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US assured of smooth transition in Malaysian leadership

PUTRAJAYA, Tues. - Washington has been assured the change of leadership in the country would be a smooth process and not in any way jeopardise peace and stability, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said.

He gave the assurance to US President George W Bush's special assistant on Asian affairs James Moriarty at Wisma Putra here today.

Moriarty, who is also a senior director of the US National Security Council for US-Asian affairs, is on a week-long Asean tour and had an hour-long meeting with Syed Hamid. "They have read about our power transition and he wanted to hear it direct from us. I assured him the transition would be smooth and crisis-free," he told reporters after the meeting.

"I made it known to him that our political transition follows tradition and hierarchy and done in such a way so as to not create any upheaval in the country.

"Even the naming of the proposed second man has been well received and accepted. People took it as a normal course of events," he said referring to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's remarks that he had no objection to Datuk Seri Najib Razak being appointed as Deputy Prime Minister.

He added that US Secretary of State Colin Powell had indicated that he would visit Malaysia before he attends the Asean Regional Forum in Brunei on July 31.