

Dr Mahathir plans to shame "big five" into surrendering veto power

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NEW YORK, 29 Sept (Bernama) – Just hours after delivering his address at the 73rd United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad revealed that he has plans to shame the “big five” in the UN into surrendering their veto power.

The “big five” refers to the countries that are permanent members in the United Nations Security Council and have veto powers, They are the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China.

After making a return from a 15-year absence from the UN, he said that he was disappointed with the UN for failing to bring reform to the veto system.

“I hope to shame them into dropping their veto power. People must tell them it is very undemocratic,” he told the Malaysia media here Friday.

Dr Mahathir said the superpowers in the UN are not fit to talk on regime change in other countries “if you can’t even give us some democracy in an international body,”.

“It’s not a nice thing, its hypocritical. On one hand you say they all must be democratic, and you cause regime change and lots of civil wars in order for democracy (to flourish).

”But here all you have to do is give up your veto power but they are not happy to do so,” he said.

Dr Mahathir was asked on his hopes after making his latest called for the UN veto system to be reformed . Dr Mahathir had suggested that a veto should not be by just one permanent member but by at least two backed by three non-permanent members of the

Security Council and the General Assembly should then back the decision with a simple majority.

Previously, Dr Mahathir had made the same call when he attended the UN general assembly in 2003.

Today, he admitted that the situation of the world was even worse.

“Things have gotten worse. In 2003 there were no wars in the Middle-East though there was the Iraqi war... but not widespread then. Now we see wars in Yemen, Syria and whole problem about the Palestinians being ejected from their own country is still there, and quite bad.

“The world doesn’t seem to have any real direction. At the beginning, when they formed the UN it was to prevent wars. But whereas Europe and North America seem to have avoided war, there are serious wars in Central Asia, so I don’t think we have learnt to live together.”

Dr Mahathir said that he was baffled that countries no longer seem to want to work together

“People who before wanted to unite and work together and cooperate but are now breaking up.

“The regional associations are now very weak, Nafta (North America Free Trade Area) is not really functioning . The European Union is breaking up with Britain leaving. Even among the members remaining in the EU there does not seem to be a unanimity of ideas and actions”.

Asked on the new Malaysia foreign policy under Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah, Dr Mahathir said: “Malaysia’s foreign policy is simple. We want to be friendly to all but maintain our right to speak our minds. So some things I say may be very well received but I

need to say it clearly because that is Malaysia's stand.

"I hope I did not offend anyone, not if you need to be truthful, you need to say things which may not sound nice to certain leaders but if I need to say it, I will say it," he said.

Dr Mahathir also hinted that Malaysia is looking into following Japan's constitution which prevents them from going into war.'

He said amendments to the constitution will be made to forbid soldiers to be sent anywhere into conflict.

"Japan is the only country that does not want to be involved in aggressive wars. Japan must defend itself so its army is known as a defence force.

"We are thinking of following Japan's current constitution to prevent us from going to war," he said.

Dr Mahathir five-day working visit to New York ends today.

The Prime Minister and wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali are scheduled to leave here today (Saturday 10am New York time) for London to continue the second leg of his working visit from Sept 29 to Oct 1 before heading home..

Dr Mahathir visited United Kingdom from Sept 21 to Sept 25 during the first-leg trip.

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