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Apec

UNITED STATES HOPES MAHATHIR WILL ATTEND APEC MEETING IN SEATTLE

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 19 (Bernama) -- The United States hopes that Prime Minister ¹³ Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will attend the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Seattle in November.

Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Winston Lord said today it would be an informal meeting among leaders that would strictly be on economic issues.

"We greatly respect the Prime Minister. He is an articulate spokesman for his country and for his region...we have hoped that he might reconsider but we will respect his decision," he said during a Worldnet live dialogue with panelists here, in Jakarta, Bangkok and Canberra via satellite.

Dr Mahathir had said he would not attend the meeting, proposed by US President Bill Clinton, as he feared Apec would be turned into a formal body to help the stronger members.

Lord said the United States, which is the host for the Apec meeting this year, was not creating some new institutional structure. -- more

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Apec 2 (last) Kuala Lumpur

The US would like to further improve its relationship with Malaysia, he said, adding that Malaysia was an important member of Asean and an important force for peacekeeping throughout the world.

He said that though the US believed that APEC was the most promising economic forum in Asia "we respect the Prime Minister's approach to the EAKC (East Asia Economic Caucus)".

The US, he said, would let the Asean and other Asian countries examine the EAKC before taking a formal position on the caucus. -- Bernama

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