

M'sian ports ban Israeli ships

PM: Israel-bound and Israel flag flying vessels cannot load cargo here

PETALING JAYA: In the latest move in support for the Palestinian cause, Malaysia has banned vessels from an Israeli shipping company from docking at its ports.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said also barred from Malaysian ports are ships bearing the Israeli flag and those bound for that nation.

"The Malaysian government has decided to bar and restrict Zim Integrated Shipping Services Ltd, a shipping company based in Israel, from docking at any port," he said in a statement yesterday.

Zim is a publicly-held Israeli international cargo shipping corporation, and the Cabinet has allowed its ships to dock in Malaysia since 2002.

However, the unity government has decided to rescind the decisions of the previous administration.

"This ban is in immediate effect," said Anwar.

He said in addition, any ships hoisting the Israeli flag would not be allowed to dock.

"Aside from that, Malaysia will also prohibit any ships heading to Israel from loading cargo in Malaysian ports. Both these bans also come into effect immediately," he added.

Anwar said the move was in response to Israel violating international laws and ignoring humanitarian principles through its continuous atrocities against Palestinians.

He said Malaysia was confident that the move would not have any effect on Malaysian trade.

Malaysia has always maintained its support for Palestine and condemned the long-standing Israeli occupation, he added.

The latest conflict that began on Oct 7 has claimed thousands of lives.

Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil said the decision to restrict vessels from the Israeli



Not welcome: View of containers at a port in the country. Fahmi said the move to restrict vessels from the Israeli shipping company to dock in our ports sends a clear signal that Malaysia doesn't recognise Israel.

shipping company from docking at Malaysian ports sends a clear signal that the country does not recognise Israel.

He said the move also showed that Malaysia did not want to assist or play any role in the economy that involved Israel.

"The government's policy is consistent as far as Israel is concerned. This latest decision is in line with our policy," he told reporters after an event at the ministry in Putrajaya yesterday.

Fahmi said the decision also reflected Malaysia's commitment to supporting the struggles of the

people in Gaza.

To a question, he said he did not foresee the government's latest stand having an effect on Malaysia's shipping sector or use of its ports.

"I don't have specifics on shipping companies that docked at our ports that are destined for Israel, but I believe the numbers are not too big," he added.

In another development, former premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad supported the government's move, saying that this was to protest Israel's continued violence against Palestinians.

He said Putrajaya initially

allowed Zim Integrated Shipping Services Ltd to dock in Malaysian ports in 2005 because there were ongoing peace talks between Palestine and Israel.

"Unfortunately, all those efforts were clearly in vain because Israel continued to show its brute nature and continued to kill the Palestinian people," he said.