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Bush phones Dr Mahathir to thank Malaysia for support

Mustapha Kamil in New York

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush called Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday to thank Malaysia for supporting America's effort to combat terrorism.

The National Security Council said Bush viewed his conversation with Dr Mahathir as one of the better ones that he has had with world leaders since Washington launched the war against terrorists.

Dr Mahathir, who was at home when Bush called at 7.50am Washington time (7.50pm Malaysia), said he would be writing to the US President to elaborate on Malaysia's position and views on the issue.

The NSC reported Bush as saying the he would wait anxiously for Dr Mahathir's letter, and hoped that it will be received before the forthcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting.

This, the NSC said, would open the possibility for both leaders to discuss the issue further during the Apec meeting.

The NSC said Dr Mahathir also voiced Malaysia's concerns on the global economy and about the threat of domestic terrorism in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, White House House spokesman Ari Fleischer said:

"They discussed economic repercussions of the attacks.

"They) agreed that the unprecedented nature of the terrorist threat requires new types of tactics and new forms of international co-operation."

Bush has been working to rally an international coalition behind likely US retaliation for the attacks.

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