



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim says he was offended by one of the demarche notes which asked Malaysia to use diplomatic channels to ask a 'third country' to not take advantage of the conflict by using a proxy to be involved in clashes in Gaza. BERNAMA PIC

## ISRAEL-PALESTINE WAR

# 'NO FEAR OF PRESSURE IN BACKING PALESTINE'

US issued three demarche notes asking Malaysia to reconsider stance on Hamas, says PM

AHMAD FAIRUZ OTHMAN  
AND NOR AIN MOHAMED RADHI  
KUALA LUMPUR  
news@nst.com.my

Malaysia need not fear the pressure it is getting over its support for the Palestinian cause.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said 119 other countries shared Malaysia's stand and believed the conflict must be resolved by the international community.

"We need not feel worried or scared by any pressure. We are among the countries at the front-line in standing up for the Palestinian cause.

"Malaysia's firm stand is shared by 119 other members of the United Nations during the UN Security Council emergency meeting on Oct 27.

"The government is maintaining its strong stand that Palestinians must be given justice based on international law. This is the real voice of democracy," said Anwar during the Prime Minister's Question Time at the Dewan Rakyat here yesterday.

He said Malaysia received three demarche notes from the United States government over Malaysia's

He said two of them came from the US embassy in Malaysia on Oct 13 and 30, while another was sent to Malaysia's ambassador to the US in Washington, Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz.

A demarche is a formal diplomatic representation of a government's official position, views or wishes on a subject to an official in another government or international organisation. Demarches generally seek to persuade, inform or gather information from a foreign government.

"Due to our reluctance to oppose Hamas and consider them as terrorists, I received information from the Foreign Ministry that we have received two demarche notes from the US embassy and another to our ambassador.

"They asked us not to continue with our stance, especially with our unwillingness to label Hamas as a terrorist group.

"I have responded to this during the recent solidarity rally (in Bukit Jalil), where I emphasised that Malaysia maintains its independent position based on humanitarian considerations and views the invasion (of Gaza) as unlawful and against international rules.

"This is not new and it has been going on for decades since 1948.

"Although we will likely get warnings from many quarters, Malaysia will not bow down to any threat. We cannot tolerate such things, whether done openly or in a disguised way."

To a supplementary question by Wan Ahmad Fayhsal Wan Kamal (Perikatan Nasional-Machang), Anwar said the US' diplomatic note reflected its concern over

notes, which asked Malaysia to use diplomatic channels to ask a "third country" to not take advantage of the conflict by using a proxy to be involved in clashes in Gaza.

"Firstly, I want to clarify that a demarche is not a neutral stance. When a foreign country issues a demarche, it means it has concerns. It does not amount to a protest, but it expresses concern.

"That is why we regarded it as a reminder. Our answer is firm, especially on our relationship with Hamas. Secondly, I was offended following a meeting with a foreign country (representative). The information was relayed and we replied firmly.

"This is why I choose to reply to this directly, so that these countries, including their intelligence agencies, will understand that we will not tolerate this."

On Oct 25, Anwar disclosed that he had received threats from European parliamentarians over Malaysia's position on the Palestine-Israel war, but stressed that he was undeterred by them.

He had said he would explain the threats from European politicians later and did not disclose their identities or which European Union nations were involved.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Razarudin Husain had said the threats against Anwar were real and should not be trivialised or labelled as political manoeuvres for personal gain.

On his recent working visits to Saudi Arabia, Turkiye and Egypt, Anwar said Malaysia had stated its preparedness to work with Muslim countries and other like-minded countries to find a fair