

11 MAY 1996

Convention-Foreign

FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES AGREE WITH MALAYSIA ON QUESTION OF DEMOCRACY

KUALA LUMPUR, May 11 (Bernama) -- All the foreign delegates attending the Umno 50th anniversary convention here today supported Malaysia's stand on democracy.

The Vietnamese Communist Party's (VCP) representative described Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech at the opening of the convention as interesting and meaningful.

Chairman of its Foreign Affairs Commission Hong Ha said that as an Asian country, Vietnam in general shared Malaysia's views on the question of democracy.

Vietnam now practised the socialist democratic system in all aspects of its administration, he said.

Hong is one of the 12 representatives from 10 countries attending the opening as guests. The other countries include Indonesia, Singapore, Bosnia, Korea and Libya.

The speech of Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, touched on the meaning of democracy, its definition and the problems it faces.

Deputy head of International Relations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Li Chengren praised Umno for successfully leading Malaysia to become a high-performing economy which enabled its people to enjoy a high standard of living.

He said that as a result of this, Malaysia was able to be a prosperous nation with its multiracial people living in harmony.

Assistant Secretary-General of Singapore's People's Action Party (PAP) Wong Wong Kan Seng said that with leaders of integrity Umno had succeeded in making a big contribution to Malaysia's development.

Wong, who is Singapore's Home Minister, agreed with Dr Mahathir's view that democracy is a good system if practised correctly.

"Dr Mahathir's message is not restricted to Malaysia or Singapore but is aimed at all countries that practise democracy," he said.

The Vice-President of Bosnia-Herzegovina's Democratic Action Party, Hussein Zivalg, said Malaysia's and Umno's experience on democracy was suited to his party because Bosnia would be holding a general election in September as agreed upon in the Dayton peace accord.

"By using Umno's experience we will work to achieve success because our aim is to see Bosnia emerge as a united nation although its people are divided by ethnic lines," he said.

A veteran from the Singapore Malay National Association, Hassan Yadi, said the Malays in Singapore still recalled and appreciated Umno's struggle till today.

"Dr Mahathir's speech is good and detailed. Although we have separated from Malaysia we regard Dr Mahathir as a world leader," he said. -- BERNAMA

AKD JK