

Dr M, Putin lay foundation for stronger ties

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MALAYSIAN and Russian leaders came out of their 90-minute bilateral meeting confident of stronger and more broad-based ties in aviation, education, staff training, bio-technology, aerospace and technology.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Russian President Vladimir Putin, at their meeting at the Kremlin, covered many areas of co-operation, including bilateral and international issues.

It was followed by a meeting of the two delegations, and they explored areas for co-operation, including research and development.

Dr Mahathir said the possibility of purchasing military equipment from

Russia was also discussed.

Putin added that "there is good relations between Malaysia and Russia in the military and defence areas", and Malaysian experts had seen the high quality of Russian military equipment, especially in aviation.

Russian experts believed that there was the possibility of trade and co-operation in this area and creating "Malaysian scientific and production bases".

The Russian leader said the relations were "developing quite positively and today, we analysed the status of our bilateral relations".

He pointed out that Malaysia accounted for 24 per cent of the world's electronic goods and "this makes Malaysia a good partner for co-operation with Russia in the high technology area".

Malaysia used a Russian launcher for its satellite, and Putin said further co-operation in this area, including the use

of mobile launchers, was possible.

He added that Russia supported direct trade between Malaysia and the Russian regions. Putin said the governors of Siberia, Buryatia, Khabarovsk and the Far East, regions with which Malaysia has direct relations, were also present.

On terrorism, the two leaders hold similar views — that the root causes need to be dealt with and removed.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia appreciated Russia's stand on dealing with the problem in the Middle East, in particular with the Palestinian issue.

Putin said: "I cannot but agree that the first attention should be on the elimination of the root causes."

He stressed that the role of the United Nations should be strengthened in many areas, including the "area of fighting terror".