

UN must be reformed, says Dr Mahathir

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From Roslan Ariffin

NEW YORK, Sept 28 (Bernama) --- After a 15 year-absence from the United Nations, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today makes his return and boldly repeated his call for a reform of the world body.

Presenting Malaysia's statement at the 73rd United Nations General Assembly the Prime Minister said: "When I last spoke here in 2003, I lamented how the world had lost its way. I bemoaned the fact that small countries continued to be at the mercy of the powerful.

"I argued the need for the developing world to push for reform, to enhance capacity building and diversify the economy. We need to maintain control of our destiny".

He said sadly that 15 years later the world had not changed much.

"If at all the world is far worse than 15 years ago. Today the world is in a state of turmoil economically, socially and politically," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he had years ago called for a reform of the United Nations

"Five countries on the basis of their victories 70 over years ago cannot claim to have a right to hold the world to ransom forever.

"They cannot take the moral high ground, preaching democracy and regime change in the countries of the world when they deny democracy in this organisation," he said.

Dr Mahathir had suggested that the veto should not be by just one permanent member but by at least two powers backed by three non-permanent members of the Security Council.

“The General Assembly should then back the decision with a simple majority. I will not say more,” he said.

On another note, the Prime Minister hoped the world could emulate Malaysians who opted for change for the better when they ousted their government who had been in power for 61 years.

“We did this because the immediate past Government indulged in the politics of hatred, of racial and religious bigotry, as well as widespread corruption. The process of change was achieved democratically, without violence or loss of lives,” he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians wanted a new Malaysia that upholds the principles of fairness, good governance, integrity and the rule of law.

“They want a Malaysia that is a friend to all and enemy of none. A Malaysia that remains neutral and non-aligned. A Malaysia that detests and abhors wars and violence.

“They also want a Malaysia that will speak its mind on what is right and wrong, without fear or favour. A new Malaysia that believes in co-operation based on mutual respect, for mutual gain,” he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians believed in the goodness of cooperation, a prosperous and stable neighbour would contribute to our own prosperity and stability.

He said under the new Pakatan Harapan government the new Malaysia would firmly espouse the principles promoted by the UN in our international engagements.

“These include the principles of truth, human rights, the rule of law, justice, fairness, responsibility and accountability, as well as sustainability.

"It is within this context that the new government of Malaysia has pledged to ratify all remaining core UN instruments related to the protection of human rights," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the process would not be easy as Malaysia was a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-lingual nation.

"We will accord space and time for all to deliberate and to decide freely based on democracy," he said.

Ending his speech, Dr Mahathir admitted that the world without the UN would be disastrous and it should be sustained with sufficient funds.

"After 15 years and at 93, I return to this podium with the heavy task of bringing the voice and hope of the new Malaysia to the world stage.

"The people of Malaysia, proud of their recent democratic achievement, have high hopes that around the world, we will see peace, progress and prosperity. In this we look towards the UN to hear our pleas," he said.

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