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Dr Ling: Thanks for allowing me to serve so long

DATUK Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, who resigned as the MCA president yesterday, said he is grateful to the party for allowing him to serve for so long.

"I would like to thank the members for their support," he told reporters after leaving the MCA central committee meeting during which he submitted his resignation letter.

In his letter, he said his decision paves the way for a smooth, constitutional transition of leadership.

"I resign with a heavy heart but with a sense of ease in the knowledge our party will be in capable hands.

"I have great confidence in the character and ability of my successors," he said.

He thanked all the past presidents for their leadership and guidance and all his colleagues in the party's central committee for their support and co-operation during his tenure as president.

"As I look back, it was Sept 11, 1971 that I was appointed a member of the CC by the late Tun Tan Siew Sin.

"For almost 32 years, I have had the privilege to serve on the highest councils of MCA, 16 of those years as president," he said in the letter addressed to party secretary-general Datuk Seri Dr Ting Chew Peh.

Dr Ling also thanked Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting and Datuk Chan Kong Choy for their co-operation in making the transition possible.

"Their maturity made our discussions not lengthy but very fruitful."

In a multi-ethnic Malaysia, he said he would be failing in his duty if he did not recognise the important role of the Barisan Nasional.

"I owe all my BN colleagues a big debt of gratitude, especially to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who was always been fatherly and never selfish with his words of wisdom and guidance," he said.