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Calls for Dr M to support dialogue after his retirement

HEADS of Government and State attending the Global 2002 - International Smart Partnership Dialogue want Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to continue to be a key player in the dialogue after he retires next year.

Ghana President John A. Kufuor said leaders participating in the dialogue would not let him (Dr Mahathir) leave when he retires in October next year.

"He can't. We won't let him go. He (Dr Mahathir) will not continue to be the Prime Minister but definitely, as a great human being, he will support the dialogue for the good of humanity," he said.

Nevertheless, Kufuor said he does not feel that Dr Mahathir would want to participate in the dialogue as a leader when he retires.

"He (Dr Mahathir) would come in as a good human individual who wants to help us create a network of success," he said.

Kufuor, who is attending the smart partnership dialogue for the first time said he was happy to receive the invitation, and was satisfied with the dialogue which provided leaders of poor nations, African and Third World countries a chance to exchange views and seek solutions to problems without fear.

Sudan President Omer Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir also shared the same sentiment, calling the Prime Minister to continue to participate in the smart partnership dialogue.

Omer said Dr Mahathir had shown a true sense of leadership.

"During his (Dr Mahathir) tenure as the Prime Minister, there have been many achievements for Malaysia. We know he has prepared young leaders to carry on the job (as Prime Minister) but I think he still has something to offer to Malaysia and other nations."

Mauritius Prime Minister Sir Aneerood Jugnauth, attending the smart partnership dialogue for the first time, hoped Dr Mahathir would still participate in the dialogue.

"Dr Mahathir is our financial guru."

Seychelles Vice-President James Alix Michel said Dr Mahathir's wisdom will continue to be important for the future development of the movement.

"I think Malaysia should continue to host the smart partnership dialogue.

"Malaysia has an important role, to ensure that it will continue to bring development to the respective countries," he said.