

# Dr M: Why I decided to attend Rio summit

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KOTA KINABALU, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said his decision to attend the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro from June 3 to 14, was because of Malaysia's commitment to the Kuala Lumpur Declaration.

The Declaration was unanimously adopted by delegates from 55 countries at the three-day second ministerial conference of developing countries on environment and development which ended yesterday.

He said: "Because of our commitment to the Kuala Lumpur Declaration we

have to present and defend it in Rio although we are still not satisfied with certain non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which are out to criticise developing countries over environmental issues.

"However, since we have played an important role in preparing the draft for the Declaration, it will be meaningless if we do not attend," he told reporters after attending a closed door meeting with State Umno leaders at a hotel here today.

The 12-page declaration, which will embody the common stand to be taken by

the South at the Earth Summit, will be taken to the working groups of the G77 in New York early next month for discussion and assessment.

Dr Mahathir had earlier refused to attend the Rio summit, formally known as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UnCED), if it was to be used as an occasion to criticise developing countries over environmental issues.

He said that he would only attend the summit session and not the entire meeting.

On Malaysia's proposal for the setting up of a Global Greening Fund (GGF), Dr Mahathir said Malaysia wanted a fund that was run on a democratic basis with active participation from developing countries and not one that was run by the World Bank.

"In the World Bank, the voices of developing countries are very weak," he said.

Earlier, on arrival at the Kota Kinabalu international airport, Dr Mahathir was welcomed by 10,000 members and supporters of the various BN component par-

ties, including Umno, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat (Akar).

Dr Mahathir who was accompanied by Minister of Land and Co-operative Development Tan Sri Sakaran Dandai, Deputy Home Minister Datuk Megat Junid Megat Ayub and Deputy Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Datuk Kadir Sheikh Fadzir arrived at the airport about 10.30am.

Among those on hand to receive them was State Umno deputy liaison chief Tun Datu Mustapha Datu Harun.