

# Malaysia, US step up anti-terror effort

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MALAYSIA and the United States agreed to step up co-operation to combat international terrorism and signed a joint declaration on Co-operation to Counter Terrorism in Washington DC.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar signed for Malaysia, while Acting Secretary of State Richard Armitage represented the us.

The joint declaration provides a framework for greater co-operation in combating terrorism. It provides for the exchange of information, data and intelligence to further enhance and strengthen the existing relations and co-operation.

It will also help strengthen the overall bilateral relationship.

Washington views Malaysia's efforts and contribution (in combating terrorism) since the Sept 11 attacks as "strong" and wants to further strengthen co-operation in this area.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who arrived on Monday for a working visit at the invitation of US President George W. Bush, met a group of 20

American opinion leaders.

The dinner meeting at the Metropolitan Club was hosted by President of The Heritage Foundation Edwin J. Feulner for the newly incorporated United States Malaysia Exchange Association (USMEA).

Among those who attended the meeting were Elaine Chao, US Secretary of Labour; Larry Eagleburger, Secretary of State under President George Herbert Walker Bush; Charlene Barshefsky, the former US Trade Representative who is now a senior partner at Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering; former US Ambassador to the United Nations Jean Kirkpatrick, currently a Senior Fellow and Director of Foreign Policy and Defence Studies, American Enterprise Institute; and Lt General Brent Scowcroft who was the National Security Adviser under President George H.W. Bush.

Tan Sri Megat Junid is USMEA's chairman, while Datuk Dr Jamaludin Jarjis and Senator Malcolm Wallop are joint deputies. The association was incorporated earlier this year in Washington DC.

In recent months the association has organised several visits by Congressional staff to Malaysia. The outcome of these visits has been positive and according to Ken Sheffer, director of USMEA, they have helped in fostering a better understanding of Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived at Andrew Airbase, went straight into working sessions. The delegation includes Sved Hamid, Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Kais Yatim and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsudin Osman.

In addition to witnessing the signing of the joint declaration on terrorism, Dr Mahathir also held discussions with Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neil and US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick. He also met with Armitage.

He is scheduled to meet President Bush later at the Oval Office, followed by a meeting with the National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice and Vice-President Dick Cheney. **By Hardev Kaur**