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Najib-Palestine

M'SIA CAN SEND PEACEKEEPERS TO PALESTINE ANYTIME

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 14 (Bernama) -- The armed forces is capable of sending peacekeepers to Palestine anytime soon if it gets the mandate from the United Nations (UN), Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

He said based on Malaysia's record in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia, the armed forces should be able to play a meaningful role in ensuring peace in Palestine and preventing its people from continuing to be victimised.

"It is not a problem; we do have the suitable battalion or unit. We have a mechanised unit which can be sent anytime on short notice," he told reporters before meeting the Umno Youth International Bureau here.

He was asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday that Malaysia was ready to join a UN peacekeeping force to protect Palestinians from violence committed by Israeli soldiers.

Najib hoped that the UN Security Council would make a decision soon to enable the despatch of peacekeepers to Palestine.

"By right the UN should take quick action in defusing the situation and not allow continued bloodshed. The best way is to make a decision to send a peacekeeping force to the area," he said.

Asked whether Israel and the United States would object to Malaysia's participation since it is an Islamic country, Najib said such suspicions were unfounded as Malaysia's role in the Bosnia-Herzegovina peacekeeping mission clearly showed its troops were fair.

"In Bosnia-Herzegovina, our troops, who were made up of Muslims, were praised not only by Muslims but also non-Muslims. They admitted that we discharged our duties with full professionalism and fairly," he said.

On his meeting with the Umno Youth International Bureau, Najib said the atrocities perpetrated by the Israeli army against Palestinians would be among the issues to be discussed.

-- BERNAMA

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