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# Abdullah: Why should I leave?

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, shocked that Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad would resort to quitting Umno, reiterated that he would not succumb to pressure and step down as party president and prime minister.

"Why should I? I have work to do," Abdullah said in response to Dr Mahathir's demand that he resign to take sole responsibility for the election results.

"What is important now is for the party to remain calm and for members to realise they must be loyal if they want Umno to be strong and to continue with its struggle."

Abdullah was confident the majority of members would stay with the party and support the leadership.

"I know that they care about the party. If they still love the party, they will not leave," he told a packed press conference here yesterday.

Abdullah, however, did not deny that Dr Mahathir's resignation could influence some Umno members to walk out with the former party president.

"Yes, it may happen because we have about three million members. But I don't think the members of parliament will take the same action.

"If we are true Umno members, we must be patient. If a member does not want to be with Umno any more, it means the party's spirit and struggle are no longer in him."

"If they want Umno to be strong, there would be no logic for them to leave the party," he said.

Abdullah said he would not give in to Dr Mahathir's long-running campaign to unseat him from the leadership of the party and country.

"I am a loyal party member who has never left the party and I will continue to fight for the party."

"Umno has contributed much to the people and our nation of many races — it all depends on us," he said.

Dr Mahathir's resignation would be discussed at the next party supreme council meeting but Abdullah dismissed a question on whether he would meet his predecessor.