

*KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
H.E. DATO' SERI ABDULLAH HAJI AHMAD BADAWI
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA
15TH PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION COUNCIL (PECC) GENERAL MEETING
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
3 SEPTEMBER 2003, 10.00 AM*

1. ALLOW ME TO FIRST EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE TO THE PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION COUNCIL FOR INVITING ME TO SPEAK AT YOUR 15TH GENERAL MEETING* IT IS INDEED AN HONOUR FOR ME TO BE ABLE TO ADDRESS THIS DISTINGUISHED AUDIENCE AND I AM ALSO PRIVILEGED TO SHARE THE SPEAKERS' PLATFORM WITH SOME OF OUR REGION'S MOST DYNAMIC LEADERS: OUR HOST, HIS MAJESTY THE SULTAN OF BRUNEI; PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THAI PRIME MINISTER DR. THAKSIN SHINAWATRA*

2. THE THEME THAT YOU HAVE CHOSEN FOR THIS YEAR'S MEETING, "SECURING THE FUTURE: A STRATEGIC PATH FOR THE NEXT DECADE." IS TIMELY AND RELEVANT* THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR US IN THE REGION TO REASSESS OUR POLITICAL, SECURITY AND ECONOMIC OUTLOOK IN RESPONSE TO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS* AS WE STRENGTHEN COOPERATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION, WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO SEE A MORE LUCID PATH FOR ALL OUR COUNTRIES BASED ON PROMOTING PEACE AND PROSPERITY* WE MUST COMMIT OURSELVES TO THE BELIEF THAT THESE TWO OBJECTIVES ARE MUTUALLY REINFORCING AND HAVE BEEN THE PILLARS ON WHICH OUR SUCCESS AS A REGION HAS RESTED UPON*

3. WHETHER IT HAS BEEN WITHIN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION, OR WITHIN THE ASEAN+3 FRAMEWORK, OR ASEAN, MALAYSIA HAS BEEN A CONSISTENT ADVOCATE FOR THE TWIN OBJECTIVES OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY* WE HAVE REPEATEDLY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF HELPING ONE ANOTHER PROSPER THROUGH NEGATING ZERO-SUM SCENARIOS* WE HAVE BUILT OUR FOREIGN POLICY AROUND WIN-WIN ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS, AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING SECURITY AND POLITICAL COOPERATION*

4. WE HAVE PROMOTED WHAT WE BELIEVE IS A PRINCIPLED FOREIGN POLICY* WE HAVE STAUNCHLY DEFENDED MULTILATERALISM AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS* WE HAVE CALLED AND WILL CONTINUE TO CALL FOR BETTER AND MORE TRANSPARENT GLOBAL GOVERNANCE – WHETHER AT THE UNITED NATIONS, THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION OR ANY OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORUM* WE HAVE SPOKEN OUT AGAINST INJUSTICE – WHETHER IT PRESENTS ITSELF OVERTLY AS

MILITARY INVASION, OCCUPATION OR GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS; OR AS MORE STRUCTURAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH GLOBALISATION* WITHOUT ADDRESSING THESE TOUGH QUESTIONS IN A FRANK AND OPEN MANNER, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CREATE A REGIONAL FRAMEWORK THAT IS MEANINGFUL, COMPREHENSIVE AND CONGNIZANT OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF ALL MEMBERS*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

5. THE SECURITY SITUATION IN OUR REGION REMAINS OF GREAT CONCERN* THE RECENT BOMBING IN JAKARTA IS A REMINDER THAT TERRORIST GROUPS ARE STILL OPERATIONAL NOTWITHSTANDING THE IMPORTANT STRIDES THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO CRIPPLE THEIR NETWORK* FOR COUNTRIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE SECURITY AGENDA IS PARTICULARLY PRESSING* INVESTORS AND TRADING PARTNERS HAVE LONG REGARDED SECURITY AS A GIVEN AMONG ASEAN COUNTRIES* WE HAVE ATTRACTED TRADE AND INVESTMENTS NOT JUST BECAUSE OF OUR PRO-BUSINESS ECONOMIC POLICIES, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANCE INVESTORS PLACE ON SECURITY AND STABILITY*

6. THE DISCOVERY OF THE *JEMAAH ISLAMIAH* NETWORK DURING POST-SEPTEMBER 11 INVESTIGATIONS, FOLLOWED BY THE BALI AND JAKARTA BOMBINGS HAVE RAISED THE SECURITY RISK PREMIUM CONSIDERABLY FOR INVESTORS LOOKING AT SOUTHEAST ASIA* IN RESPONSE, WE HAVE ACTED SWIFTLY TO STRENGTHEN COUNTER-TERRORISM COOPERATION THROUGH INCREASED SHARING OF INTELLIGENCE, TACKLING TRANSNATIONAL CRIME THAT OFTEN PROVIDES FUNDING FOR TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND ALSO BY COOPERATING EXTENSIVELY WITH THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE "ASEAN-US JOINT DECLARATION FOR COOPERATION TO COMBAT INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM" TO ENSURE A COORDINATED RESPONSE TO THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE REGION*

7. IN RESPONSE TO THE NEED FOR GREATED SHARED EXPERTISE IN THIS AREA, MALAYSIA HAS ALSO RECENTLY ESTABLISHED THE SOUTHEAST ASIA CENTER FOR COUNTER TERRORISM* THE CENTER WILL SERVE AS THE FOCAL POINT FOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR INTELLIGENCE AND ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN THE REGION BY SETTING BEST PRACTICES, SHARING EXPERIENCES AND CONDUCTING VARIOUS PROGRAMS TO ENHANCE COOPERATION AMONG RESPECTIVE AGENCIES* I HOPE THAT THROUGH THE COMMITMENTS, AGREEMENTS AND THE REGIONAL CENTER, COUNTER-TERRORISM EFFORTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE COORDINATED AND EFFECTIVE IN THE REGION*

8. APART FROM THESE MEASURES, WE NEED TO STRENGTHEN OUR POLITICAL WILL IN CONFRONTING TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS* FOR COUNTRIES LIKE MINE, WE HAVE BEEN CONSISTENT IN FIGHTING TERRORISM OF ALL FORMS – WHETHER THEIR CAUSE IS BASED ON A POLITICAL IDEOLOGY, ETHNICITY OR RELIGION* TODAY, THE MAIN TERRORIST THREAT COMES FROM GROUPS LIKE THE J.I. WHICH BASE THEIR STRUGGLE ON RELIGION – SPECIFICALLY ISLAM* ALTHOUGH MALAYSIA IS A MAJORITY MUSLIM COUNTRY, WITH ISLAM AS THE RELIGION OF THE FEDERATION, THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT COMPROMISED IN OUR RESPONSE TO THE THREAT POSED BY THE J.I. ORGANIZATION* WE HAVE BEEN QUICK NOT JUST TO ACT DECISIVELY AGAINST THIS GROUP, SEVERELY CRIPPLING THEIR NETWORK IN MALAYSIA, BUT WE HAVE ALSO MADE SURE THAT NO SUPPORT FOR THIS GROUP EXISTS IN MALAYSIA*

9. MY COUNTRY HAS A LONG HISTORY OF FIGHTING TERRORISTS – COMMUNIST INSURGENTS THEN, RADICAL MUSLIM GROUPS TODAY* WE REALISE THAT THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF DEFEATING TERRORISTS IS TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE DISCREDITED AND ARE DENIED ANY SUPPORT FROM THE PEOPLE* IF THEY ARE VILIFIED BY THE PEOPLE, AND THEIR CAUSE LOSES ITS CREDIBILITY, THEY WILL BE UNABLE TO RECRUIT MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS, THEY WILL BE STARVED OF FINANCIAL AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT, AND SOME OF THEIR MEMBERS MAY EVEN ABANDON THEIR ORGANIZATION*

10. WHEN WE BATTLED THE COMMUNIST TERRORISTS, IT WAS NECESSARY TO DEMONSTRATE THAT MALAYSIANS HAD A SECURE LIFE UNDER THE GOVERNMENT AND THERE WAS NOTHING THAT THEY COULD BRING THAT THE PEOPLE DID NOT ALREADY ENJOY* WE NEEDED TO PROVE THAT WE WERE A GOVERNMENT FOR ALL MALAYSIANS REGARDLESS OF RACE, RELIGION AND ETHNICITY, AND THAT ANYBODY WHO WANTED TO, COULD PROSPER AND SUCCESS IN MALAYSIA*

11. TODAY WE HAVE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT GROUPS LIKE THE J.I. ARE NOT FIGHTING FOR ISLAM, AND THAT THEIR OBJECTIVES HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ISLAM* MY GOVERNMENT HAS CLEARLY STATED THAT THERE IS NOTHING IN ISLAM THAT JUSTIFIES WHAT AL-QAEDA OR THE J.I. DOES* WE HAVE BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF PROJECTING THE TRUE IMAGE OF ISLAM, AT HOME AND TO THE WORLD – A RELIGION OF PEACE, PROGRESS AND TOLERANCE* A RELIGION AND CIVILISATION THAT IS ABLE TO COOPERATE AND COEXIST WITH OTHER FAITHS AND CIVILISATIONS*

12. ALTHOUGH J.I. MEMBERS ARE MUSLIMS, THIS HAS NOT IN ANY WAY WEAKENED MY GOVERNMENT'S RESOLVE IN FIGHTING THEM* OUR POLITICAL WILL HAS NOT BEEN COMPROMISED BECAUSE MALAYSIANS REALIZE THAT J.I. TERRORISTS AND OTHER MUSLIM TERRORIST GROUPS DO NOT SPEAK NOR ACT ON THEIR BEHALF*

13. HAVING SAID THIS, IF WE ARE TO BE ABLE TO BRING BACK A MORE SECURE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND FOR THOSE THAT INVEST AND DO BUSINESS IN OUR REGION, WE MUST BE AWARE THAT WHILE THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA DO NOT SUPPORT THE TERROR GROUPS, THEY SYMPATHIZE WITH SOME OF THE ISSUES THAT HAVE BEEN HIGHLIGHTED BY THESE GROUPS* THIS THEN COMES BACK TO THE NEED TO ADDRESS ROOT CAUSES OF TERRORISM* THERE ARE ROOT CAUSES THAT ARE LOCAL IN CONTEXT, UNIQUE TO THE INDIVIDUAL TERRORIST GROUPS THAT NEED TO BE RESOLVED AT A LOCAL, DOMESTIC LEVEL* THERE ARE ALSO ROOT CAUSES THAT ARE MORE UNIVERSAL IN NATURE* THESE INCLUDE ANGER TOWARDS A GLOBAL ORDER THAT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY UNILATERAL AND IMPERIAL, THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE CONTINUED OCCUPATION OF IRAQ AND THE VILIFICATION OF ISLAM IN THE AFTERMATH OF SEPTEMBER 11*

14. TERRORISM, WHETHER IT IS ON A GLOBAL OR REGIONAL LEVEL, CANNOT BE COUNTERED EFFECTIVELY WITHOUT LOOKING AT THE ROOT CAUSES* WE CAN ENHANCE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES OF ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES* WE CAN STEP UP INTELLIGENCE SHARING* WE CAN CHOKER THE FINANCES OF THESE GROUPS* BUT UNTIL AND UNLESS THERE ARE SERIOUS ATTEMPTS TO ADDRESS THE UNDERLYING ISSUES, THERE WILL BE SYMPATHIZERS, THERE WILL BE FOLLOWERS AND THERE WILL BE THOSE WHO WILL JOIN THESE TERRORIST GROUPS* WE CANNOT SECURE THE FUTURE BY MERELY ADDRESSING THE SYMPTOMS OF TERRORISM WITHOUT LOOKING AT WHAT IS CAUSING IT* I THEREFORE HOPE THAT THE ISSUE OF EFFECTIVELY COMBATING TERRORISM WILL CONTINUE TO BE A PRIORITY FOR GOVERNMENTS AND POLICY-MAKERS IN OUR REGION*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

15. THERE ARE OTHER SECURITY ISSUES THAT CONFRONT THE REGION WHICH DESERVE OUR ATTENTION* THE KOREAN PENINSULA REMAINS A DANGEROUS POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT* ALTHOUGH THE MULTILATERAL TALKS HELD IN BEIJING RECENTLY WAS A GOOD START, WE ARE FAR FROM ANY LASTING RESOLUTION OF THE SECURITY SITUATION IN NORTH KOREA* A NUCLEAR-ARMED NORTH KOREA IS

DETRIMENTAL TO THE SECURITY, NOT JUST OF NORTHEAST ASIA, BUT OF THE ENTIRE REGION AND THE WORLD* IN ADDRESSING THIS ISSUE, MALAYSIA CALLS FOR RESTRAINT ON ALL SIDES INVOLVED* AGGRESSIVE AND HAWKISH APPROACHES CAN ONLY AGGRAVATE AN ALREADY TENSE SITUATION* THERE NEEDS TO BE COMMITMENT FROM ALL PARTIES INVOLVED TO RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO FIND A CREDIBLE RESOLUTION TO THE CURRENT STAND-OFF*

16. THE ASIA-PACIFIC MUST ALSO ENCOURAGE STABILITY BETWEEN CHINA AND TAIWAN* CROSS-STRAITS TENSIONS HAVE, IN THE PAST, BEEN A GREAT SOURCE OF INSTABILITY IN THE REGION* WITH THE RISE OF CHINA AS AN ECONOMIC POWER AND AS A PREMIER DESTINATION OF FOREIGN INVESTMENTS, THERE IS GREAT HOPE THAT THE STABILITY THAT CURRENTLY CHARACTERISES CROSS-STRAITS RELATIONS CAN BE MAINTAINED* AGAIN, A SECURE ENVIRONMENT IN THIS AREA REQUIRES GREAT MODERATION, RESISTING ANY POLITICALLY EXPEDIENT SHOW OF AGGRESSIVENESS ON EITHER SIDE*

17. IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, INTER-STATE RELATIONS ARE PERCEPTIBLY MORE BENIGN* THE PROBLEMS ARE ESSENTIALLY DOMESTIC, BUT WITH THE POTENTIAL OF HAVING SERIOUS SPILLOVER EFFECTS TO THE REST OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGION* ALL STATES WILL HAVE TO CONTINUE TO WORK HARD AT NATION-BUILDING EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT THE REGION BECOMES A DYNAMIC COMMUNITY OF PEACE AND STABILITY, WITH THE CREDIBLE RESOLUTION OF LONG-STANDING POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF INSURGENCY, SEPARATISM AND SECTARIAN CONFLICT*

18. IN THIS REGARD, I WOULD LIKE TO SEE ASEAN AS THE FOCAL POINT, ONCE AGAIN, OF EFFORTS TO PROMOTE PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN THE REGION* ASEAN HAS BEEN THE BEDROCK OF COOPERATION IN THE REGION SINCE ITS INCEPTION, AND IS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STABILITY AND GOODWILL THAT EXISTS AMONG OUR NATIONS* IT IS THEREFORE ESSENTIAL THAT ASEAN REMAINS RELEVANT* THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM, A GLOBAL ORDER THAT THREATENS TO WEAKEN THE MULTILATERAL FRAMEWORK, THE MULTIPLICITY OF NON-STATE ACTORS, THE CHALLENGES OF A MORE LIBERALIZED GLOBAL ECONOMY, ALL NECESSITATE THE PRESERVATION OF ASEAN UNITY AND COHESION*

19. EFFORTS TOWARDS CREATING AN INTEGRATED ASEAN COMMUNITY MUST BE SUPPORTED BY ALL MEMBERS* IT MAKES SENSE POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY* I AM GLAD TO NOTE THAT THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THIS COMMON ENDEAVOUR ARE

BEING PUT IN PLACE WITH EFFORTS TO CREATE AN ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BY THE YEAR 2020 AND AN ASEAN SECURITY COMMUNITY*

20. APART FROM SHARING A COMMON DESTINY, ASEAN'S FUTURE PROSPERITY IS INEXTRICABLY LINKED TO ITS NORTHEAST ASIAN NEIGHBOURS* CHINA'S ENTRY INTO THE W.T.O. MAKES IT MORE RELEVANT FOR COUNTRIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND NORTHEAST ASIA TO ENHANCE THEIR COOPERATION IN ALL SPHERES* TOWARDS THIS END, THE STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF EAST ASIAN COOPERATION HAS NEVER BEEN SO VITAL AND TIMELY ESPECIALLY IN SAFEGUARDING ASEAN'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND THE WELL BEING OF ITS ENTIRE PEOPLE*

21. WITH THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION OF ASEAN+3 COOPERATION WITH THE CONVENING OF THE FIRST ASEAN+3 SUMMIT IN KUALA LUMPUR IN DECEMBER 1997, ASEAN+3 COOPERATION HAS RAPIDLY EXPANDED TO COVER MANY AREAS* THIS FORUM IS THEREFORE A CRUCIAL AND STRATEGIC ASPECT OF ASEAN'S REGIONAL COOPERATION EFFORTS, WHICH ALLOWS COUNTRIES IN EAST ASIA TO CONSULT AND DISCUSS PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE REGION AND THE WORLD AND, IF POSSIBLE, TO EVOLVE COMMON UNDERSTANDING AND APPROACHES IN ADDRESSING SUCH PROBLEMS* THEREFORE ASEAN WOULD NOT ONLY HAVE TO FURTHER EXPAND ASEAN+3 COOPERATION BUT EVENTUALLY WORK TOWARDS AN EAST ASIAN COMMUNITY – WITH ASEAN AT ITS CORE – AS A NATURAL COMPLEMENT TO THE EFFORTS AT BUILDING AN ASEAN COMMUNITY*

22. IT HAS OFTEN BEEN CITED THAT THE EUROPEAN UNION IS THE WORLD'S BEST EXAMPLE OF CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURE* IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, ASEAN HAS PLAYED THAT ROLE* THE BY-PRODUCTS OF ASEAN NAMELY, THE P.M.C., ASEAN+3 AND THE A.R.F. PROCESSES HAVE ALSO PLAYED CONFIDENCE BUILDING ROLES, NOT ONLY AMONG ASEAN MEMBERS, BUT COUNTRIES IN THE ENTIRE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION* THEREFORE BY EXTENSION, IT WOULD BE LOGICAL TO CONCLUDE THAT THE EVENTUAL CREATION OF AN EAST ASIAN COMMUNITY WOULD ALSO SERVE TO REDUCE TENSION AND POTENTIAL CONFLICTS IN THE GREATER ASIA-PACIFIC REGION* IT IS TOWARDS THIS FUTURE THAT ASEAN SHOULD NOW FOCUS*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

23. MY COUNTRY IS SEEN AS A GLOBALISATION HERETIC* THIS IS IN LARGE PART DUE TO THE STRONG VIEWS OUR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP HAS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY* IT IS ALSO DUE TO HOW WE HAVE DECIDED TO MANAGE OUR ECONOMY* THAT WE WERE ABLE TO THINK OUT OF THE BOX DURING THE ASIAN FINANCIAL CRISIS BY PURSUING RECOVERY POLICIES THAT WENT AGAINST CONVENTIONAL THINKING WAS LAMBASTED ROUNDLY IN THE REGION AND BEYOND* IN RETROSPECT I BELIEVE THAT MALAYSIA HAS DEMONSTRATED SOMETHING IMPORTANT AND RELEVANT: THAT WE MUST NOT BE DOGMATIC AND UNWAVERING IN PURSUING GLOBALISATION* THE EFFICIENCY OF MARKET FORCES CAN AND HAS WREAKED HAVOC IN OUR REGION* WE MUST BE PRACTICAL ABOUT WHAT WORKS, AND WHAT BRINGS THE GREATEST BENEFIT TO OUR PEOPLE*

24. MALAYSIA IS BY NO MEANS ANTI-GLOBALISATION AND ANTI-FREE TRADE* WE SIMPLY CANNOT AFFORD TO BE* WE ARE AMONG THE TOP 20 LARGEST GLOBALLY TRADING NATIONS* OUR GROWTH RELIES HEAVILY ON EXPORTS* UNDER THE ASEAN FREE TRADE AREA COMMITMENTS, MALAYSIA HAS INCLUDED SLIGHTLY OVER 97% OF OUR PRODUCTS INTO THE C.E.P.T. SCHEME OF WHICH 99% ARE AT DUTIES RANGING BETWEEN 0-5% AND 60% HAVE NO DUTIES AT ALL* WE STRONGLY SUPPORT ASEAN'S RESOLVE TO MOVE BEYOND TARIFF CUTTING WITH PROGRESS BEING MADE IN SERVICES AND INVESTMENT LIBERALISATIONS*

25. WE RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF FORGING GREATER LINKAGES WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF CREATING A LIBERALIZED TRADING ENVIRONMENT IN THE REGION* WE REALISE THE LIMITATIONS OF MULTILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENTS, LIKE THE W.T.O.* THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM IS STILL SEEN TO BE CORPORATE DRIVEN RATHER THAN DEVELOPMENT DRIVEN, WITH POWERFUL NATIONS AND CORPORATIONS WIELDING GREAT INFLUENCE* WHILE COMMITTING OURSELVES FULLY TO THE W.T.O. PROCESS, WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A NEED TO PURSUE REGIONAL AND BILATERAL INITIATIVES*

26. REGIONAL TRADING ARRANGEMENTS SUCH AS A.F.T.A. ALLOW COUNTRIES IN THE REGION TO BUILD ON THEIR STRENGTHS, TO COALESCE AND COUNTERWEIGHT THE MONOPOLY POWER OF LARGE TRADING BLOCS* AND TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE ARDUOUS AND, AT TIMES TILTED PROCESS TOWARDS MULTILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENTS, REGIONAL AND BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE CRUCIAL STEPPING STONES AND BUILDING BLOCKS TOWARDS GLOBAL FREE TRADE* THERE ARE KEY DEVELOPMENTS ON THIS FRONT WHICH ARE ENCOURAGING SIGNS THAT REGIONAL AND BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS CAN COMPLEMENT THE GREATER MULTILATERAL PROCESS* FOR EXAMPLE, ASEAN HAS POSITIONED ITSELF VIS-À-VIS CHINA THROUGH THE ASEAN-CHINA F.T.A. WHICH IS CURRENTLY BEING NEGOTIATED* BESIDES CHINA,

THERE ARE ALSO NEGOTIATIONS WITH JAPAN AND INDIA, AND INTEREST FROM THE U.S. AND THE E.U. TO CONCLUDE WITH ASEAN THE TRADE AND INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT* BILATERALLY, MALAYSIA IS EXPLORING STRENGTHENING ITS ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH JAPAN THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK AND WITH THE U.S. THROUGH A TRADE AND INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

27. GOING FORWARD, IF WE ARE TO REALIZE A VISION FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION; IF WE ARE GOING TO “SECURE THE FUTURE” AS THE THEME OF THIS MEETING PUTS IT, WE MUST SECURE OUR OWN RESPECTIVE FUTURES FIRST* IT IS PRECISELY BECAUSE OF THE GREATER LINKAGES, COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION WE HAVE FORGED THAT OUR OWN RESPECTIVE FORTUNES BEAR GREATLY ON OTHERS* ECONOMIC CRISIS IN ANY OF OUR COUNTRIES CAN AFFECT THE ENTIRE REGION* SIMILARLY, UNREST AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY CAN ALSO SEND SHOCKWAVES TO OUR NEIGHBOURS*

28. WHILE WE CALL FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL, WITH THE REASSERTION OF MULTILATERALISM AND A FAIRER PROCESS OF TRADE LIBERALISATION, WE MUST ENSURE THAT IT EXISTS AT HOME* REGIONAL STABILITY IS A FUNCTION OF THE STABILITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES THAT MAKE UP THE REGION* PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN THIS REGION CAN ONLY BE SUSTAINED WITH GOOD GOVERNANCE IN OUR COUNTRIES*

29. THIS IS SOMETHING THAT WE ALL NEED TO WORK AT* WHETHER IT IS THROUGH STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, TACKLING CORRUPTION, DEVOLVING POWER TO OUR PEOPLES, ACCOMMODATING AND CELEBRATING THE DIVERSITY OF OUR POPULATIONS, OR ADAPTING TO EVER-CHANGING ECONOMIC SITUATIONS, GOVERNMENTS MUST REMAIN RESPONSIVE AND CREDIBLE*

30. AT THIS TIME WHEN THE ONLY CERTAINTY IN THE WORLD IS UNCERTAINTY, GOVERNMENTS HAVE TO DEMONSTRATE FORESIGHT IN ADDRESSING LATENT TENSIONS, POLITICAL WILL IN TACKLING SENSITIVE ISSUES, AND RESOLVE IN RESISTING SHORT-TERM REMEDIES* NOW MORE THAN EVER, WHAT WE DO AT HOME AFFECTS OUR NEIGHBOURS* AND WHILE WE MAINTAIN THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERFERENCE, WE MUST ALL BE AWARE THAT WE INCREASINGLY LIVE IN A COMMON SPACE* IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THIS COMMON SPACE – IN SOUTHEAST ASIA,

EAST ASIA AND THE ASIA-PACIFIC, MUST BE A COMMUNITY OF EQUAL PARTICIPANTS,
RESPECTFUL OF ONE ANOTHER, WITH THE BELIEF THAT WE CAN ONLY LIVE
PEACEFULLY AND PROSPER IF EVERYONE ELSE IN OUR COMMUNITY DOES SO AS
WELL*

THANK YOU*