

UE207 AAE  
MAHATHIR

HUALA LUMPUR, DEC.3 (BERNAMA) -- MODERN DEFENCE STRATEGY LIES IN BUILDING NATIONAL RESILIENCE AND SHAPING A STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT WHERE THREATS ARE MINIMISED, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR "OHAMAD SAID TODAY.

ADDRESSING THE +GLOBAL COMMUNITY FORU" '84 MALAYSIA+ HERE, HE SAID THAT THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENCE OF ANY COUNTRY WAS NOT IN ITS MILITARY CAPABILITY.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO DEFENCE MINISTER, TOLD THE 60 OVER DELEGATES REPRESENTING THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE WORLD AS +GLOBAL CITIZENS+ THAT UNFORTUNATELY THERE WERE THOSE WHO STILL BELIEVED THAT +IF YOU WANT PEACE YOU MUST PREPARE FOR WAR.+

THE NOTION HELD IN THE PAST BY PEACE-LOVING COUNTRIES THAT 'THE ONLY GUARANTEE OF PEACE WAS THROUGH THE CREATION OF MILITARY BALANCES HAD BECOME RIDICULOUS IN THESE DAYS OF ENORMOUSLY EXPENSIVE +STAR-WAR+ WEAPONS, HE ADDED.

HE TOLD THE FORUM, CENTERED ON THE THEME \*SOUTHEAST ASIA-AND THE PACIFIC AGE+, THAT SUCH POLICY WOULD PULL THE REST OF THE WORLD ON A PATH OF ESCALATING DEFENCE EXPENDITURE.

+THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY WHICH SOUNDS SO GOOD MIGHT ONLY MEAN GLOBAL DESTRUCTION IF THE IDEA OF PREPARING FOR WAR IN ORDER TO AVOID IT IS CARRIED TO ITS LOGICAL CONCLUSION,+ HE ADDED.

INSTEAD, HE ADDED, IF THE POLICY OF +MAKING FRIENDS WITH THOSE WHO WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH US+ WAS PURSUED, THE CONCEPT OF A STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT WITH MINIMAL THREATS COULD BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT HAVING TO RESORT TO ANY MILITARY MEANS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO ALSO SPOKE AT LENGTH ON THE THEME OF THE CONFERENCE, SAID THAT ASEAN, WHICH HAD BECOME THE SECOND MOST EFFECTIVE REGIONAL GROUPING AFTER THE EEC, COULD PROVIDE A GUIDE FOR GREATER PAN-PACIFIC COOPERATION.

HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE PROPOSED PACIFIC COMMUNITY IDEA WAS FAR FROM REALITY, IT WAS AN IDEA WORTH TALKING ABOUT.

AT PRESENT, THE CULTURAL OBSTACLES TO SUCH COOPERATION WERE SO GREAT THAT EVEN MINIMAL COOPERATION WAS IMPOSSIBLE, HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER FELT THAT PACIFIC BASIN COUNTRIES COULD ACHIEVE MUCH BY HAVING LOOSE INFORMAL MEETINGS AT ALL LEVELS AND ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT WHILE IT HAD BECOME FASHIONABLE TO TALK IN TERMS OF \*GLOBAL CITIZENS+ AND +GLOBAL COMMUNITY+, WHICH WAS INDEED A VERY GOOD ACADEMIC EXERCISE, THE WORLD SHOULD NOT LOSE TRACK OF THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS FACED TODAY.

PEOPLE GATHERED TO TALK OF GLOBAL COOPERATION BUT AT THE SAME TIME THERE WERE OTHERS WHO WERE SCHEMING TO MAKE THE WORLD ANYTHING BUT GLOBAL.

REFERRING TO THE PROTECTIONIST TENDENCIES OF THE DEVELOPED WORLD, HE SAID THE DEVELOPED NATIONS MUST SURELY REALISE THAT ONE DAY THEY WOULD BOW TO THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

ON SOUTHEAST ASIA, HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE REST OF THE REGION WAS PROGRESSING, INDOCHINA WAS STILL INVOLVED IN A DEBILITATING WAR WHICH HAD STAGNATED ITS PROGRESS.

THE FOREIGN PARTICIPANTS AT THE TWO-DAY CONFERENCE INCLUDED SINGAPORE'S FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DR. GOH KENG SWEE AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF COOK ISLAND, ENCIK NORMAN GEORGE, AS WELL AS A HIGH-POWERED, JAPANESE DELEGATION.

THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION INCLUDED FOREIGN MINISTER TENGKU AHMAD RXTHAUDEEN.

THE COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN THE FORUM INCLUDED HONG KONG, THAILAND, THE PHILIPPINES, INDONESIA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, FRANCE, CHINA, INDIA, BRITAIN, THE UNITED STATES, FIJI, CANADA, BRAZIL, CHILE AND SOUTH KOREA.

IT IS SPONSORED BY MALAYSIA'S INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND JAPAN'S ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION. -- BERNAMA.