

2006

PRESS RELEASE

THE CHRISTIAN FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA NATIONAL DAY MESSAGE

In conjunction with the 49th Anniversary of our National Day, August 31st 2006, the Executive Committee of the Christian Federation of Malaysia issues this special message.

Once again, with joy and thanksgiving in our hearts, we join our fellow Malaysians in celebrating our 49th National Day. We offer our prayers of thanksgiving to our Almighty God, for blessing our nation with growth, progress and stability over the years, which has brought great benefit and prosperity to many.

"The earth has yielded its increase; God has blessed us." (Ps. 67:6)

The **spirit** of "Merdeka", first uttered 49 years ago, continues to be our inheritance and aspiration as a nation today.

When our nation became independent from colonial power, the various ethnic and religious communities came together to pledge to build a united and resilient nation, where the invaluable contribution of each community in the service of all, would be recognized and appreciated. Where will we be today, if not for the hardwork, sacrifice and fraternity of our people and leaders, committed to build a Malaysia for all Malaysians.

Therefore on our National Day, we shall celebrate our "diversity in unity" built on the foundation of our Rukunegara.

*"Let each of you look not to your own interests,
but to the interest of others" (Phil. 2:4).*

The concept of independence is also very closely linked to the more powerful concept of "human freedom". The National Constitution, our document of destiny, was ingeniously crafted by our founding fathers to not only reflect the diversity of our nation, but also to protect the essential element interwoven into all human rights which is freedom.

The fundamental liberties guaranteed to every citizen are spelt out in over 20 articles in our constitution. "Merdeka" should continue to assure that every citizen in our country shall live in freedom and enjoy a quality of life, that shall not be hampered by fear, threat, or, restrictions.

It is the responsibility of all families to nurture their children to cherish the **spirit** of "Merdeka", so that our nation will continue to be strong.

There are daunting challenges ahead for our nation. It will require the commitment and aspiration of all. We must face the challenges that threaten our freedom; cultivate the common moral ground that can nourish our mutual relations; and, reaffirm shared

common values that can sustain responsible and meaningful encounters and dialogue even in the most difficult of circumstances

As churches we pledge our loyalty to the nation and commit ourselves to the work that will preserve and promote the spirit of Merdeka to our sons and daughters.

In our prayers we uphold the King and the Sultans, the government and the people, and seek God's blessings to be on all.

In raising the "Jalur Gemilang", we stand side-by-side our fellow Malaysians and proudly celebrate our multi-ethnic, multi-religious Malaysia; a blessed country where justice and peace shape our destiny.

***'Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other'
(Ps. 85:10).***

Bishop Dr. Paul Tan Chee Ing, SJ
Chairman
and members of the Executive Committee

30th August, 2006