

WELCOMING REMARKS
BY
DATUK SERI DR. RONALD KIANDEE
DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PARLIAMENT MALAYSIA
AT
PGA PARLIAMENTARY SOUTH-EAST ASIA SUB-REGIONAL SEMINAR ON THE
INTERNATIONAL RULE OF LAW AND THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS
HOSTED BY THE PARLIAMENT OF MALAYSIA
IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE COALITION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL
CRIMINAL COURT (CICC)
ON
30 JULY 2015
9.30
VENUE: *LE MERIDIEN HOTEL*,
KUALA LUMPUR

Honourable Chairman

Your Excellencies'

Respected Honourable Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed an honour for the Parliament of Malaysia to play host to this important and timely seminar. The landscape that beholds me right now, enables me to ascertain with a certain degree of accuracy and certainty that this gathering is a perfect amalgamation of noble intentions, by people no less noble than yourselves, in the pursuit of upholding the rule of law and the protection of the rights of ordinary civilians.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Seminar is most appropriate and timely, in view of the fact that eight hundred years ago in the same month of July, the greatest constitutional document of all times, the *Magna Carta* was written. It gave birth to contractual form, the idea and notion that

the law stood over and above the government. It is from this 'Great Charter' that ultimately flowed the rights and freedoms, namely equality above the law, *habeas corpus*, free and fair elections, uncensored newspapers, security of property, fair trials, free worship, free association, free speech and so forth.

Your relentless championing and campaigning for the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the ICC, therefore falls squarely within the fundamentals enshrined in the *Magna Carta*.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I must admit that I am personally overwhelmed with a sense of pride, to stand here this morning. This sense of pride emanates from the fact that, despite all the obstacles and hurdles, you have relentlessly, selflessly and dauntlessly pursued your cause. You have made unprecedented achievements over the years as well. Through your dedicated labours, you have steered the challenging task with much admired patience and resilience.

Rest assured that I believe and am convinced that your efforts will not go to waste and would soon gain tremendous support and bear fruit. To pluck an example at random, the nuclear accord reached on 14 July this year is the dramatic climax of the long-running nuclear talks. I see the strategic importance of the ICC. You as Parliamentarians can negotiate from a position of advantage, strength and principle.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Whether you find a way around your respective country's reluctance or simply wait patiently, your cause will only get stronger with time. You should move forward in achieving your objectives without fear in any one of you, without hypocrisy and avarice. This Seminar could represent a seminal achievement in the history of ICC negotiations. It is my sincere hope that you are able to reach agreements and consensus which guarantee your interests.

I know that the ICC serves as a permanent international monitoring body. Persuade policy-makers to change their stance and take, on the ICC. What you need might be years of patient diplomacy. When countries realise they have reached a turning point, they would be compelled to rectify the ICC.

However, allow me to express a word of caution. While it is important to be vigilant, it is also important to be realistic. In your efforts at persuasion of your governments, you need to tread with care and sensitivity. You must ensure that your demands do not run contrary to the government's existing rules of law, regulations and their foreign policies.

With the above thoughts for you to ponder upon, on behalf of my colleagues and fellow Members of the Malaysian Parliament, I extend a very warm welcome to each and every one of you and hope that you will all have fruitful and beneficial discussions. This Seminar, offers an opportunity to move a step further in the right direction and you should not hesitate to seize it.

Thank you.