

MAHATHIR

(EMBARGO: FOR AUTOMATIC RELEASE AT 5 A.M. MALAYSIAN TIME TOMORROW,
JAN. 24)

FROM EFFENDI ARIFFIN

PARIS, JAN. 23 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HERE TONIGHT THAT MALAYSIA WANTS TO ENTER INTO GENUINE PARTNERSHIP WITH COUNTRIES BOTH IN THE EAST AND WEST TO ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE.

HE SAID THAT MALAYSIA, AS A GROWING NATION, COULD OFFER OPPORTUNITIES TO COUNTRIES WHICH HAD THE TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW AND READY TO TAKE PART IN MALAYSIA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

"WE CERTAINLY WELCOME FRENCH INTEREST IN THIS FIELD," HE SAID AT A DINNER GIVEN IN HIS HONOUR BY FRENCH PREMIER PIERRE MAUROY.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS DELEGATION OF 20 OFFICIALS ARRIVED LAST NIGHT FOR A FOUR-DAY VISIT TO FRANCE. DR. MAHATHIR HAD JUST CONCLUDED A 10-DAY VISIT TO THE CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES IN THE COURSE OF A FOUR-NATION TOUR WHICH WILL TAKE HIM TO SWITZERLAND THIS WEEK.

REFERRING TO COOPERATION BETWEEN FRANCE AND MALAYSIA IN EDUCATION, HE SAID: "OUR TWO SIDES ARE IN THE PROCESS OF FINALISING THE AGREEMENT FOR THE PROGRAMME WHEREBY MALAYSIAN STUDENTS WILL PURSUE THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION IN FRANCE". - MORE 2358 BW

ZCZC N160 (S)

MAHATHIR 2 PARIS (EMBARGO)

HE BELIEVED THAT THE PROGRAMME WOULD HELP ESTABLISH THE FOUNDATION FOR MUCH CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

HE HOPED THAT THE MALAYSIA-FRANCE TRADE WOULD BE EXPANDED.

MALAYSIA AND ITS PARTNERS IN ASEAN VALUED THE COOPERATION AND TRADE BETWEEN THE EEC AND ASEAN, HE SAID AND ADDED THAT THE DIALOGUE AND REGULAR MEETINGS BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS WOULD PROVE TO BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL.

REFERRING TO WORLD ISSUES, DR. MAHATHIR EXPRESSED MALAYSIA'S CONCERN OVER THE SUSPENSION OF TALKS ON ARMS REDUCTION BETWEEN THE TWO SUPERPOWERS. - MORE 0000 BW

MAHATHIR 3 PARIS (EMBARGO)

HE ALSO SAID THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE WHICH HAD BEEN THE CORE OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT REMAINED UNRESOLVED AND MALAYSIA HAD URGED FOR THE CONVENING OF THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE ON WEST ASIA AS CALLED FOR BY THE DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE GENEVA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON OF PALESTINE.

+WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE PROVIDES THE BASIS OF A JUST AND COMPREHENSIVE PEACE AND WOULD LEAD TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A INDEPENDENT STATE OF PALESTINE,+ HE SAID.

REFERRSNG TO THE CRISIS IN LEBANON, WE APPEALED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED TO RENEW EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND PEACE IN LEBANON.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE UNRESOLVED PROBLEM OF KAMPUCHEA WAS A SOURCE OF INSTABILITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA THAT *IT THREATENS ALL OF US IN THE REGION WITH THE UNWANTED POSSIBILITY OF BIG POWER INTERFERENCE IN OUR AFFAIRS+.

AMONG THOSE PRESENT AT THE DINNER HELD AT A PREMIER HOTEL WERE NATIONAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER.DATUK SANUSIJUNID, FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL TAN SRI ZAKARIAMOHAMEDALI, AND MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE TAN SRI ABDUL RAHMAN BIN ABDUL JALAL. -- MORE 0005/MB

ZCZC N162 (S)
MAHATHIR 4 PARIS-(EMBARGO)

EARLIER TODAY, THE PRIME MINISTER WENT FOR A DEMONSTRATION RIDE ON A HIGH SPEED TRAIN OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL RAILWAY TO VEOUMORT, ABOUT 120 KM SOUTH OF HERE.

THE TVF -- TRAIN A GRANDE VITESSE -- CAN RUN AT 380KM AN HOUR AND IS SAID TO BE THE FASTEST IN THE WORLD. THE NETWORK SERVES CITIES IN SOUTH SOUTH-EASTERN FRANCE.

ACCOMPANYING DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ON THE TRAIN RIDE WAS FRENCH MINISTER OF EXTERNAL TRADE PUAN EDITH CRESSON AND FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO MALAYSIA PUAN M.T. CORBIE. DATIN SERI DR SITIHASHMAH, DATUK SANUSI JUNID AND TAN SRI APDUL RAHMAN WERE ALSO IN THE GROUP.

THISEVENING, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HAD DISCUSSIONS WLTH PIERRE MAUROQ.

DR MAHATHIR IS SCHEDULED TO MEET PRESIDENT FRANÇOIS MITTERRAND AT ELQSEE TOMORROW. -- BERNAMA 0012/MB