

Indonesia, M'sia lead global effort for Palestinian rights – academic

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Indonesia and Malaysia, two key Southeast Asian nations, are playing a critical role in garnering global support for Palestine, according to academic Sudarnoto Abdul Hakim of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University.

As respected members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), he said both countries have consistently demonstrated their support for Palestine through diplomatic and humanitarian efforts.

Sudarnoto, who also serves as the head of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) for Foreign Relations and International Cooperation, recently visited a Palestinian refugee shelter in Amman, Jordan.

He shared that refugees expressed profound gratitude towards both Indonesia and Malaysia for their unwavering support.

“The appreciation for these nations’ commitment is deep. Their role has been essential in sustaining hope and advocating for justice,” Sudarnoto said.

In Malaysia, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has emerged as a vocal advocate for Palestinian rights on the global stage.

Anwar has called for the formal recognition of Palestine as a sovereign state and Israel's removal from the United Nations.

At high-level international meetings, such as the G20 Summit in Brazil and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) Economic Leaders' Meeting in Peru - Malaysia has advocated for UN reform and highlighted Israel's ongoing actions against Palestinians.

Anwar also raised the issue at the Extraordinary Arab and Islamic Summit in Riyadh, urging stronger international action against Israeli military actions in Palestine.

Similarly, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto has used his platform at the G20 Summit to call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, as well as in Ukraine.

In meetings with UN secretary-general António Guterres, Prabowo reiterated Indonesia's commitment to supporting UN efforts to address the Palestinian crisis and offered to contribute peacekeeping forces if necessary.

Steadfast backing

Indonesia's Deputy Foreign Minister Anis Matta further emphasised the country's steadfast support for Palestine at the OIC-Arab League Summit in Saudi Arabia.

"Indonesia and Malaysia are both advocating for global action," Sudarnoto said while outlining several key initiatives to strengthen the two countries' stance on the Palestinian issue and hold Israel accountable for its actions.

"We must unite globally to push the UN to immediately implement the International Court of Justice's ruling, holding Israel accountable for its human rights violations and crimes," he explained.

He also stressed the importance of both nations rallying together to garner global support for the expulsion of Israel from the UN.

On the humanitarian front, Sudarnoto proposed a unified effort between philanthropic organisations in both countries.

"Humanitarian aid should no longer be organised separately. By coordinating efforts, we can create a far greater impact," he said.

To ensure these goals are realised, he believes that both governments must take a firm stance against pro-Zionist movements within their societies and coordinate diplomatically to shift US policy.

“It’s crucial that we align our diplomatic efforts to convince the US to adopt a more civilised approach, one that fosters peace and ceases support for Israel,” he added.

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