

## DOCUMENTATION

### *Address by President Reagan to the Meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers, Bali, Indonesia, 1 May 1985*

THE PRESIDENT: Mr Vice President, ASEAN Foreign Ministers, ladies and gentlemen, I appreciate this opportunity to discuss with you the wide range of issues that are of mutual concern to our peoples. Since coming to the Presidency, I have stressed enterprise, not redistribution, as the best means of improving the economic well-being of any country. I've emphasized the importance of free people cooperating together to meet the serious challenges that are loose in the world today. Our talks, then, have particular relevance. Since its founding in 1967, ASEAN has been a shining example of enterprise and cooperation.

It was my honor earlier to have met and conferred with President Soeharto. Our discussions were friendly and carried out with the mutual respect one would expect between the leaders of two great nations. I am confident that our discussions will be in the same spirit. I mean our discussions here. And I'm looking forward to hearing your views.

You know, there is a story back in the United States about two men out in the woods on a hike and they saw a large bear coming over the hill directly towards them. And one of them sat down, took off his knapsack, raced in, got out a pair of tennis shoes and started to put them on. And the other one looked and says, "You don't think that putting on those tennis shoes — you're going to be able to outrun that bear?" He said, "I don't have to outrun the bear — I only have to outrun you." (Laughter.)

Well, if there is a bear coming over the hill, unlike that hiker, the American people can be counted on to stick with our friends. We won't put on running shoes. (Laughter.) Standing together, we can make certain the people of this region remain free and secure.

Today there is an ever-increasing recognition that our futures are linked in so many ways. Two ASEAN members, Thailand and the Philippines, are treaty allies. All of you are friends with whom we work closely. The United States sees ASEAN's unity and decisiveness as an example to other free people. The ASEAN collective voice of responsible international behavior has been amplified throughout the world, and I am here to listen to you. Support for and cooperation with ASEAN is a linchpin of American Pacific policy.

Nowhere has your leadership been more inspiring than in molding the world's response to the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia. After the collapse of South Vietnam, ASEAN took a strong stand against Vietnamese expansionism. When Vietnam invaded Cambodia in 1978, you recognized the threat and acted quickly. The strength of your commitment and the direction you've provided on this vital issue have been much admired by the United States.

In 1981 ASEAN organized the International Conference on Kampuchea. We continue to support the basic principles for the settlement of the Cambodian situation agreed upon at that Conference — the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese forces under international supervision; the restoration of Cambodian independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; a Cambodian government chosen in free elections under international auspices.

ASEAN's efforts are consistent with American desires to bring peaceful resolution to the tragic cycle of events that has plagued the Cambodian people. We continue to believe a negotiated settlement with ASEAN is in Vietnam's interest, and in the best interest of everyone in the region. We are prepared to participate constructively in a regional settlement and call upon Vietnam to answer your reasonable proposals for negotiations. The contrast between the economic conditions prevailing in Vietnam and ASEAN is striking. Their continued occupation of Cambodia is simply widening this gap each day. Cambodia is, of course, something we will discuss further this afternoon, along with other issues of regional and global importance.

In approaching our discussions, let me just say, the United States considers itself a Pacific Rim country, with a heavy stake in the outcome of events in this region. The Philippines, for example, is a country with which the United States has deep and abiding ties. We hope that recent events there will increase the chances of unity through democracy and enable the Philippine people, to a greater degree, to join in the economic advances so apparent throughout the region. Before I left Washington, we announced a Philippine aid package to help our Filipino friends during this difficult period.

This region's economic stature continues to grow. Collectively, ASEAN is now the United States' fifth largest trading partner. Our trade with you, as with all of East Asia and the Pacific, is growing faster than with any other region of the world. When this organization was founded back in 1967, our annual trade was running at less than \$2 billion. In 1985, U.S.-ASEAN trade reached \$23.5 billion.

As you are all aware, there is growing pressure in many industrial countries to restrict trade. Well, I'm certain you agree that any substantial cut in the commerce between nations would be an unmitigated disaster. It is only right that we are meeting prior to the 12th economic summit in Tokyo. One of the messages I am bringing to the economic summit concerns the necessity of keeping open the avenues of world trade. This is something that the United States and ASEAN should work closely together to achieve. It is fundamental to the well-being of both our peoples.

As part of my preparation for the economic summit, I'm also looking forward to hearing today your thoughts on issues that the summit conferees should keep in mind as concerns of the countries of ASEAN. We are pleased, as a Pacific Rim partner, to take your ideas to the meetings in Tokyo.

Our progress has been based on freeing, not restricting, man's commerce, energy, and creativity. A strong commitment to the principles of freedom and independence and a fundamental trust in free enterprise and open markets have propelled ASEAN countries far beyond what others would have thought possible. The decision-makers of your countries have proven their wisdom and good sense. But I have a favor to ask. I think the leaders of the developing world could use your advice. You know, give a man a fish and he won't be hungry today, but teach him how to fish and he'll never be hungry again. You can do a great service by telling others, especially those trying to improve their lot, how to follow the path of personal incentives to economic progress.

I would like to mention the humanitarian issue of great personal concern to me, my administration, and the American people. It is about our men still missing in action from the Vietnam War. Vietnam's recent apparent attempt to link this last vestige of the war to other issues is a great disappointment to us. We were pleased with the evident progress over the past year. It indicated Hanoi had agreed with us that resolution of this issue was in their national interest. We appreciate all that you have done to help us on this, and we hope that Vietnam will soon resume these important talks.

In closing, I would like to say the United States is proud to be a partner with ASEAN in the quest for peace, freedom and greater prosperity. I am looking forward to our meeting this afternoon and to the continuing close relationship between our governments and people.

Thank you all and God bless you.

SOURCE: Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 1 May 1985.