

Parliament: Ideological Differences Not A Hindrance To Diplomatic Ties
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 31 (Bernama) -- Malaysia maintains good diplomatic relations with countries throughout the world, regardless of ideology, political or economic systems.

Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Richard Riot said this included forging bilateral relations with communist or socialist countries. Malaysia has diplomatic relations with five such countries, including China, Laos, Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea.

"Even differing in ideology, it does not hinder bilateral relations," he said, when replying to a question by Datuk Mahfuz Omar (PAS-Pokok Sena) who wishes to know what positive effects arose from such relations.

Richard said bilateral relations with these countries had brought enormous benefits to Malaysia in terms of trade, investment, tourism, education and technology.

"The good relations also provided a positive impact to regional cooperation, as well as multilateral relations to help stabilise the security and stability of the region," he said.

Answering a question by Mahfuz regarding an understanding between Umno and the Chinese Communist Party, Richard said the matter was no longer a problem as it was now government policy.

Further, he said China was now implementing an open door policy, unlike the past when it had a closed door policy.

In August last year, Umno and the Communist Party of China signed a memorandum to allow youth leadership exchanges so youth leaders of both countries could develop a better understanding of the economic and social development taking place in Malaysia and China.

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