

PAS urges Muslims to boycott Dutch goods
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Islamic party PAS today urged Muslims worldwide to boycott Dutch products to protest against an anti-Islamic film by a far-right Dutch lawmaker.

"We strongly urge Muslims all over the world to boycott all Dutch products effective immediately," PAS youth chief Salahuddin Ayub said.

"We firmly express our deepest resentment over the production of the offensive film by Dutch MP Geert Wilders," he added.

The 17-minute film 'Fitna' was released on the Internet on Thursday and has provoked widespread condemnation, with United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-Moon calling it "offensively anti-Islamic".

Dutch businesses on Saturday threatened to sue far-right lawmaker Wilders if his film led to a boycott.

"I don't know if Wilders is rich, or well-insured, but in the case of a boycott, we would look to see if we could make him bear responsibility," Bernard Wientjes, chairman of the Dutch employers' organisation VNO-NCW, told the newspaper Het Financieel Dagblad.

"A boycott would hurt Dutch exports. Businesses such as Shell, Philips and Unilever are easily identifiable as Dutch companies," he was quoted as saying.

'Close down their businesses'

On Saturday, former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad said that if the world's 1.3 billion Muslims boycotted Dutch products, the country's industries would be forced to shut down.

"If Muslims unite, it will be easy to take action. If we boycott Dutch products, they will have to close down their businesses," he told reporters after officiating at an Islamic gathering.

"If the world's 1.3 billion Muslims unite and say they won't buy, then it (the boycott) will be effective," he said.

The film 'Fitna' ('Discord' in Arabic), featuring violent imagery of extremist attacks which it linked to verses from the Koran, was posted on the Internet on Thursday.

Salahuddin said Islam did not condone terrorism.