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Govt releases Dr M's letters to Israeli PMs

KUALA LUMPUR: The government yesterday made public three letters sent by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to Israeli prime ministers, which clearly show Malaysia's firm stand against Israel's illegal actions and atrocities against the Palestinians.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman said the letters were made public in order to dispel allegations made by certain parties that the government has not been consistent on its stand regarding Palestine and the struggle of the Palestinian people.

In a statement yesterday, he said the three letters were addressed to Yitzhak Rabin (dated Dec 21, 1993); Benjamin Netanyahu (March 14, 1997); and Ehud Barak (June 8, 1999).

During Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's visits to Malacca on Feb 24 and Sekinchan, Selangor on Feb 26, he had said the government was ready to publish several letters from Mahathir to Israeli prime ministers.

"I wish to state that as a matter of

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 policy, Malaysia has consistently over the years publicly supported the struggles of the Palestinian people for a just and lasting comprehensive solution to the Palestine-Israel conflict and for the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state.

"The contents of these letters reflect Malaysia's strong and principled stand against Israel's illegal actions and atrocities that had undermined the peace process by urging Israel to fulfil its obligations by implementing and respecting all agreements signed between Palestine and Israel," said Anifah.

He said this included the Oslo Accords signed by the late Yasser Arafat on behalf of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Shimon Peres of Israel on Sept 13, 1993 on the Principles and Mutual Recognition between Israel and the PLO.

Anifah said as the prime minister then, Mahathir had never expressed support for Israel, including its security in any of these letters, nor did

they reflect implicitly or explicitly that Malaysia had diplomatic relations with Israel.

"Malaysia's readiness to consider establishing relations with Israel is also contingent upon Israel's implementation of all the requirements as stated in the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, including Palestine's submission to become a full member of the UN on the basis of the June 4, 1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif (East Jerusalem) as its capital. This has been the Malaysian government's position all these years," he said.

Anifah said the letters also reflected the role of Mahathir, and Malaysia, as a responsible and respected leader of the international community in trying to facilitate in finding a just and lasting solution to the conflict and to restore the dignity of the long suffering Palestinian people. - Bernama

> See www.theSundaily.my for the three letters



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