

Malaysia Gains Respect through Presidency of UN Security Council - Ahmad Zahid

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From Khairdzir Md Yunus

NEW YORK, Aug 26 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's presidency of the United Nations Security Council has earned much respect for the policies of the country under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, according to Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

During that time, many issues were raised at the council, one of them being the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, he told Malaysian journalists here.

Ahmad Zahid himself had chaired the council's open debate on the matter, which was held on the initiative of Malaysia as the Security Council president, and in line with its long-standing principled position on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also Home Minister, had been in the United States since Aug 22 on a five-day working visit.

He also said that the protection of children in armed conflicts was another issue that was discussed by the UN Security Council under Malaysia's presidency.

Malaysia had also chaired the working group on Children and Armed Conflict, he said.

Ahmad Zahid said Malaysia and the UN Security Council viewed with grave concern the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeeping forces stationed in conflict zones.

He also said that Malaysia under Najib's leadership played an active role in the Non-Aligned Movement and that Malaysia would attend the NAM Summit scheduled for next month in Venezuela.

Malaysia also offered much assistance on the issue of migrants and refugees, especially from Syria and Myanmar, he said, pointing out that at the UN General Assembly last year Najib gave Malaysia's commitment to accept 3,000 Syrian refugees over a period of five years.

Besides helping Syrian refugees, it was also the policy of the Najib government to help the Rohingya refugees, he said.

Ahmad Zahid said the government was also actively addressing and combating international terrorism with the help and cooperation of the international police force, Interpol.

The radicalisation of detainees suspected to be terrorists, pioneered by Malaysia, had been adopted at the international level, he said.

"Malaysia also actively contributed security forces comprising members of the Royal Malaysia Police and Malaysian Armed Forces to serve under the UN banner in Lebanon," he said.

Ahmad Zahid said the Palestinian issue was one of the key issues championed by Malaysia in the UN Security Council, especially the right to self-determination based on the 1967 borders.

"As a member of the UN Security Council, Malaysia has held an informal meeting of the council on the situation in Gaza, while in May this year, we held another meeting to urge for international protection of the rights of Palestinians often oppressed by Israel.

"The Najib-led government has also provided various forms of humanitarian assistance, including medicines, to refugees and facilitated humanitarian outreach by NGOs to the refugees.

"The Malaysian government also provided much assistance to disaster victims, especially in neighbouring countries, including extending the assistance of the SMART rescue teams and civil defence teams as well as Malaysian Armed Forces personnel besides helping to reduce the risk of disaster.

"Under the leadership of Najib, the country's foreign policies have been translated for implementation," said Ahmad Zahid.

He also said that Malaysia had made available a food warehouse at the military airbase in Subang to help victims of disasters in Asia.

This visit is Ahmad Zahid's third to the United States since his appointment as the deputy prime minister in July last year.

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