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Zimbabwe-Mugabe

MUGABE SLAMS WESTERN MEDIA FOR PROJECTING WRONG PICTURE OF ZIMBABWE

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 5 (Bernama) -- President Robert Mugabe today slammed the western media for projecting Zimbabwe as being inhumane when the country is merely taking control of its own natural resources to ensure equitable economic development.

"Our second liberation (from the colonial masters) is to get back our land. You can't just be owners of votes, and somebody else is owning your land, your minerals, water, forests and animals," he said.

Mugabe, who attended the just-concluded Langkawi International Dialogue (LID 2002), said Zimbabwe had been pictured in the media as a lawless state seizing farms belonging to the white man of Europe.

"This is the picture painted by our enemies, those who do not want the Zimbabweans to gain control of their own destiny and own resources," he said.

Speaking at the launch of the Zimbabwe Asia Expo Centre, here, he said the former colonial masters, the British, now used all kinds of pressure and propaganda to project them as inhumane scavengers and violators of the rule of law.

Mugabe's ruling party, the ZANU-PF Party, won the country's election in March this year but the Western world has claimed that it was rigged and that the party supported lawlessness in the country.

His government also ordered white commercial farmers, who are among the largest producers of wheat and cornmeal, to turn over to the government their land, which was seized from blacks during British colonial rule.

The 78-year-old Mugabe claimed that the British, helped by United States President George W. Bush, had been using the international media such as BBC and CNN to portray Zimbabwe as a lawless nation.

He said that the British had said before the country's election that if Mugabe's party won, the election would not be free and fair.

"Witnesses said the election was marvellous, free and fair and the results legitimate. We have won the election, so to them (British) it was not free and fair," he said.

Mugabe claimed that the British had gone around and tried to coax the members of the European Union to withdraw aid and impose sanctions quietly.

"We have to demonstrate to our people that this struggle was not about arms rule to retain the government of their own choice but a liberation struggle for total freedom from the British imperialism...so that you can be your own self in your own country," he added.

"We don't need someone from outside to come and show us how to resolve our differences," he said.

Mugabe praised Malaysia for being able to fend off economic difficulties following the currency manipulation by the West a few years ago.

"We praise Malaysia for what it has done during difficult times. Today, we regard you as a leader of all developing countries and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as the champion who even withstood economic pressure," he said.

"Those who had said that Malaysia would sink are now the first to praise Dr Mahathir," he said.

Mugabe described the Zimbabwe Asia Expo Centre as a milestone for more viable economic relations with Malaysia.

-- BERNAMA

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