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US-Ambassador

US AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE LOOKS FORWARD TO COUNTER TERRORISM WITH M'SIA

SEPANG, Sept 30 (Bernama) -- United States ambassador-designate to Malaysia Marie T. Huhtala is looking forward to working closely with the Malaysian government in the international effort to prevent further acts of terrorism.

"Our two countries, along with nearly every country in the world community are now facing unusually severe challenges, particularly in the area of counter-terrorism.

"The attacks on New York and Washington earlier this month were attacks on us all," she said in her arrival statement at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) here today.

She said that US was grateful for the enhanced protection and cooperation the Malaysian government had given the embassy and deeply appreciative of the condolences received from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his sharp condemnation of terrorism.

Huhtala, a native Californian who joined the US Foreign Service in 1972, also expressed her most sincere condolences to the families of those Malaysians who were among the victims of the attack on Sept 11.

She said the US and Malaysia share ties that are broad and cooperative in many areas and the relationship rests on a common interest in regional stability and prosperity.

The US is Malaysia's largest foreign investor and its largest export market, said Huhtala whose last position was minister counsellor and deputy chief of mission at the US embassy in Bangkok.

Married to Eino Huhtala Jr and having two grown-up children, Huhtala began her career by serving overseas in Paris, Chiang Mai, Taipei and Hong Kong.

"We hope to get to know as many people in the government, business, the media and private organisations and to exchange ideas on a broad range of issues important to America including regional, economic development and human rights," she said.

From 1992 to 1995, she served as consul-general and principal officer at the US consulate in Quebec City.

Huhtala, who also speaks in French, Thai and Chinese, replaces B. Lynn Pascoe who left for another government post in Washington last month.

-- BERNAMA

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