

NEW STRAITS TIMES

DATE: 29/09/2007

# 'Conflicts due to use of force'

CONFLICTS between Western and Muslim countries occur because of the repeated use of force by powerful nations over the weak to secure strategic or territorial gains, the prime minister said.

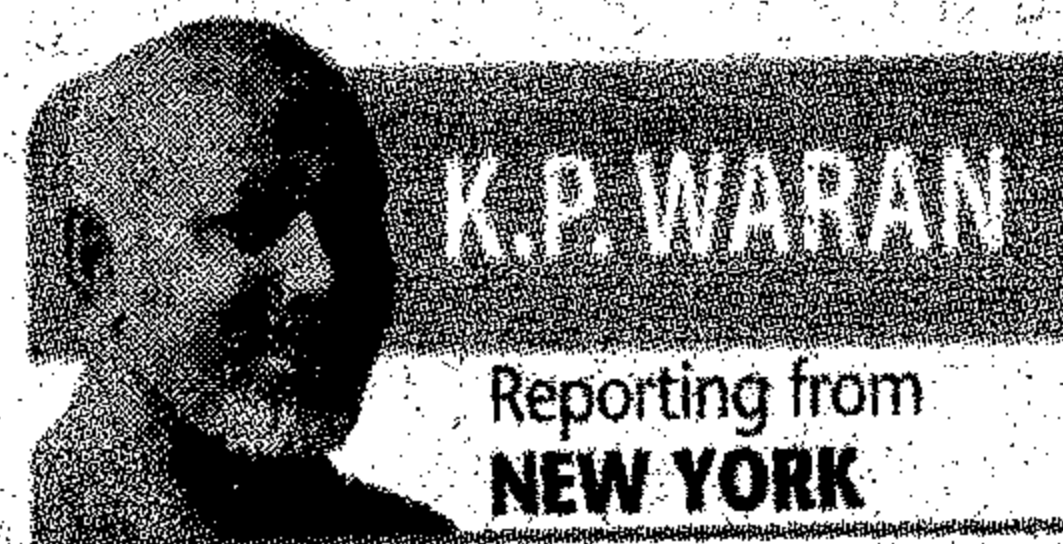
Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said there was a tendency to blame history for this but pointed out that vestiges of these wars for control and domination persisted today as gnawing problems in Afghanistan, Lebanon, the Golan Heights and Iraq.

Addressing the United Nations General Assembly, the prime minister said many of the problems confronting the people of Iraq originated from its foreign occupation.

He stressed that the international community had a responsibility to assist the people of Iraq achieve peace and stability, so that the unity of Iraq as a nation is preserved and its territorial integrity is not compromised.

He said Iraq should take a leaf from Malaysia's experience of power-sharing among different ethnic groups if it wanted to escape from its present political problems.

"The Iraqis should be given full opportunity to determine their own future. For this purpose, Iraq needs a government of national



Reporting from  
**NEW YORK**

unity, which can be achieved through national reconciliation.

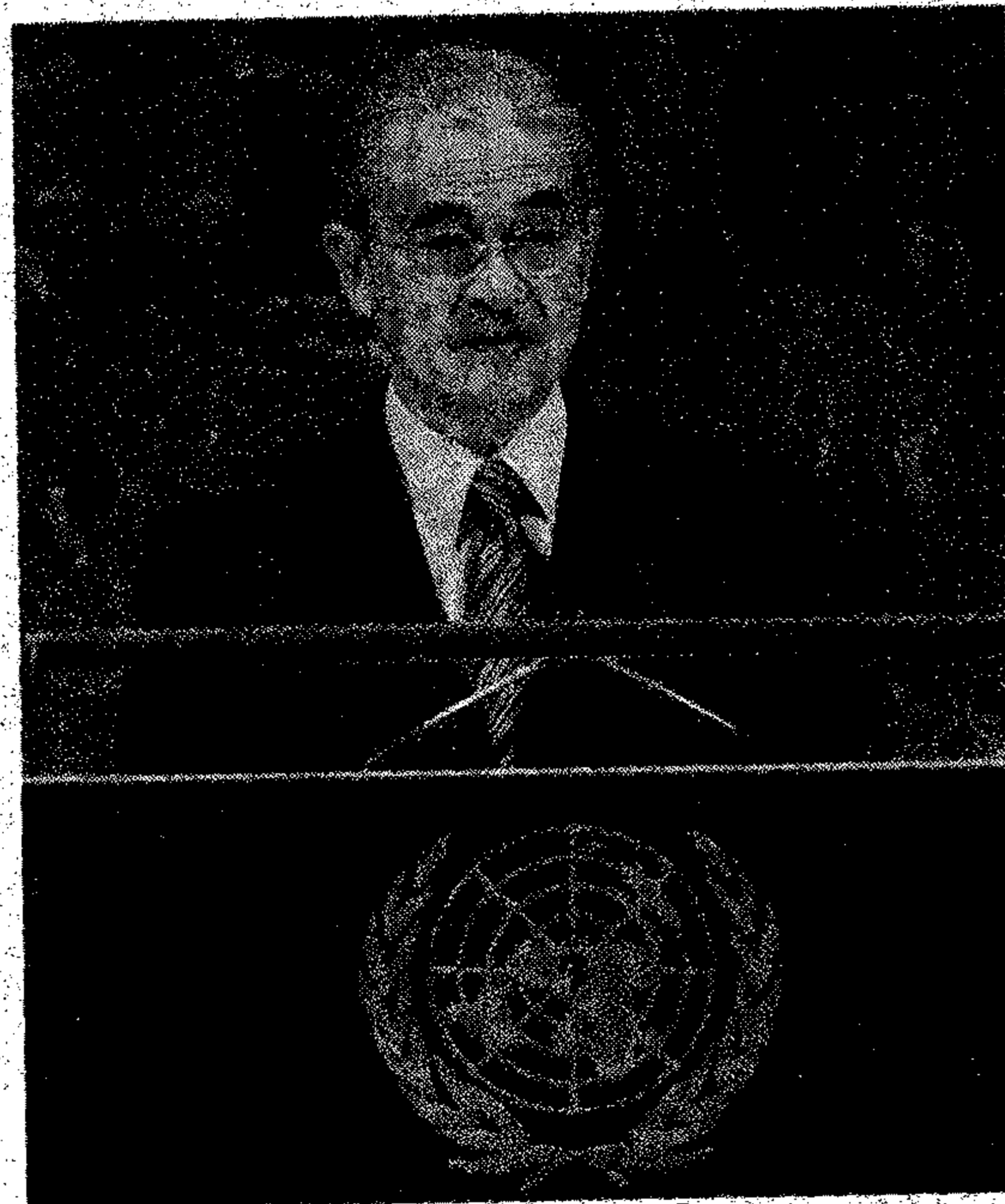
"I put great emphasis on national unity because it has been our experience in Malaysia that national unity is best achieved through the practice of power-sharing in a government in which ethnic groups of different religious faiths are represented.

"This government has succeeded in bringing peace and prosperity to the country for the last 50 years."

Abdullah stressed that the issue of Palestine, which had been festering for 60 years, topped the list of grievances the Islamic world held against the West.

Welcoming the fresh initiatives to bring Israel and the Palestinians, together with other states, for high-level peace talks, he urged the leaderships of the two nations to act courageously to meet the needs and expectations of their citizens who have suffered long enough.

"Of course, real peace can only



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi addressing the 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly at the UN headquarters in New York yesterday. — AP picture

be achieved if the legitimate rights of the people are recognised and protected during the negotiations.

"Palestine had been partitioned before. This should never happen again," he said, urging the international community to play the role of honest brokers in a difficult negotiating process.

Abdullah said the most important issue lying in the way of peace and fraternity between Islamic and Western countries was Palestine, which, once settled, would lead to greater harmony between the two groups.

He said Muslims, on their part, had a responsibility to present to the world the true face of Islam and that it abhorred conflict, more so between Muslims.

He said when disputes arose, Islam enjoined forgiveness and reconciliation through *mushawarah* — engaging in dialogue and peaceful negotiation.

He said the teachings of Islam placed a high premium on peace and development.

In Malaysia, the government employed progressive Islamic

teachings under Islam Hadhari as the basis for good governance to deliver benefits to all sectors of its multi-ethnic and multi-religious society without discrimination.

On climate change, he said the 2007 Report of the Inter-Governmental Panel had made it clear that the scale and urgency of the challenge was greater than was thought and feared.

He said national or regional initiatives to deal with climate change should not be in competition but instead complement each other.

Malaysia would fully support the initiatives during the 13th Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Bali, and there was a need to launch the process of negotiations for a post-2012 agreement, Abdullah said.

He added the international community must recognise that the poorest countries in the world had the least capacity to adapt and should therefore be apportioned the least responsibility to mitigate the impact of climate change.