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Mahathir-Mindanao

UMNO BACKS MANILA-MNLF PEACE PACT

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 6 (Bernama) -- Umno supports the peace pact signed between the Philippines Government and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) on Monday, party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

He said Umno fully backed the agreement and hoped that it would pave the way for lasting peace in Mindanao.

With the signing, development can be carried out in resource-rich Mindanao in southern Philippines, he told a news conference after chairing the supreme council meeting at the party headquarters, here.

The pact ended a war that started in 1972 in which some 125,000 people have died.

He also said that Umno was sad on the United States' attack on Iraq as "we feel it is inappropriate."

Although the US struck without informing its allies but sometimes its unilateral actions had positive effects.

For instance, the US attack on Bosnian Serbs compelled the Serbs to give in to the United Nations Protection Force (Unprofor) and paved the way for the signing of the Dayton peace accord, he said.

Dr Mahathir said Umno supported the US' actions in Bosnia but opposed its attacks on Iraq as the party felt that such bombings should not have been launched.

"Nevertheless, we also disagree on any actions taken against the Kurds by any groups," he said.

He said Umno felt that outsiders should not interfere in the Kurds issue in northern Iraq. -- BERNAMA

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