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MALAYSIA-AMCHAM

MALAYSIA'S LEADERSHIP AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES WELL RESPECTED BY
FOREIGNERS

KUALA LUMPUR, May 9 (Bernama) -- American businessmen, optimistic about the Malaysian economy, are confident that the upcoming meeting between Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and President George Bush will serve to enhance trade ties between Malaysia and the United States, the president of the American Malaysian Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM), Nicholas Zefferys, said today.

"While Malaysia may face competition with other countries in terms of attracting foreign investment, its pragmatic leadership and diverse range of economic activities are well respected by foreign investors," he said at a press conference after AMCHAM's 25th annual general meeting.

Zefferys referred to the Securities Commission's (SC) recent move to review its regulations to allow foreign assets to be injected into listed companies to facilitate corporate restructuring as a positive development.

While there might be a decline in foreign investment, strong indication of the world and the US economy improving, should be positive news for Malaysia, he said.

"The only halt to a full economic recovery, is the continued conflict in the Middle East and its impact on oil prices," he added.

He said that US investments in Malaysia was substantial and to date it stood at about US\$20 billion.

Zefferys said there was a general belief that the service sector could play a leading role in the country's economy.

"In the US, service sector accounts for 80 percent of its economic activities and it will be beneficial if the Malaysian government encourages the growth of this sector by providing attractive incentives," he said.

In line with the development of high technology, he said there was a need for greater emphasis on the English Language, technology and science in schools and institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. -- BERNAMA

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