

Malaysia calls for peace in the Balkans

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By WONG CHUN WAI

TIRANA: Malaysia has called for preventive action to be initiated in Bosnia-Herzegovina to ensure the peace and stability of the Balkans and the region.

The Prime Minister said the unwillingness of the major powers to take resolute and decisive action to end the aggression against the independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia was totally unacceptable.

He said Malaysia shared Albania's concern and anxiety over developments in the former Yugoslavia, especially in Ko-

sovo where its large Albanian population is under pressure by the Serbs.

"Albania's close proximity to this horrendous scene of genocide and ethnic cleansing understandably causes your country acute concern as it does to us in Malaysia," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He was speaking at a luncheon hosted by his counterpart, Mr Aleksender Meksi, at the Palace of Brigade yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said the end of the cold war had given rise to fresh hope and expectation of global peace and stability and a new world order.

"Unfortunately, such optimism proved to be premature as several long standing issues remained unresolved while new regional and sub-regional conflicts emerged in various parts of the world," he said.

The disintegration of the old world order had brought to surface previously suppressed ethnic nationalist sentiments, intolerance, and rivalries, he said.

"Nowhere are such developments more pronounced than in Bosnia-Herzegovina where blatant aggression and the drive for ethnic supremacy by the Serbs is leading

to the destruction and annihilation of an entire group of people and nation," he added.

On bilateral relations, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was ready to train Albanians in specific areas under the technical co-operation programme.

He said as a country with an open economy, Malaysia had a very active private sector that had made significant contribution to its economic development.

Malaysia, he added, would encourage its private sector to participate in the economic develop-

ment of Albania.

Dr Mahathir hoped the visit would be the beginning of more contacts and exchanges.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir held talks with Albanian President Dr Sali Berisha and Meksi.

The leaders discussed ways to enhance ties and trade, the economic situation and the situation in Bosnia.

Dr Mahathir also met the chairman of the Presidency of the People's Assembly, Pjeter Arbnori.

Today, Dr Mahathir will be made an honorary citizen of Tirana City.

(P) Overseas trips