

# Afghanistan seeks our help in restoring peace

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. Afghanistan wants Malaysia to push the Organisation of Islamic Conference for a solution to restore peace in the beleaguered nation.

Afghanistan Acting Foreign Minister Dr A. Abdullah said Malaysia had the capability to do this as it was looked upon with respect by other Islamic countries in the grouping.

"We have discussed the role which Malaysia can play in promoting peace in Afghanistan and how it can mobilise other OIC countries to co-ordinate efforts with the United Nations to restore peace in our country," he told reporters at the end of his three-day visit to Malaysia.

During his stay here, Abdullah had the opportunity to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Abdul Hamid Zainal Abidin Hamid and Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamed.

Abdullah said he was not satisfied with the commitment given by the OIC so far to finding a solution in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan blames Pakistan for supporting the Taliban, whose rule has brought untold sufferings to the people.

"As far as pressure on Pakistan is concerned, this has not taken place yet. I think it will help in a positive way if this is done in the future," he said.

Abdullah said Pakistan would eventually get a taste of his own medicine if it did not stop supporting the Taliban.

"I think the next victim will be Pakistan itself due to its own policy. The sooner Pakistan stops its policy towards Afghanistan, I think the better it will be to its interest," he said.

Elaborating, Abdullah said there was a growing trend of "Talibanisation" in Pakistan. As Pakistan was now a nuclear power, it was essential that the Talibanisation of the country be checked as anything less could spell trouble for mankind.

"What will happen if one day nuclear devices are in the hands of groups like the Taliban.

"Pakistan doesn't seem to be doing anything to prevent that from happening. That is our major concern being their neighbour," he said.

Abdullah said after the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and following the independence of the republics in Central Asia, there were plenty of opportunities to be exploited in the region.

"But we cannot do this due to Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan," he said adding that this had brought instability to the region.

Asked why Pakistan supported the Taliban which misused Islam to its advantage, Abdullah said this was probably done to match India's might in the Indian sub-continent.

"I think the main reason behind it is that Pakistan believes by controlling a group that takes orders from Islamabad, they can match India's might and help create a balance as far as their problem with India is concerned," he said adding that this would also help Pakistan achieve its hegemonistic goals.

Abdullah said he was also grateful to Malaysia for providing scholarships for Afghan students to pursue tertiary education here. Also discussed was ways Malaysia could extend humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

He said Afghanistan, which saw Malaysia as a model nation, hoped it would also help reconstruct the country.