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The 1974 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service

RESPONSE of M. S. Subbulakshmi

Ramon Magsaysay Award Presentation Ceremonies

31 August 1974, Manila, Philippines

I feel deeply honored to be receiving this Award and I accept the honor in all humility.

I am extremely happy to have come to this beautiful country. I find the landscape enchanting with its beach, green lawns and avenues, and the people cheerful, friendly and hospitable. I feel not only quite at home but that we are of one family.

Your great President Ramon Magsaysay was a shining personality and leader who had arisen in our midst in this part of Asia. We knew of the ideals of personal integrity, the sense of truth and justice, that he strove to establish in the short time he was your president. I offer my salutations to him. I also offer my salutations to your national hero Dr. Jose P. Rizal.

Naturally my reverential memory now hovers around Mahatma Gandhi who was the apostle of Peace on Earth, beloved Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of the Indian Republic, and Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, affectionately called Rajaji. It was my singular good fortune to have come under the loving spell of all three. I offer my deepest homage to this trinity.

My all I owe to my husband, Sri T. Sadasivam. By his loving care he is my parent; by his unerring guidance he is my preceptor.

Indian music is orientated solely to the end of divine communion. If I have done something in this respect, it is entirely due to the Grace of the Almighty who has chosen my humble self as a tool. But He is beyond my gratitude. Yet, in a way, I take Him to have come within my reach in the benign personality of the Sage of Kanchi, His Holiness Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Sankaracharya, who is divinity in flesh and blood, now in his 81st year. I offer my obeisance to the Sage from the core of my being, and pray that he bless me to deserve the honor done to me.

Once again, I wish to express to you all my deep sense of gratitude for honoring me with this Award.