

13/08/1997

Silajdzic: Time ripe for economic partnership

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The time is ripe for Malaysia and Bosnia-Herzegovina to move towards a different form of relationship, based on economic partnership, co-chairman for the Council of Ministers of Bosnia-Herzegovina Dr Haris Silajdzic said today.

He said the Balkan war had resulted in both countries establishing an excellent political relationship.

"However, it is time we move on to the next stage. Now that there is peace in Bosnia, we can move towards a totally different relationship.

"The next phase is a relationship based on partnership, economic relations, which we want to foster closely not only with Malaysia but also the world," he said in an interview.

Silajdzic is on a five-day official visit at the invitation of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad along with Boro Botic, also co-chairman of the council.

Silajdzic said he agreed with Dr Mahathir that the coming century would be a century of prosperity and there was no place for confrontation.

"We do not want to see a clash of cultures anymore. But we want people to master communications and to grow over their own cultural barriers.

"We want to see people being able to live together and to know each other, not only through communications but through personal contact," he said.

He added that the Bosnian war had raised a question (on breaking down cultural barriers) of which the answer existed in this part of the world.

He said in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a majority of the Bosnian Serb were misled by their own leadership.

"Many were involved against their own will in ethnic cleansing and genocide," he said.

He added that while the situation now seemed complex with either side having their differences, he assured that all parties were working together to find a common solution to their problems.

"The Dayton Accord has established for Bosnia-Herzegovina a (unique Government) system that I admit is complicated.

"But all these complications are within our process of integration.

"It is a transitional time but it is better to do it on the table instead of going to war (to sort out differences)," he said, adding he was confident of better days for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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