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Slovenia's PM endorses Dr M's stand on currency

Zainon Ahmad in Ljubljana

MALAYSIA and Slovenia agreed that countries must exchange views on currency trading and how to prevent it from causing problems such those affecting East Asia and now spreading elsewhere.

Slovene Prime Minister Dr Janez Drnovsek said: "We must protect ourselves as any country can be affected by this problem."

He concurred with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the problem could be averted if currency trading was regulated.

The two leaders were speaking at a Press conference following their meetings at the Presidential Palace where earlier Dr Mahathir had called on President Milan Kucan.

Dr Drnovsek said he would be visiting Malaysia next year to see for himself the development and investment opportunities there just as Dr Mahathir was doing in Slovenia during his three-day visit.

Dr Mahathir, in response to a question from a Slovene journalist, said Malaysia was looking at the steel factories and the possibility of importing their products, technological exchanges and joint operations in their respective countries.

He would be visiting the Port of Koper and look at its facilities with a view to using Slovenia as an eastern gateway for Malaysian products to the whole of Europe.

The Balkans was still an unfamiliar area for Malaysia just as Asean was unfamiliar to Slovenia and, therefore, contacts between the two Governments, their officials and their private sectors were important.

Last night during a dinner given in his honour by his counterpart, he said: "I realise that Slovenia has sought to build good relations with its neighbours. It is a matter of sadness that Slovenia has not quite been able to persuade the Government in Belgrade to live in peace.

"Belgrade's actions continue to threaten the fragile peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Serbs in Belgrade seem bent on unravelling whatever the Dayton Peace Agreement has achieved for the region."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was willing to work with Slovenia to contribute to the process of achieving normalcy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The details could be worked out at various levels.

He was confident that such co-operation would lay the groundwork for a durable peace.

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