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We are willing to listen to Ramos, says Syed Hamid

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Malaysia is willing to listen to former Philippine president Fidel Ramos, who is coming here to discuss the plight of deportees from Sabah with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Foreign Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said Malaysia practised an open policy and welcomed Ramos if he sought an explanation or to get the real story.

"If they want an explanation they are more than welcome. But if they want to solve the problem, it cannot be done by taking violent action.

"Being violent or taking unethical action to hurt Malaysia is not a mature approach. It is better if they know exactly what they want and we will accept," Syed Hamid said after being interviewed in TV3's Malaysia Hari Ini programme at Sri Pentas in Bandar Utama today.

It was reported yesterday that Philippine president Gloria Arroyo would be sending Ramos to discuss the matter with Dr Mahathir after seeing for herself the conditions of deportees in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.

Asked to comment on demonstrators in Manila protesting alleged mistreatment of Filipino illegal immigrants, Syed Hamid said: "We hope the Philippine Government will take action according to their law to ensure the safety of the Malaysian embassy."