

# Fulfil your pledge, Soviets urged

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**MOSCOW, Thurs. — Malaysia has called on the Soviet Union to give substance to its declaration that it will ensure peace in Asia by helping to end the Kampuchean conflict.**

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad spoke of the "critical role" the superpower could play in efforts to resolve the Kampuchean problem, which he described as a "festering sore."

Speaking at a dinner given in his honour by acting Soviet Prime Minister V.S. Murakhovsky last night, he said Malaysia recognised that the Soviet Union was an integral part of Asia and the Pacific and, in this context, welcomed the concept of Asian-Pacific security.

This is believed to be Malaysia's first official response to the proposal contained in a statement by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Vladivostok last year.

Dr Mahathir said Mr Gorbachev's proposal, and a similar one on interdependence made during the Soviet leader's visit to India, should be supported by moves to defuse tension in the region.

Malaysia believed that efforts should initially be concentrated on easing regional tension caused by "conflict situations" that had led to the escalation of great-power rivalry

## From ZAINON AHMAD

which, in turn, had polarised and divided the region.

Similar moves should be initiated with regard to Afghanistan, for as a member of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, Malaysia was concerned with the fate of that country.

"If the ideals of Vladivostok and Delhi are to be substantiated, these conflicts must be settled as soon as possible," Dr Mahathir said.

In this regard, he said, Malaysia was encouraged to hear that the Soviet Union was prepared to work with the United States to terminate the arms race, improve relations with China and Japan, withdraw its troops from the territories of other countries and

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enhance its relations with other nations in the region.

On Kampuchea, Dr Mahathir reiterated Asean's proposal for the withdrawal of foreign troops and their replacement by an international peace-keeping force to ensure that no party could dominate the country before internationally-supervised elections are held for a Government of a neutral, non-aligned Kampuchea.

Last week, Mr Gorbachev spoke of "some promising indications" of a possible settlement through political means. He said the most important thing was that the idea of national reconciliation was making headway

"slowly but surely." He also spoke of the possibility of "a coalition of national forces."

On Tuesday, the Soviet leader assured the leader of the ruling regime in Kampuchea, Heng Samrin, of the Soviet Union's support for his policy of national reconciliation.

On Afghanistan, Dr Mahathir welcomed the Soviet Union's stated policy of withdrawal and said Malaysia looked forward to an early agreement on the subject at the on-going talks in Geneva.

"Although we are a small, developing country, we will, nevertheless, make our stand clear against any instance when fundamental principles of relations between nations are ignored and violated," the Prime Minister said.

As a non-nuclear nation firmly committed to peace and disarmament, Malaysia welcomed the Soviet Union's initiatives on nuclear disarmament.

He said: "We agree with you that the world must deal with the threat posed by nuclear confrontation and that new thinking and political courage are required to end the arms race."

"It is our hope that the Geneva talks will bear some fruit soon for the sake of mankind."

Last week Mr Gorbachev announced the Soviet Union's concept of "global double zero," which entails the destruction of all its medium range missiles.

Dr Mahathir told his hosts that the major purpose of his visit was to consolidate relations between the two countries and to discuss their future co-operation.