the main drug of abuse. As high as 67.6 percent of all persons detected as drug addicts admitted to heroin addiction, 9.1 percent were on cannabis, and 23.3% percent were on morphine, opium and other substances.

5. What is most distressing about the abuse of illicit drugs in Malaysia is the young profile of drug addicts. Of the addict population detected so far 60.9 percent were in the 20-29 age group and 12.7 percent in the 15-19 age group.

Statistics also show that 97.4% of the addict population are males in the prime of their lives, and that 78 percent of those detected were employed, 20.7 percent unemployed and 1.3 percent school pupils.

6. To show you the magnitude of the drug problem in Malaysia, let me quote the following figures:  
Number of Drug Addicts Identified For the First Time    Years    Number of Addicts    Identified  
1970 711  
1975 5,062    1980 7,154    1981 10,391    1982 13,363    1983 14,624    1984 11,915    1985 9,591    1986 7,329    1987  
(Feb) 1,184 CAUSES

7. The involvement of our youths in drugs in the 1960s occurred at a time when youthful involvement in drug abuse was growing worldwide, due principally to the influence of the "hippie" culture as I mentioned earlier. Our country was then undergoing rapid social and economic changes and there was an influx of youths into the labour force. This meant the migration of youths from the rural areas to the urban and industrial areas who found freedom away from parental guidance. American soldiers who came for rest and recreation from the Vietnam War also introduced drugs into the country. Because of the demand for drugs, there was an increase in drug production, especially heroin, from neighbouring countries that make up the "Golden Triangle" and our close proximity to these drug-producing areas make for the easy availability of these drugs on our streets.

These drugs are usually smuggled into the country either by land or sea.

## SECURITY PROBLEM

8. Drug dependency in Malaysia has affected our political, economic and social development. This is because Malaysia is a young nation with 60 percent of its population below the age of 20. As a developing nation with 15.7 million people we need all the available manpower to develop our country. At the moment there are 122,329 registered addicts.

The figure, however, is not comprehensive as there may be many more addicts who have not been detected and therefore unregistered. With so many of our youths and adolescents involved in drug abuse, what a waste of human resources they have proven to be. Thus, pervasive drug abuse has not only impeded the social development of our country but has also taken away scarce human resources that are urgently needed for economic development. What is even worse is that narcotic production and trafficking is associated with increased criminal activities, corruption, violence and intimidation.

9. During my travels in Malaysia I met with parents of drug addicts and heard of the tragic effects drug addiction has afflicted on the affected families. I heard of addicts stealing from their families, and mothers and wives being beaten by their sons or husbands under the influence of drugs. Some of them even go to the extent of killing to get money to buy the drugs. The situation became so bad that parents clamoured for the Government to do something to save our young generation.

## GOVERNMENT EFFORTS

10. The Government took a serious view of the drug menace because of the heavy toll it took on the lives of our youth and adolescents which could be better channelled towards national development. In 1983 the drug problem was declared a national security threat and a National Anti Narcotics Committee was formed under the purview of the National Security Council (NSC) of the Prime Minister's Department.

The NSC is the foremost security agency in the country and by placing the Anti Narcotics Committee under the aegis of the Prime Minister, the Government demonstrates its seriousness to effectively combat the drug problem in Malaysia.

11. To assist the Anti-Narcotics Committee, an Anti Narcotics Task Force was established with representatives at the Federal, State and District levels to plan, coordinate and monitor all activities pertaining to the implementation of national drug policies by government agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in the anti-drug crusade.

12. The Government's strategy to combat the drug problem is contained in the National Anti-Narcotics Action Plan formulated in 1984. The strategies and priorities of the Action Plan aims at reducing the supply and demand for narcotics in Malaysia and stresses on prevention, rehabilitation, coordination, research and international cooperation. It envisions an integrated approach involving Government agencies, the private sector and the community at large. The Government hopes that parents, community leaders and voluntary organizations would come forward and shoulder this heavy responsibility together with the Government.

13. As part of its preventive efforts the Government has concentrated on strengthening and supporting law enforcement agencies to prevent the entry of illicit drugs smuggled through the borders and the many entry points into the country. The Royal Malaysian Police, the Royal Customs and Excise, and the Border Anti Smuggling Unit are the national enforcement agencies charged with the responsibility to check the smuggling of illicit drugs into the country. The Planning Division of the Ministry of the Ministry of Health is responsible for the enforcement of registration relating to the importation, storage, utilization of dangerous drugs, poisons and the sale of other drugs. This measure has been successful and the vigilance of our law enforcement officers has crippled many drug syndicates. In 1986 the Police detected and destroyed 84 syndicates involved in drug trafficking. Out of these, four syndicates were responsible for trafficking drug overseas using Malaysia as a transit point. Our long coast line and the easy access along the border

with Thailand makes it easy for smugglers to exploit this advantage and opportunity to bring illicit drugs into Malaysia either by domestic couriers or concealing them in vehicles and boats. Smuggling of drugs, especially cannabis, is also prevalent along our border with the Philippines.

14. Detection of drug smuggling activities by our law enforcement officers which include a dog-handling unit have led to the arrest in 1986 of 479 traffickers for possession of 15 grammes and more of heroin, morphine and monoacetylmorphine, 116 pushers for possession of less than 15 grammes of heroin and other dangerous drugs and 8774 for other drug-related offences. Since the coming into force of the Dangerous Drugs (Special Preventive Measures) Act, 1985, 65 persons have been put under detention from June to December, 1985. In 1986, 348 persons were put under detention.

Another 145 persons were detained under the Emergency Ordinance No. 5/69 who comprised leaders and members of syndicates responsible for the planning and financing of drug smuggling operations. Foreigners were also involved in drug trafficking and in 1986, 132 of them were arrested for various drug offences compared to 89 in 1985. 1986 also saw an increase in the number of Malaysian arrested overseas (386 persons) as compared to 1985 (369 persons).

## LEGISLATION

15. The basis of the Government's law enforcement measures are from separate statutes enacted since the 1950s.

The Dangerous Drugs Act 1952 prohibited the use, possession, manufacture, sale and importation of all types of narcotic drugs, and the penalty for the possession of 5gms. or more of heroin or morphine was a maximum of 5 years imprisonment or a fine of up to M\$20,000 or both. This Act has been amended several times to impose a more severe penalty for certain offences under the Act. In 1973, the penalty was increased from a minimum sentence of 3 years imprisonment to a maximum sentence of 14 years and a mandatory prison sentence was imposed upon those found in possession of heroin and morphine. In 1975 whipping was introduced and offenders received 6 strokes of the rotan. In the same year life imprisonment or the death penalty was imposed on drug traffickers. In 1983 the mandatory death penalty was imposed for those found in possession of 15 gms. or more of heroin, morphine, or heroin and morphine, one kilogramme (1000 gms.) or more of raw or prepared opium, 1000 gms. or more of raw opium and prepared opium, 200 gms. or more of cannabis or cannabis resin or a combined weight of cannabis and cannabis resin. This was further revised in 1984 to include fifteen gms. of monoacetylmorphines, heroin, or combined weight of morphine and monoacetylmorphines. Prior to these amendments the death penalty or life sentence was imposed on those who were found in possession of 100 gms. or more of heroin or morphine, 5 kilo or more of raw opium, one kilo or more of prepared opium and 200 gms. of cannabis.

16. Further amendments to this Act were made in 1986 which include an increase in the maximum fine from M\$10,000 - to \$20,000 for unlawful possession of raw opium, coca leaves and poppy-straw of cannabis and for importing, exporting, possessing, manufacturing, selling or dealing in prepared opium (including cannabis and cannabis resin).

17. Another feature of this 1986 amendment is the presumption as to trafficking (for which the penalty is death) the possession of 40 grammes or more of cocaine or 2,000 grammes or more of coca leaves; and an increase from six to ten strokes the mandatory whipping for possession of 15 gms. or more of cocaine, or 50 gms. or more of cannabis or 50 gms. or more of cannabis resin, or a total of 50 gms.

or more of cannabis and cannabis resin, or 750 gms. or more of coca leaves.

18. The 1986 amendment also introduced a new provision of mandatory jail sentence of two to five years and mandatory whipping of between three to nine strokes for those in possession of 2.5 gms. of heroin, morphine, and monoacetylmorphines or the total weight of any two of these dangerous drugs, and 5.15 gms. of cocaine, and 20-50 gms. of cannabis, cannabis resin and the total weight of the two; and 100-250 gms. of raw or prepared opium, and 250-750 gms.

of coca leaves.

19. We all know that these merchants of death who peddle drugs to our youths have profited enormously from the miseries of our youth. As a deterrent to these profiteers, the Malaysian Government is in the process of enacting legislation on the forfeiture of illegally acquired property and assets of drug traffickers. A draft Bill cited as the Dangerous Drugs (Forfeiture of Property) Act 1986 has been prepared and would be tabled in Parliament this year.

#### TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION

20. The Government has made provisions for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts at various centres set up by the Government. The Government also established detoxification centres in seven hospitals and detection centres in 17 hospitals. In 1977 the Government made it compulsory for drug dependents to receive treatment and rehabilitation at Government rehabilitation centres. The period of rehabilitation at the seven government-run rehabilitation centres was extended from six to two years and this was followed by a two-year aftercare programme.

These centres can handle 2050 inmates at any one time.

21. Voluntary organizations also provide drug rehabilitation services to complement the government efforts. There are currently 53 hospital-based drug abuse detection centres and 28 drug detoxification centres throughout Malaysia. Each detoxification centre has between 4 to 40 beds.

22. For the period 1986-87 seven more drug rehabilitation centres are being constructed, one of which will be exclusively for women. Most of the work on the new centres which are converted police or army camps are carried out by addicts undergoing rehabilitation as part of their skill training/work therapy programmes.

23. At the moment there are two one-stop centres one launched in May 1983 and the other, launched in December 1984. The services provided at these centres include detection, detoxification, examination and treatment for illness, counselling, para-military training, moral/ religious and social education, vocational and skill training and work therapy (in "Work Brigade" formations).

24. The security-oriented approach to combat the drug problem has led to the introduction of new elements in the concept of treatment and rehabilitation, which include the isolation of addicts from society by requiring them to undergo compulsory treatment and rehabilitation; the introduction of para-military training to instil discipline as well as to build up their physical well-being; "Cold Turkey" treatment in specially designed detoxification wards; inmates' active participation in economic activities like agriculture, building construction, etc. and skill training to provide them with marketable skills. Some inmates will be taken out of the centre in "Work Brigades" to worksites like rubber and oil palm estates where they get paid.

25. In the field of aftercare, the government provides a supervision of two to three years and solicits the support of the community for para-counselling services in its 'neighbourhood counselling scheme'. The aftercare is the most critical period in the re-entry phase of an ex-addict's life. The cooperation of the private sector is also required in providing job opportunities for ex-addicts.

26. Since the introduction of institutional rehabilitation in 1975 about 13,814 drug addicts have undergone institutional rehabilitation and another 25,065 have followed the supervision (non-institutional) programme. Up to October 1986, 4,222 drug addicts have been referred to the government for treatment and rehabilitation, 824 of whom were volunteers and the other 3,398 apprehended by the police.

27. Drug addicts who are serving prison sentences are also being rehabilitated. The Prisons Department runs a drug rehabilitation programme whereby 166 officers who received intensive training in drug counselling served as counsellors to the prisoners under their care. As of October 1986, about 8,246 drug

offenders are serving prison sentences in prisons throughout the country.

28. To encourage community participation in the aftercare of ex-addicts the government established Drug Rehabilitation Committees to assist the re-entry of addicts into society. These committees, set up in various localities comprises community leaders and representatives of voluntary and service organizations. Up till the end of 1986, 78 Committees have been established in "high risk" localities throughout the country. A "Neighbourhood Counselling Scheme" was also introduced in 1984 as a parallel project. Members of this Committee were given basic training in drug counselling and tasked to assist drug rehabilitation officers in the aftercare programme and to reintegrate ex-addicts into society.

#### ROLEENTS OF PAR AND THE COMMUNITY

29. I believe that parents and the community can complement government efforts in the fight against the drug menace.

The anti-drug campaign requires total commitment and community involvement in order for it to be effective and successful. I am happy to say that Malaysian parents have responded positively to the call for community involvement.

30. In October 1985 a "National Conference on Parents' Involvement in the Prevention of Drug Abuse" was organized by the Association of Wives of Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries (BAKTI) to create public awareness on the drug problem. About 400 representatives of voluntary organizations participated at this meeting. The conference recognised that parents have an important role to play in the fight against drug abuse and that children need to grow up in an atmosphere of love and understanding with strong moral values. The role of women as mothers who are closest to their children was given strong emphasis.

31. This was followed by a "Workshop on the Involvement of Members of the Public Service and their Families Against Drug Abuse" in April 1986. About 250 government officials and their spouses attended this workshop which formulated a comprehensive Plan of Action in how members of the public service and their families can be involved in drug prevention efforts in the workplace, family and the society.

32. Two more meetings were held in 1986 as part of the drug awareness campaign launched by the Government. In July 1986 the National Advisory Council on the Integration of Women in National Development (NACIWID) convened a workshop to formulate guidelines on the formation of a Parent Movement in Drug Abuse Prevention at national, state and district levels. This workshop culminated in the launching of a National Parent Movement in Drug Abuse Prevention. They also came out with guidelines on how parents and the community, through schools, voluntary organizations and semi-government bodies could create nation-wide parent movements in the prevention of drug abuse in the country.

33. A Symposium on the Role of Medical and Health Professionals and Para-Professionals in the Control and Prevention of Drug Abuse was convened in October 1986 to increase the awareness of the health and medical professionals and para professionals on the drug problem faced by the nation. It was attended by about 300 officials and representatives from the various medical and health agencies and associations.

34. To raise the level of public awareness and the dangers of drug abuse the Government media has intensified its awareness campaign through the electronic and print media.

Filmlets, dramas, documentary and feature films, songs/ jingles, forum, etc. aired through both radio and television and film shows, stage shows, talks and exhibitions have created an awareness among the public and stressed the role that parents and the community can play in the prevention efforts through proper upbringing of their children and family.

35. I am glad to say that since 1983 when the anti-drug campaign was launched, the public has

responded positively and through voluntary organizations which have widespread representation throughout the country they have become involved in one way or another in drug prevention efforts.

They organized lectures, seminars and workshops, exhibitions, hotline telephone service and drug counselling centres for their members. I should mention here some of these active organizations namely the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, the Women's Institute, the National Association for the Prevention of Drug Abuse (PEMADAM) whose leaders are present here today; the Islamic Women Welfare Association, the National Family Planning Association and the Action Committee for Parents' Movement Against Drug Abuse.

36. Apart from the organizations I have mentioned above there are other bodies like uniformed groups, for example the Girl Guides Movement, social service clubs and religious organizations which are also helping in the drug awareness campaign. Information on the dangers of drug abuse are also disseminated to schools where secondary school children form a high risk group. Efforts have also been taken to get parents involved through the Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) but this may take a while to succeed due to the lack of parental involvement in the PTAs.

37. In order to involve the community in drug prevention efforts a new project known as the "Concentrated Integrated Project for the Prevention and Eradication of Dadah" (C.I.P.) was launched recently. This pilot project involved the dissemination of drug-related information to parents, school children, youths and the members of the community and the organization of family programmes like family day, sports and recreational activities and cooperative efforts like cleaning of the neighbourhood, public parks, market place, etc. Officials from government agencies were present to answer any questions on drug-related subjects.

38. The private sector has also been mobilised to help in the drug prevention efforts. Their participation has been most encouraging since the launching of the national campaign. A number of companies helped to sponsor national and state drug abuse prevention programmes and activities, besides undertaking in-house programmes for their workers.

Several companies have also absorbed rehabilitated addicts as workers while others have sponsored ex-addicts to operate small businesses.

39. Another way of getting public cooperation is through the mail. Members of the public are rather reluctant to come forward personally if they have information on drug abuse and trafficking activities. So the Government has provided a Post Office Box (No. 7000) where postage is free for all letters addressed to this box. This facility has met with some success. From Feb. to Nov. 1986 the Government received 293 letters.

40. The Government has also provided a hotline service at the National Anti Drug Operations Room set up at national and state levels. This facility was provided to get public cooperation in the fight against drug abuse and trafficking.

#### INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

41. The uncontrolled use of drugs would certainly sap the energy of our youths and our economy and endanger our national security. We can ill afford to sacrifice the future...future/- future of our young generation.

For them to grow and prosper, for us to ensure they lead a good life, for us to preserve the bond and unity between parents and children, the evil menace of drug abuse and illicit trafficking has to be stopped and prevented. But no country can fight it alone. It needs the concerted action of all countries to stop this scourge that has affected us all.

42. The deep concern of our Government in eradicating the domestic drug problem has been instrumental in Malaysia playing a prominent role in the international arena. We believe that only with

political commitment of the leadership of all nations can we overcome this drug menace.

We hope the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking will come up with concrete proposals and guidelines for all nations to combat the drug scourge.

On our part, Malaysia has cooperated with several countries in the exchange of information and technology that has led to major seizures of dangerous drugs and the arrest of drug trafficking syndicate members.

43. Recognizing the need that parents play an important role in prevention efforts, Malaysia has joined with neighbouring countries to create a network of parents' movement against drug abuse. Just a few days ago we concluded a "Workshop on the ASEAN Network of Parents' Movement Against Drug Abuse" which was the official launching pad for this concept. The Work-shop formulated guidelines for voluntary organizations in the various countries to set up such a movement. The guidelines included plans of action for parents in drug prevention education in schools, the work place and home.

#### CONCLUSION

44. Parents in Southeast Asia have made a start to cooperate in parents' movement against drug abuse. It is my hope that eventually this movement will spread worldwide so that we can learn from each other's experiences on how to protect our young generation from the miseries of drug abuse. We have to protect our future generation from destroying their minds and bodies.

45. We, as parents, who care for the safety and security of our children, should no longer be naive about the international nature of the drug problem. The drug problem is not only a social problem affecting families but has international ramifications as well because it threatens the security of nations. It is imperative that we learn from each other, and cooperate with each other so that together we can create a drug-free world of tomorrow for the sake of our children and the future generation.

Thank you.