

14 MAY 2002

Mahathir-Declaration

KL AND WASHINGTON SIGN ANTI-TERRORISM DECLARATION

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WASHINGTON, May 14 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and the United States Tuesday sealed a declaration that provides for a framework for cooperation in the prevention and disruption as well as combating international terrorism.

The Declaration on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism will allow for the exchange and flow of information and intelligence and the overall strengthening of bilateral ties between the two signatories.

The signing of the declaration comes at a time when the world is faced with the danger of terrorism following the Sept 11 attacks in the United States.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar signed on behalf of Malaysia while the US was represented by acting Secretary of State Richard Armitage.

The signing ceremony took place in the Jackson Room of the US president's guesthouse, called Blair House, where Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is staying during his three-day visit to the US which began on Monday.

Dr Mahathir witnessed the signing of the declaration. Others present at the ceremony were Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsudin Osman.

The scope and areas of cooperation are:

- \* Continued and improved intelligence and terrorist financing information sharing on counter terrorism measures, including the development of more effective counter terrorism policies and legal, regulatory and administrative counter terrorism regimes.

- \* Enhancement of existing liaison relationship between the two countries' law enforcement agencies to engender practical counter terrorism cooperation.

- \* Strengthened capacity-building efforts through training and education; consultations between officials, analysts, and field operators; seminars; conferences; and joint operations, as appropriate.

- \* Assistance on transportation, border and immigration control challenges, including document and identify fraud to stem effectively the flow of terrorist-related material, money and people.

- \* Compliance with United Nations Security Council lists and circulars ordering the freeze of terrorist assets, and

- \* The participants may at any time mutually determine additional areas of cooperation under this declaration of cooperation.

To execute the declaration, each country will designate an agency to act as the central point of contact for the purposes of implementing as laid out in the four-page document.

They include the police, military, intelligence, other law enforcement agencies and other concerned agencies including immigration, customs and justice/Attorney-General's Department.

The declaration also stated that neither party would disclose or distribute any confidential information, documents or data received during the implementation of the declaration to any third party except to the extent agreed in writing by the other party.

It further said that the document may be modified or revised, if it was deemed necessary, by mutual consent in writing by the two participants.

It said any disputes arising out of the interpretation or implementation of the declaration should be settled amicably through consultation or negotiation between the governments through diplomatic channels.

The declaration stated that the document was in no way intended to limit or constrain the respective actions of the US or Malaysia in combating terrorism, but rather it was an effort to enhance the efficacy of those efforts.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir held talks with Armitage, Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill and US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick at the Blair House.

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