



**SPEECH BY  
YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM  
PRIME MINISTER**

**DINNER CELEBRATION FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND  
CHINA**

**20<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2024 (THURSDAY)**

**KUALA LUMPUR**

1. *Bagi meraikan sahabat dan juga pemimpin Negara China yang berkunjung secara rasmi ke Malaysia.*

Ladies and gentlemen,

2. 50 years ago, Malaysia under the leadership of the late Tunku Abdul Razak and the People's Republic of China proclaimed the initiation of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Over the past half century, our relations have evolved from tentative beginnings to what is now a comprehensive strategic partnership. We are here today to celebrate the glorious past, a flourishing present and a promising future. It is a fitting tribute to that partnership that we join this evening by my firm friend and counterpart, Premier Li Qiang.
3. How do we justify this historic milestone? The starting point is to recognise and to treasure the fact that the remarkable step taken by our two nations in 1974 was far from inevitable. At the time it took immense courage and wisdom from the leaders on both sides to make a leap of faith and forge a new relationship across what was once an impenetrable ideological war.

4. The actions demonstrate that the future is not claimed by those who dwelled in the past or fear the unknown. It is the bold dreamers and the brave souls who dare to strive that shape the world and make it their own.
5. It was with that valiant and visionary spirit that the Malaysian Prime Minister at the time, Tun Abdul Razak travelled to Beijing on May 28th, 1974. The following day, he stood face to face with Chairman Mao Zedong. On May 31st, amidst the Grand Wall of the Great Wall of the People, Tun Razak and Premier Zhao Enlai signed the communique that established diplomatic relations between Malaysia and China.
6. Though the past ahead was not set in stone. History was made and the ark relations between China and maritime Southeast Asia was altered forever. Since that fateful day, our bilateral partnership has blossomed from the seat of political power to the bustling of the economic markets, to the hallowed halls of academia and beyond.
7. It will be an understatement to say that China has developed by leaps and bounds during that period. When our relations were initially forged in 1974, it would be stretching the facts to say that China's economy

constituted even 1% of the global GDP. Today, China account for 18% of the global economic output, and what is particularly satisfying is their success in combating and elevating the issues of poverty and development. Therefore, it is worth recalling and celebrating the fact that Malaysia has always been at a stronger tie with China and ASEAN.

8. In July 1991, the then Foreign Minister the People's Republic of China, Qian Qichen has attended the opening session of the 24th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting here in Kuala Lumpur. This path breaking move came as an initiative of Malaysia. It marks the start of China-ASEAN dialogue relations. I mentioned this other milestone to emphasise the Malaysia views in relations with China, not merely under bilateral terms but through a comprehensive strategic lens. We believe that it is in Malaysia's strategic interests to force amity and cooperation with China and not against it. We make every effort to diplomatically engage with China and integrate it into regional affairs, not because it is always sought for, but because it is crucial for our shared future.

9. To commemorate the 10th anniversary of Malaysia-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, last year, I had the opportunity to embark on several visits to China, an historic meeting with President Xi Jinping and as well as Premier Li Qiang in Beijing and later in Nanning. I'm glad to know that those visits have further strengthened and advanced better cooperation, especially in trading, investments, education, agriculture, tourism, food security, digital economy and energy transition.
10. Our common robust trade relationship is underscored by China being Malaysia's largest trading partner for the last 15 years demonstrates the profound depth and significance of our economic ties and the firm and fiercely independent foreign policy.
11. As the Belt and Road Initiative catalyses the enhancement of international connectivity and cooperation and we have seen together with Premier Li Qiang the impressive and successful performance of the ECRL project and also the Two Countries Twin Parks that we now advance it to Two Countries Multiple Parks and I'm sure Premier would want to include Kuching into that.

12. That provides a tremendous economic boost, particularly in Malaysia's East Coast region in the context ECRL. Additionally, the ongoing East Coast Rail Link and the automatic high-tech value in Tanjung Malin projects are vibrant drivers of growth and job creation.
  
13. The time with China is not about short-term needs, it is a curing the vital long term interests of Malaysia and Malaysians. The guiding style of my actions is to nurture a Malaysia that is respected globally where the achievements of our children are not transient but will endure for generations to come. The MADANI government will work closely with Malaysia's friends and partners worldwide to pursue these dreams. And I reiterate why the relations with China, particularly President Xi Jinping is remarkable and outstanding. Here comes a government and a leader who takes not only in terms of trade and investments, but also a shared future. And beyond that, one of the few outstanding statesmen in the world that talks about civilization understanding and civilizational dialogue. Thank you very much Premier Li Chiang.

14. I, therefore, in conclusion would call on all Malaysians as well as our counterparts in China to summon the courage and wisdom that have fortified our times for generations. In fact, for centuries from the days of the famous days of Admiral Zheng He to Malacca in this region to fortify our times from the very beginning and forge a new era of times between our two great nations Malaysia and China.

*Xièxie.*