

## **Mahathir tells Trump to be consistent**

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NEW YORK, Sept 27 (Bernama) – Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said there is a need for United States President Donald Trump to be consistent, including over policy matters on Asia.

"Be consistent. If you want to fight us say you want to fight us. If you don't want to fight us and you want (us) to be friends, say so and (let's) be friends," the Malaysian prime minister, who is here for the United Nations General Assembly, said.

He was fielding a question on what would be his advice to Trump to do differently regarding policy in Asia at a meeting with members of the US Council on Foreign Relations on Wednesday.

Queried on his assessment of Trump, the 93-year-old Dr Mahathir said he did not know how to make any opinion about the president.

"Because he changes his views even in a matter of hours," he said, citing Trump's fluctuating stand over whether or not to hold a meeting with the leader of another country as an example.

"So it's very difficult to make out what he wants to do. Dealing with people who are not consistent is a very big problem," the prime minister said.

Dr Mahathir said he got the impression that the US president "doesn't not know much about Asia and therefore he makes decisions that are not based on realities of the facts on the ground". "And he seems to be thinking about America and thinking only how to make America great again. He's not thinking about foreign relations," Dr Mahathir said.

The prime minister pointed out that the US response to any particular crisis "is to send warships" which he thought was not a very good idea.

"It creates tension, it's a kind of provocation. That's why Malaysia has expressed its foreign policy in terms of not having warships stationed in that area," he said, referring to key waterways of the South China Sea and the Strait of Melaka.

Queried what the balance of power would look like in Asia and the world in the future, he said: "Fifteen to 20 years from now would mean that Mr Trump is not going to be around. I think that other Americans are quite reasonable people. People realise that peace is better than war."

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