

SPEECH ON THE OCCASION OF CONFERRING THE HONORARY DOCTORATE TO  
H. E. TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD  
PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA  
IN THE PERIOD FROM 1981 – 2003

Prof. Dr Faruk Čaklovica, rector

YOUR EXCELLENCY TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD, B&H MINISTER OF DEFENSE MR. SELMO CIKOTIĆ, THE STATE CANTONAL AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS, SENATORS, DEANS, YOUR EXCELLENCIES, DEAR STUDENTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Before we start, I wish you Good morning and pleasant moments during the ceremony!

On behalf of all professors, staff, and students of the University of Sarajevo, I have the honor to wish a warmly welcome to His Excellency TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD, Prime Minister of Malaysia in the period from 1981 – 2003, Her Excellency Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, the wife of Prime Minister, the members of the delegation, and all of you who came today.

Welcome to the oldest University in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the beginnings of academic community date back to the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. The official beginning of our teaching and research activities at the University is connected to the year of 1949. The establishment of the University of Sarajevo was an evidence of general social and cultural emancipation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and represented an important constant of her sovereignty and her development.

Today, among the member institutions of the University of Sarajevo are 20 faculties, 3 academies, 4 institutes, 4 University centers, National and University Library, Clinical Centre and the Students' Parliament. The Faculty of Islamic Sciences has become a University of Sarajevo's member institution, and this year, we expect the Catholic Theological Faculty to do so. Currently, we have 40000 students studying at the University, 1302 professors and associates and 900 non-academic staff in the teaching process.

During a very difficult period of aggression from 1992 to 1995; the period of 1479 days of the total siege of the city and of the University, the professors, associates, staff, and students did not stop working. Victim of the aggression, the University of Sarajevo raised up to become a hero of defense of academic dignity and its spiritual and social mission. During this period, 900 professors and associates left the University, while 143 students, 53 professors, and 61 associates were killed.

Despite of the atrocious war, the University of Sarajevo managed to keep multiethnic structure of teachers, as well as students. We are very proud of this, because the plurality makes an integral part of our culture and tradition for centuries.

After the Dayton Peace Accords, we have accepted every challenge and obligation that stem from Bologna Declaration and embedded them into our Higher Education system. By doing so, the academic community of B&H provides the support for quicker integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European Union.

Till today, 140000 undergraduates, 4.128 masters of sciences and arts, and 2.401 doctors of sciences and arts, obtained their degrees from the University of Sarajevo. We have published several thousands of textbooks, books and journals, scientific papers, and have implemented thousands of international and local scientific projects.

Up to now, we have signed 92 agreements on international cooperation with prestigious universities from all continents, including the 4 agreements on cooperation with following universities from Malaysia: Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, Kuala Lumpur, University Sains Malaysia, Penang, National Defense University of Malaysia and with the University Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Indeed, it is special honor for us to have H.E. TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD as a candidate for the University of Sarajevo's honorary doctorate. In the world of modern politics, H.E. TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD occupies a special place of the most successful Prime Minister of today, whose prudent decisions and swift actions, during his term in the office as the Prime Minister of Malaysia, transformed his homeland from the state of high backwardness into the one of most developed world countries. Particularly, during that period and later, You led the most decisive and unselfish campaign for progress, peace and prosperity in the world.

Your Excellency: You are coming from the country that was , during the most difficulty historic period both for Bosnia and Herzegovina and her existence, a loyal friend of Bosnian people, full of sympathy for their pain and suffering.

Malaysia is one of the countries that provided significant support to the higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It provided free studies and accommodation for several hundreds of undergraduate and postgraduate students from B&H. These experts are in B&H today, working at very important positions, incorporating the knowledge gained directly into the development of B&H society, thus leading it towards developed and modern world.

We would also like to remind that a friendly Malaysia provided strong and unconditional support in reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina. People of Bosnia and Herzegovina are eternally grateful for the provided help, and as such, they will never forget it.

Co-operation with Malaysia is very important for our University and for Bosnia and Herzegovina. During a long period, Malaysia has been an important contributor to democratisation, stability, and world progress and peace at the international political scene.

Your Excellency, let me wish to You and Your family, good health and success in all fields. To the friendly people of Malaysia, I wish for happy and safe future.

Thank You very much!

Sarajevo, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Bosnia & Herzegovina