

PART I

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS LEADING TO THE
KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION**

**"Gajah Sama Gajah Berjuang
Pelandok mati di tengah-tengah"
(When two elephants fight, it is the
mousedeer in the middle who gets hurt)**

- old Malay saying

INTRODUCTION

THE KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION

On the 27th of November 1971 the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia and a Special Envoy of Thailand met in Kuala Lumpur and signed a Declaration now called the Kuala Lumpur Declaration. It is in this Declaration that they expressed their determination to have South East Asia recognised and respected as a zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference by outside powers. Let us consider the factors that led the five countries to make this Declaration.

Comparatively speaking most of the countries in South-East Asia are newly independent. They are all in various stages of economic development, intensely involved in the task of nation-building and pre-occupied in giving substance and strength to their independence in striving towards these objectives each is faced with a number of problems some peculiar to itself and others common to all. In this respect Malaysia for example is faced with a number of challenges - the challenge of diversification which is to correct the imbalance in the economy and reduce over-dependence on certain commodities, the challenge of economic imbalance between races, the challenge of modernisation and not least the challenge of developing and evolving a system