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OIC-Jews

DR MAHATHIR'S SPEECH NOT ANTI-SEMITIC - OIC LEADERS

PUTRAJAYA, Oct 17 (Bernama) -- Leaders of Islamic countries said today Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech at the opening of the 10th OIC Summit here yesterday was not anti-semitic at all.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Abu Bakar Qurbi said he did not think the speech was anti-semitic.

Dr Mahathir was stating facts facing the Muslim world and he was not being confrontational at all, he told reporters on the sidelines of the summit here.

Abu Bakar was asked to comment on reaction from the European Union, the United States and Australia to that aspect of the Prime Minister's speech which foreign wire agencies chose to highlight when filing their reports on the opening of the 10th summit of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference at the Putrajaya Convention Centre here yesterday.

"I support his speech 100 per cent...he wants the Muslim world to stand up to its responsibilities to its people," Abu Bakar said.

Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai said Dr Mahathir's historic analysis of Islam was very correct.

"What Muslims should do is to cease suicide attacks," he said.

Hamid said the Muslim community must take a big step forward if they wanted to be a strong Ummah and respected by other communities.

"Muslims must learn to educate themselves, must begin to be progressive, ...begin to develop themselves," he said

PLO Political Bureau Chief Farouk Kaddoumi said Dr Mahathir's speech was excellent and he provided the strategy for Muslims to safeguard their interests.

"Islam is a religion of peace, without any discrimination among human beings."

"The others...they are occupying our country, killing our people and claiming that we are terrorists and anti-semitic. State terrorism is practised in Israel," Kaddoumi said.

He said the Israelis and their sympathisers tended to regard any statement which was against them as anti-semitic but at the same time they occupied Palestinian land.

"This is a violation of human rights because they continue the occupation... 85,000 soldiers occupy our country and the other territories of the Arabs in the Golan Heights and they claim they are pursuing peace," he said.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher said there were certain quarters who would condemn any criticism levelled against Israel and its government without understanding the whole issue behind it.

He said there were people who were ready to pounce on anything with the intention of creating trouble.

"I know people who are willing to condemn anything. As soon as you have criticism against Israel even without understanding what the whole issue is about. They are ready to rush to condemn anything.

"Let me tell you, there are people who are waiting to create trouble and invent problems that are non-existent," he told reporters after calling on his Malaysian counterpart Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar.

Maher advised those who are very critical about Dr Mahathir's speech to read and understand it as a whole.

"The whole speech was addressed to the Islamic countries and Muslims

asking them to work hard and affirm their conviction as well as to look to the future," he said.

He described Dr Mahathir's speech as a "pep talk" to the Muslims and brushed aside any condemnation which might arise from it.

"I do not think anybody will lose sleep over this condemnation," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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