



MINISTRY OF NATIONAL UNITY

OFFICIATING SPEECH

BY
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MINISTER OF NATIONAL UNITY

FOR

MABC ANNUAL GALA DINNER

27 OCTOBER 2023 (FRIDAY)

8.00 PM

HILTON HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR

Thank you emcee.

SALUTATIONS

***Provided separately*

Salam perpaduan and Salam Malaysia MADANI.

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests,

1. I am delighted to address you tonight at the MABC Annual Gala Dinner, celebrating the strong and enduring ties between Malaysia and Australia. The rich cultural similarities, the shared values of diversity, and the historical significance of our relationship form the foundation of a strong and fruitful partnership. Allow me to expand on these talking points and highlight some of the remarkable initiatives that continue to strengthen the bond between our two nations.

CULTURAL SIMILARITIES BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND AUSTRALIA

2. **Multiculturalism:** Australia and Malaysia both take immense pride in their multicultural societies. We have opened our

hearts and homes to people from all corners of the world, creating vibrant and diverse communities.

3. **Love for Nature:** Our nations are blessed with breathtaking natural beauty and unique ecosystems. The orangutans of Malaysia and the kangaroos of Australia are just a glimpse into the wonders of our respective environments. Our shared commitment to environmental preservation unites us in a global mission to protect our planet.
4. **Passion for Sports:** Sports have always been a common thread between us. Our friendly yet competitive spirit on the international stage, such as the Olympics and Commonwealth Games, reflects our shared love for sports and physical activities.
5. **Expatriate Communities:** The presence of substantial expatriate communities from both Malaysia and Australia has enriched our cultural exchange. These communities serve as bridges of understanding, promoting people-to-people connections.

DIVERSITY IN AUSTRALIA

6. **Equality and Inclusivity:** Australia's commitment to equality and inclusivity serves as a beacon to the world. By upholding the principles of equality in law, Australia has created a welcoming atmosphere for all residents and visitors.
7. **Harmony Week:** Celebrations like Harmony Week, held annually in March, showcase the benefits of diversity and serve as an example for the world. It is a time to honor the various cultures that make up our societies.

HISTORY OF THE MALAYSIA-AUSTRALIA RELATIONSHIP

8. **Deep Historical Roots:** Our bilateral relationship traces its roots to the 1800s when Malay pearl divers ventured to Broome and Darwin, forming the basis of our diverse communities in Australia.
9. **World War II Allies:** Australia and Malaysia became staunch allies during World War II, with Australian troops fighting alongside Malaysians to liberate the region from the Imperial Japanese Army.

10. **Diplomatic Relations:** Our formal diplomatic relations started in the mid-1950s, with the establishment of high commissions in each other's capitals.
11. **Strong Defense Ties:** Our defense ties have remained strong, spanning from the Malayan Emergency to modern-day collaborations through the Five Powers Defense Arrangement, securing our shared region and promoting peace.
12. **Economic Cooperation:** In recent decades, Malaysia and Australia have deepened economic cooperation through trade agreements, including the Malaysia-Australia Free Trade Agreement and participation in regional trade pacts like the CPTPP and RCEP.

EDUCATION LINKS

13. **Education Collaboration:** Our nations have made significant strides in education collaboration. There are Australian university campuses in Malaysia, and many other institutions offer online or exchange programs for Malaysian students.

14. **Student Mobility:** The increasing number of Malaysian students studying in Australia, totaling 15,420 in 2022, reflects the trust and quality of education shared between our countries.

CONCLUSION

15. In conclusion, the ties that bind Malaysia and Australia are both diverse and deep-rooted, extending beyond culture, history, and education. As we stand at the crossroads of a bright future, our nations continue to work together to build stronger relations and promote shared values of unity, diversity, and prosperity.
16. May this Gala Dinner mark the continuation of our shared journey towards a closer, more prosperous, and harmonious Malaysia-Australia partnership. Thank you.

Thank you.