

PM: Overall solution vital for refugees in Darfur

The Star: 26/6/2007

ROME: A comprehensive solution, ranging from providing food aid, security and education for the refugees in Darfur, is needed if the problem there is to be resolved, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Abdullah, who is the OIC chairman, said that from his recent visit to Darfur, he found the problems there were serious and multi-fold.

"The people who run to Darfur are doing so not only because they are poor or in search of food but also because they need protection.

"I have spoken to the tribal leaders there as well as other world leaders, including the United Nation secretary-general, and informed them of the need for a multi-facet solution," he told Malaysian journalists at the end of the second day of

his visit here.

Abdullah said he also discussed the matter with his Italian counterpart Romano Prodi about the Darfur issue and they both agreed that the situation there was urgent.

Asked if Malaysia was willing to contribute troops as peacekeepers, Abdullah said there had been no such request at the moment as the international thinking was to allow

African states to makeup the majority of the peacekeeping force.

"If there is a request, Malaysia will send its troops," he added.

Abdullah said he had also spoken to Petronas about playing its role to resolve the problems in Darfur.

"As a corporation operating in Sudan, they should contribute by setting up schools and provide food aid," he said.