Nearly two-and-a-half years after opposition gains in the momentous March 2008 elections, and 12 years after the first cry of reformasi, politics in Malaysia appears frozen. Everything is seen from a divisive, partisan perspective and, worse still, few substantive changes have been made. The opposition Pakatan Rakyat has recently been hit by a series of defections, but its capacity to surprise cannot be ignored. The ground is shifting. With rumours of a snap election before the due date of 2013, could the opposition defeat Malaysia's National Front coalition, the ruling party since independence in 1957? Can Pakatan Rakyat survive, thrive, and govern? What are the consequences of the standoff for society and the economy in the long run?

Liew Chin Tong was elected on the ticket of the Democratic Action Party (DAP) as Member of the Malaysian Federal Parliament for Bukit Bendera in the March 2008 election. Since 1999, Chin Tong has served the DAP in various capacities and is now a Member of its Central Executive Committee, serving as International Secretary.

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