

UN members must keep faith: Mahathir

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Member nations must reaffirm their commitment to the charter of the United Nations and work together to ensure the effectiveness of the world organisation, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The trend among nations to pay lip service to the charter and disregard the decision of the world organisation should be arrested.

The Prime Minister, speaking in Parliament House at the function to mark the 40th anniversary of the United Nations, said the occasion should be used to reflect on the successes and failures of the world body.

He stressed that member nations have a collective responsibility to ensure that the world body continued to function in the future.

"A new attitude and view is needed in order to overcome future international crises. Member nations must work together to ensure that the United Nations is not crippled.

Divisions

"Continued support is an important element for the world body to achieve progress," he said.

Dr Mahathir felt that if the world body failed in its efforts to achieve peace and harmony

in the world, member countries should be blamed for not being prepared to uphold its charter and decisions.

He regretted that negative trends had emerged in the world body which indirectly divided member nations like the rich and poor, the weak and strong and the developed from backward.

Such divisions would only lead to an atmosphere of tension and conflict among member nations.

In addition, member nations must realise that although much progress had been attained in various fields, "we have failed to overcome po-

verty and starvation which continued to plague a number of member nations."

The Prime Minister said the declaration of 1986 as International Year of Peace by the UN was most appropriate and hoped that the world would be a more peaceful place in years to come.

Refugees

"Even though we have witnessed numerous conflicts and war, we should also be proud that through the United Nations we have been able to avoid massive conflicts such as the First

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and Second World War.

"In this aspect, we should be proud of the role played by the United Nations."

Dr Mahathir also congratulated UN secretary-general Javier Perez de Cueller and his staff for being able to carry out their responsibility with dedication, especially since their task

had increased as a result of unhealthy developments in the international political, economic and social arenas.

The Prime Minister assured the UN secretary-general that Malaysia would continue to support any effort by the world body for the common good.

He also recorded his appreciation to all UN agencies for their technical, cultural, social,

scientific and technological programmes in Malaysia, which had jointly benefited member nations.

Dr Mahathir also expressed his appreciation to the world body for aiding Malaysia in many fields and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNCHR) for resettling Vietnamese refugees in third countries.