

## **Malaysia Can Play More Vital Role In Supporting Palestinian Cause As UNSC Member-Envoy Bernama**

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**By Azzah Mohamad Som**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 6 (Bernama) -- Palestine is confident that Malaysia can play a more vital role unilaterally in supporting the Palestinian cause after being elected a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), said Palestinian ambassador to Malaysia Dr Anwar H. Al Agha.

He said that Malaysia's chairmanship of ASEAN this year and its active involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) as well as the Commonwealth would add impetus to its role in backing the Palestinian issue.

The envoy also hoped that the relationship between the two countries would always remained excellent.

"In this aspect I would like to thank the government of Malaysia and its people for the real support and firm understanding towards our people in Palestine and the Palestinian cause," he told Bernama recently in an interview held in conjunction with the 39th anniversary of the Palestinian "Land Day" on March 30.

He hoped more Malaysians could visit Palestine where the Muslims could pray in the Al Masjidul Al Aqsa al Mubarak (Al-Aqsa Mosque) and the Christians at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem while at the same time see the antiquities, historical and tourist attractions in Palestine.

"The Palestinian leadership and government are exerting extra effort to keep Al-Aqsa Mosque free of the Israeli occupation and stop the Israeli settlers and extremists from attacking Al-Aqsa Mosque and our people within the area of Baitul Maqdis," he added.

He also reiterated the invitation by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to visit Palestine, and pray in the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

On March 30, 1976, thousands of Palestinians marched in towns and villages across the Galilee region, in the north of present-day Israel, to protest Israel's expropriation of vast tracts of Arab-owned land at the expense of the indigenous population.

During the demonstration six Palestinians were killed, hundreds wounded, and hundreds jailed by the Israeli. These events have become consecrated in the Palestinian memory as Land Day.

"Today as we commemorate this anniversary we must tell the whole world, that despite the Israeli occupation forces, atrocities against our people, we will never give up and will always remain steadfast to keep our lands and our people's rights to independence," he said.

He said that the Palestinians would never forget their homeland and the Palestinian refugees, numbering 11,200,000, would always look to the day they could return home.

He also stressed on the need for real support from the international community including the United Nations, European Union and the African Union, to put pressure on the Israeli government to immediately end its occupation and establish the state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

He said that there were about 4,000 Palestinians in Malaysia comprising students, academicians, businessmen and traders.

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