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Mahathir-Arafat

M'STA PLRDRS CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR PLO

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 28 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today assured Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat that Malaysia will continue to support the PLO in its struggle against Israel.

The Prime Minister said he gave the assurance because "we sympathise with him and we are saddened that many Palestinians were killed during the intifadah."

He told reporters this after a one-on-one meeting Arafat which lasted almost two hours at his office in the Prime Minister's Department here.

Although the PLO was currently under pressure, Arafat said the PLO would not back down and would continue with its struggle to oppose Israel, Dr Mahathir said.

Asked on the suggestions he made to the President of the State of Palestine, Dr Mahathir said: "I proposed that ways be found to continue with negotiations on a fairer basis to the Palestinians." -- more

JO YBY

▼28/07/18-47MST

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Mahathir-Arafat 2 Kuala Lumpur

Such efforts should be made because based on the present talks, there was actually no place for the Palestinians, he said.

The Prime Minister said Arafat, who arrived this morning for a three-day working visit, gave him a copy of the peace proposals and showed him how the negotiations were not based on United Nations resolutions.

Arafat said the PLO was willing to continue with the talks but not on the basis proposed by Israel and the United States as it was different from that decided by the UN, he said.

"If the talks are not based on UN resolutions, they do not get anything. He sticks to UN resolutions," Dr Mahathir said.

Under the present circumstances, Arafat said the PLO could not agree with the conditions proposed to them, he said. -- more

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▼28/07/19-22MST

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Mahathir-Arafat 3 Kuala Lumpur

He said the proposals also did not touch on the future of Jerusalem.

"We support its (PLO) stand because if there is to be settlement there should be fair agreement and negotiations whereby Palestine can regain autonomy in its territory and also the future of Jerusalem should be determined," he said.

"Even if it can't get Jerusalem today, what about the future?" the prime minister asked.

On Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon the past three days, Dr Mahathir said Israel was just looking for an excuse to use its weapons.

"That should not have happened but Israel could not use its big guns or jets in the intifadah because it took place in the towns," he said. -- more

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Attn Editors: First para of item slugged Mahathir-Arafat 4 Kuala Lumpur should read Arafat...was accompanied to the Prime Minister's Department, rpt PM's Department, and not the meeting as sent earlier. Herewith the corrected repetition.

Mahathir-Arafat 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Arafat, here at the invitation of the prime minister, was accompanied to the Prime Minister's Department by his advisors Hani Al-Hassan (politics), Sakher Habash (state affairs) and Mohamed Rashid (economic affairs), PLO head in Japan Baker Abdel Munin and PLO Ambassador to Malaysia Ahmad Al-Farra.

Also present were Foreign Ministry Deputy Secretary-General Datuk Abdul Halim Ali and Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Dr Abdullah Fadzil Che Wan, the minister in attendance.

This is Arafat's second visit to Malaysia, the first being in March 1990. -- Bernama

JO YBY

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