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For a good cause:
Dr Mahathir releasing a pigeon to signify peace and freedom for the Palestinian people while Adnan looks on during VPM's launch yesterday.

Activist: World must not ignore Palestinian plight

KUALA LUMPUR: The world has to help Palestinians to give them a better lease of life regardless of race, religion and creed, said English broadcaster, journalist and human rights activist Lauren Booth.

Booth, the sister-in-law of former British prime minister Tony Blair, said the Palestinians' suffering was the greatest crime against humanity.

"Israel's oppression of the Palestinian people has killed their dreams, talents and hopes," she said, describing her personal experience in Gaza where she witnessed hundreds of helpless women, children and the elderly survive in terrible conditions.

"It's not up to journalists to make a difference, it's up to you and me," she said in her speech during the launch of Viva Palestina Malaysia (VPM), which was formerly known

as COMPLETE (Coalition of Malaysian NGOs Against the Persecution of Palestinians).

Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who launched the newly named organisation, hoped Malaysians would continue to demonstrate sympathy and understanding towards the problems faced by the people of Gaza until their conflict is resolved.

VPM chairman Datuk Adnan Tahir stressed that the organisation's fight for the Palestinian cause was not for religious reasons but for moral justice.

He said about RM350,000 in donations had been collected for VPM's four ongoing projects in Gaza.

Collection for donations is open until June and those interested can contribute via Paypal at www.vivapalestina-my.org.