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Abdullah-US

MALAYSIA NOT ON ENMITY WITH THE US- ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 28 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's firm stand in defending its interests and rights does not mean that it is on enmity with other countries including the United States, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

"We don't wish to be the enemy of other countries as we realise that if we are on good terms with others including the United States, it will bring much benefit to us," he told TV3's Malaysia Hari Ini (Malaysia Today) talk show.

He described Malaysia-US relations as healthy and mature and said Malaysia would support the United States if what it did was proper but would oppose if it was against Malaysia's principles.

For instance, he said Malaysia supported US intervention in Bosnia to implement the Dayton accord and also its programmes in North Korea under the auspices of the Korean Energy Development Organisation.

He said Malaysia acknowledged the importance of the United States as a trading partner and as the third biggest investor in this country and at the same time did not want this to be a "big power-small power relationship with Malaysia becoming an errand boy."

He said Malaysia's exports to the United States last year totalled US\$14 billion while the imports from that country amounted to US\$12 billion. The US investments in Malaysia were worth US\$6 billion in the capital sector and US\$2 billion in the equity sector.

"We also have more than 10,000 students in the United States while our investments there totalled US1 billion," he said.

He also denied the allegation that Malaysia was a trouble maker and US basher and felt such allegations arose because Malaysia did not agree with the US on certain issues.

On the move by 34 US Congressmen to table a resolution asking Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to apologize or resign for his alleged anti-Jewish remarks, Abdullah said Malaysian embassy officials were in contact with the Congressmen to state Malaysia's stand.

"As of now the Malaysian Embassy officials had also met representatives of the Jewish community in the United States to explain the actual situation," he said referring to Dr Mahathir's statement about US financier and currency speculator George Soros, which had been misconstrued as an anti-Jewish statement.

Abdullah said Malaysians' outpouring of spontaneous support for the Prime Minister over the issue showed that Malaysians were united when faced with external trouble.

On Malaysia-Singapore relations, he said the sensitive nature of the relationship was normal among close friends.

"What is important is that both countries should realise the importance of their relationship and be cautious always," he said.

-- BERNAMA

HJ AAM