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Dr M cannot mediate unless asked by global community

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad cannot offer himself as mediator to solve the United States-Afghanistan conflict unless he is called upon to do so.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said although certain intellectuals in Afghanistan had asked for Dr Mahathir to intervene, there was nothing much he (Dr Mahathir) could do except continue airing his views.

"It is true that Dr Mahathir's views on the matter, in particular his call for a stop to the bombing and for the issue to be resolved through discussions and peaceful means, is well received by the international community.

"Dr Mahathir, despite being respected as a fair world statesman, cannot do much unless the international community makes a direct call for our help."

He said Malaysia had, through Dr Mahathir, taken a strong stand in calling for a stop to the unnecessary suffering of the Afghan people and staunchly believed that the way to hunt down terrorists, was not through waging war.

"Our voice will be strengthened if more countries come out to voice similar concerns, over the suffering of the innocents caused by the US attacks."

Syed Hamid said the United Nations was the best body to intervene in the matter and all interested groups and countries should push the body, to act immediately.

He was speaking after opening a forum entitled "Human Rights Forum Through The Islamic Perspective" at Pusat Islam here today.

Syed Hamid said Malaysia also condemned the persecution of Palestinians by Israel which caused the death of more than 500,000 people.

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