

FROM HASHIM MAKARUDDIN

BUCHAREST, MAY 18 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS EXPLAINED TO THE LEADERS OF YUGOSLAVIA, ROMANIA AND TURKEY ABOUT A NEW STRATEGY TO HELP SOLVE THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS WHO ACCOMPANIED HIM ON HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE THREE COUNTRIES, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID TODAY THAT THE STRATEGY WAS NOT A FINAL ONE BUT ONE WHICH WOULD HAVE A GREATER CHANCE OF SUCCESS.

THE PRIME MINISTER ENDED HIS THREE-DAY VISIT TO ROMANIA TODAY. HE HAD VISITED TURKEY AND YUGOSLAVIA.

LAST NIGHT DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HELD AN HOUR-LONG MEETING WITH ROMANIAN PRESIDENT NICOLAE CEAUSESCU AT HIS RESIDENCE. IN THE EVENING HE VISITED THE PETROCHEMICAL COMPLEX IN THE PRAHOVA DISTRICT, ABOUT 60 KM FROM HERE.

DURING HIS VISITS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR EXCHANGED IDEAS WITH THE LEADERS OF THE THREE COUNTRIES ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES.

HE SAID THAT THE STRATEGY TO HELP SOLVE THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM COULD NOT BE ANNOUNCED TO THE PUBLIC.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED, THE STRATEGY HAD ALREADY BEEN TOLD TO THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO) REPRESENTATIVE AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC) ENCIK HABIB CHATTI AND BANGLADESH FOREIGN MINISTER ENCIK A.R. SHAMUD DOHA WHEN HE VISITED THE COUNTRY RECENTLY.

ON KAMPUCHEA, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT MALAYSIA DID NOT STATE THAT HENG SAMRIN SHOULD NOT AT ALL TAKE PART IN NEGOTIATIONS TO HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF HIS COUNTRY.

"BUT THE MAIN QUESTION WE POSED IS THAT VIETNAM MUST WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM KAMPUCHEA," HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT ONCE THIS WAS DONE THEN MALAYSIA MIGHT CONSIDER WHETHER HENG SAMRIN SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS OR NOT.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE LEADERS OF THE THREE COUNTRIES SHARED THE SAME VIEWS WITH MALAYSIA THAT BILATERAL RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SOUTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE WAS IMPORTANT.

THEY BELIEVED THAT IF DIRECT REATIONS COULD BE FURTHER ENHANCED, IT COULD FORGE CLOSER ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND HELP REDUCE THE DEPENDENCE OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON THE DEVELOPED NATIONS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE EXPLAINED TO THE LEADERS OF THE THREE COUNTRIES THAT MALAYSIA WAS NOT KEEN ON MULTI-LATERAL NEGOTIATIONS FOR ULTIMATELY IT WOULD BECOME A FORUM FOR ISSUING STATEMENTS.

SUCH NEGOTIATIONS COULD ONLY BRING LIMITED RESULTS, HE ADDED.
--BERNAMA. 1845/WS