

Mr. President,

15. Regrettably, as always the case, where developing countries are concerned, everything we do is examined for faults by groups and certain countries. With regard to Malaysia, there have been efforts from the outside to instigate non-violent indigenous people into claiming for themselves huge tracts of land as their natural domain. It has been suggested that these people should be left alone in their natural surroundings and the government has no business in trying to bring them out of the jungle and to join other members of the society. It is curious that in the countries of these outside groups, no one is being encouraged to go back to live in forests and the indigenous people there in those countries are in many ways second class citizens.

Mr. President,

16. The government of Malaysia is confident that it can resolve any kind of problem in relation to its communities and people. We can do this without interference and harassment from outside. We are a country at peace within our society and will welcome back the few that feel differently or have grievances. I direct this specifically to my indigenous brother, Anderson Mutang Urud of Sarawak, who is here with us. I appeal to him as he is himself not living in the forest but has chosen the modern mainstream to examine how well off the other indigenous groups in Malaysia are after making the choice to change and modernize. I can assure him that the Malaysian government's commitment to the sustainable management of forests made in Rio will ensure that the forests of Sarawak will not disappear as he fears.

Thank you, Mr. President.