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Boycott call by Jewish group extreme, says US envoy

MALACCA, Thurs. - United States ambassador to Malaysia Marie T. Huhtala has described the call by a Jewish group to boycott investments and not to make visits to Malaysia as extreme.

While expressing surprise over the statement by the influential Simon Wiesenthal Centre, Huhtala said the move was a result of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech at the opening of the Organisation of Islamic Conference summit last week.

"I think it is an extreme step (taken by the group), but it is in reaction to the comments made by your Prime Minister during the OIC," she said.

She even described Dr Mahathir's statement that Jews were ruling the world by proxy as putting the issue too far, and offensive.

Huhtala said the Simon Wiesenthal Centre was not a Jewish lobby group but a foundation to commemorate the survivors of the holocaust.

She said while Malaysia and American relationship was fundamentally strong, she hoped that this controversy would not have a lasting impact.