

1985

Statsminister Kåre Willoch

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STATSMINISTER WILLOCH`S TALE UNDER MIDDAG PÅ AKERSHUS
SLOTT MANDAG 22. APRIL 1985, I ANLEDNING AV MALAYSIAS
STATSMINISTER`S BESØK I NORGE

Honourable Prime Minister,
Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamead,
Excellencies,
Malaysian and Norwegian friends,

It is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to host tonight's dinner in honour of you, Mr. Prime Minister, and your delegation. Moreover, we are celebrating the first visit to Norway of a Malaysian Prime Minister, an occasion we have been greatly looking forward to. It is my hope that all our Malaysian friends will feel that they are very welcome in Norway, and that they will find their stay both interesting and rewarding.

Mr. Prime Minister,

Today we have had a useful exchange of views on

bilateral and international issues. We in Norway feel that we have gained a better understanding of Malaysian views and standpoints. On many issues there is also a close similarity between Norwegian and Malaysian points of view. The nature of our exchange augurs well for future contacts and cooperation between our two countries.

The ASEAN countries have experienced considerable economic growth throughout the last decades. Your own country, Mr. Prime Minister, stands out as an example to others in this respect. I find it particularly interesting to note that certain features in the development of your country correspond to features in our own development: The combination of domestic natural resources, and the import of capital and technology, has been a cornerstone of our development as it has been of yours. This combination, however, calls for an accommodation of foreign and national interests alike which requires skill and political leadership. Your "The Malaysian Incorporated Concept" is a concept which commends the interest and respect of other countries including Norway.

Mr. Prime Minister,

Our bilateral trade in commodities is still modest, but the prospects for the future look good, particularly in view of the encouraging increases more recently. In my

view, the economic structures of our two countries should provide a fertile ground for further intensification of our economic relations. Economic integration would enhance the growing prosperity of both countries.

Several Norwegian companies, some of which you will encounter in the course of your stay, have established themselves in your country. Not only do these companies contribute to the mutually beneficial economic progress of our two countries; but where tradesmen meet, so do cultures. Thus, I am convinced that this economic cooperation will also improve Norway's and Malaysia's understanding of each other.

Like Malaysia, Norway has an open economy. Like Malaysia we export about 50% of what we produce. And like Malaysia we therefore depend upon an open world trade. The meeting of Ministers of the OECD in Paris recently concluded that a new round of negotiations in the GATT should be convened as soon as possible. In our view, however, such a round could prove successful only if the interests of the developing countries were accorded considerable weight. In this context we have noted with satisfaction that the ASEAN-countries have shown a favourable attitude towards a new round in the GATT.

Mr. Prime Minister,

If we are to succeed in bringing about development

on a more worldwide scale, concerted action among countries is necessary. We have to revitalize the machinery of international cooperation. But this is not limited to the economic field. It also applies to international politics in general, and one way of doing this is by strengthening the United Nations. Both Malaysia and Norway are staunch supporters of enhancing the role of United Nations and thereby improving its ability to prevent conflicts and crises. Only through the effective functioning of its principal organs can the organisation play the role envisaged in the Charter.

Allow me on this occasion to compliment Malaysia on her efforts within and outside the United Nations to find ways of solving the Kampuchean problem together with her ASEAN-partners, and also on Malaysian support to the Afghan people in their efforts to regain their independence, free of foreign interference and coercion.

I can assure you that the aim of your noble efforts in these conflicts is the same as Norway's.

Mr. Prime Minister, I am convinced that your visit will be a major step in bringing Malaysia and Norway closer together. It will also serve as an inspiration for closer cooperation in many fields. As I mentioned earlier we are not among your biggest and most important trading partners, but we hope that, during the next two days, you and your delegation will conclude that we stand for reliability and quality.

The Norwegian Government actively encourages those enterprises in our industrial and service sector that wish to become more international. We feel confident that our industry possesses technological "know how" that could prove useful to Malaysian industries also, and that the size of our economies and of our companies are well suited for increasing the cooperation between us. I sincerely believe that the economic cooperation between our two countries will develop further following your visit.

Excellencies, and other friends,

Let me close by inviting you to join me in a toast to the good health of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, to the good health of the delegation accompanying him, and to the continuing development of friendly relations between Malaysia and Norway.