

PM: Protest against Israel must continue

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KUALA LUMPUR: Countries must continue voicing their protest against Israel's actions towards Palestine although the United Nations Security Council has a history of shooting down resolutions made against the country, the Prime Minister said.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said that if the countries were consistent in pushing for matters they felt were important, the global views would eventually bring about some changes.

He said resolutions against Israel brought to the Security Council were often plagued with problems either in getting them implemented or passed.

"This is disappointing," he said at the Police Family Day held at the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia in Kepong near here yesterday.

However, he said, countries including those in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), both of

which Malaysia is currently chairing, should not be hampered by the council's tendency to veto the resolutions.

"We cannot neglect and set aside the negotiation process in the United Nations.

"Whatever we feel is right should be brought up at debates and discussions. If in the end we face problems in getting the resolutions implemented, there is not much we can do," he said.

Abdullah said he hoped the NAM ministerial committee meeting on Palestine which would be held here on Wednesday would be as successful as the OIC special meeting last month.

The special meeting came up with a declaration on Palestine which asked for Israel to respect international laws and condemned attacks on Palestinian leaders.

Abdullah said countries such as Malaysia had long voiced out the need to reform the structure of the United Nations so that the voice of the developing countries would be considered.

He said their views against wrongful acts, if voiced continuously, would



CLOSER LOOK: Abdullah inspecting an antique pistol before using it to launch the Police Family Day at the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia in Kepong yesterday. — Bernamapic

eventually bear results.

He said when the media highlighted the torture of prisoners by US soldiers at the Abu Ghraib jail in Iraq and several countries reacted to it, President George W. Bush had to apologise.

"Why would he apologise if he thought it never happened?" he said.

Abdullah added that the US must ensure that the torture of Iraqi prisoners by US soldiers stopped.

In Kota Tinggi, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said Bush

and his Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld should personally apologise to the prisoners who were abused.

He said they should also seek forgiveness from the prisoners' families.

"We think that the public apology by Bush is just not enough. They were humiliated by people from a so-called highly civilised country," he said after attending a thanksgiving lunch organised by the Kampung Makam Umno branch here yesterday.