



United Nations

Press Release Secretary-General

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SECRETARY-GENERAL HAILS MALAYSIA'S CONSTRUCTIVE, COMMITTED ROLE

AS HE RECEIVES GIFT TO UN FROM PRIME MINISTER

Secretary-General Kofi Annan made the following remarks upon receiving Malaysia's gift to the United Nations today, 25 September:

I am delighted and honoured to accept, on behalf of the United Nations, this beautiful gift from the Government and the people of Malaysia.

I can think of no object that better symbolizes the many precious attributes of Malaysia than the gift you are giving us today. This *tepak sireh*, exquisitely crafted in an ancient tradition, embodies the rich culture, art and history of your country. With its many vessels, designed to hold a range of different ingredients, it captures the rich diversity of the Malaysian nation. As an object traditionally used for welcome and hospitality, it stands for communication and harmony among peoples and you, Mr. Prime Minister, stressed that this morning.

There is no more fitting or important message that Malaysia could send to the world at this difficult time in human affairs.

That message is well in keeping with Malaysia's constructive and committed role as a Member State of the United Nations -- as a contributor to United Nations peace operations; and as a leading voice for developing and non-aligned nations; as well as a promoter of dialogue and understanding among the peoples of the world.

That makes your nation particularly well equipped to host next month's summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which -- given the events of the past year in your region and beyond -- promises to be one of the most important in the history of the OIC.

So let me take this occasion to express my gratitude for all that Malaysia has contributed to the United Nations and to the world.

Mr. Prime Minister, as you attend your last General Assembly as head of Malaysia's Government, let me also thank you personally for your long-standing support of this Organization and for the contributions you have made to your own country and to the region. We applaud your leadership.

And may this *tepak sireh* inspire our staff and visitors alike as a symbol of harmony in diversity.

Ribuan terima kasih. Thank you very much.

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