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PM glad peace has come to the Balkans

By Vijayan Menon and Ashraf Abdullah

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today expressed relief that parties at the Bosnia peace talks had reached an agreement to end the war, after a three-and-a-half-year conflict.

Dr Mahathir said: "I feel relieved. I do not know what the contents of the peace accord are but I am relieved that all three parties have agreed to end the war and will try to co-operate under the Bosnian Federation."

Asked how confident he was that the accord would be maintained, the Prime Minister said he was as confident as he could be, considering the limited amount of news he had. "What we know is what we read in the newspapers," he said.

He said he would have to wait until the actual results were known and how it would be received by the (affected) people — the Serbs, Croats and Bosnians.

Asked to comment on reports that made it seem that certain quarters were taking credit for achieving the peace accord and made no mention about the contributions from other parties such as the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), Dr Mahathir said this was a trivial matter.

"For me, it is a trivial matter and we do not have to focus on or give much weight to it. Who gets credit or not is immaterial. What is important is the end of the war and the unjust killing as Bosnians were unable to defend themselves."

"That has been stopped and we are satisfied," he told reporters after giving a special closed-door pre-general assembly briefing and dialogue with divisional representatives, delegates and supreme council members at the Dewan Merdeka, Putra World Trade Centre, here.

Asked whether Malaysia would help Bosnia in efforts to develop the war-torn country, Dr Mahathir said firstly it had to be ensured that peace was maintained in Bosnia.

"If there is a role that we can play in helping the country to develop, we are willing to do so according to our means. We will not go there to make a profit but only to help them," he added.

Asked for his comments on the fourth nuclear test conducted by France in the south Pacific, Dr Mahathir condemned it outright, saying that the republic had total disregard for the views of the international community.

"If we were to do something like chopping down three trees, they will shout throughout the world. On the contrary, they are setting off nuclear blasts without scant regard for the world community."

"This is something that reflects their arrogance. And what more, there are even quarters who support their action."

"We feel that these people

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Dr M condemns France for fourth nuclear explosion

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are equally as arrogant as the French."

Asked whether Malaysia would take stern action such as imposing a trade embargo on French goods, Dr Mahathir said: "At present we have no such plans."

Asked whether the European Union should have taken a firmer stand on the matter, Dr Mahathir said: "The European Union, as you know, stood by and watched the Bosnians being massacred and did nothing."

"I do not think the EU will break their unity purely be-

cause bombs are exploded 12,000 miles away from France and Europe.

"If the testing has been done in the North Sea, I am very sure that they will take France to task," he said.

France staged a fourth nuclear test in the south Pacific yesterday, defying a host of nations which just last week called for an end to its underground blasts.

Carried out at the French Polynesian atoll of Mururoa, the latest test looked likely to be overshadowed in the media by a peace agreement ending the four-year Bosnian war.