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Mahathir-Croatia

MALAYSIA WELCOMES CROATIA'S PEACE KEEPING ROLE IN EUROPE

KUALA LUMPUR, March 3 (Bernama) -- Malaysia welcomes Croatia's foreign policy commitment to play a positive and constructive role to ensure durable peace in the South-Eastern European region, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

He said while Croatia had successfully attained its 1,000-year-old dream of nationhood, Bosnia-Herzegovina was still grappling with the fundamental issues of territorial integrity and governance.

"With Croatia's understanding and the crucial role of the international community, Bosnia-Herzegovina has been given a sovereign personality of its own," he said at a dinner in honour of visiting Croatian Prime Minister Zlatko Matesa at his official residence Sri Perdana here.

He said the sovereign personality could only be nurtured through an extraordinary effort to rebuild that country and that Malaysia was encouraged by the support shown by Croatia.

Dr Mahathir and Matesa, who is on a three-day visit held talks on various issues at the Prime Minister's Department this morning.

Dr Mahathir said the people of Malaysia had followed closely the plight of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina during the four-year-old war and hoped that time would heal the wounds of the victims and that a new and more tolerant society would emerge.

He said Malaysia would continue to cooperate with other countries in building a climate of durable peace in South-Eastern Europe.

Dr Mahathir also said with the multi-cultured Malaysian society, the government had emphasised the need for all ethnic groups to work together as a united force to compete globally in the regional and international market.

"Rather than look back at historically different ethnic origins, we have looked forward to bridging the differences through creating mutual understanding and a healthy respect for one another's customs and culture," he said.

As for trade, Dr Mahathir said with Croatia's ability to adapt to the fast changing international business environment, more business ventures could be generated between Malaysia and Croatia.

--BERNAMA

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