Group glad proposal was well received

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PUTRAJAYA: For months the Council of former MPs and State Assemblymen (Mubarak) discussed the deteriorating relations between Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The council's worst fear was that failure of the two leaders to meet and address the contentious issues, could be exploited by certain parties.

Mubarak's acting president Datuk Abu Zahar Ujang said members of the council were sad when differences between the two leaders came to light.

"We believe that as long as they do not meet and talk, the problems cannot be resolved. For the sake of the country we want them to bury the hatchet," he said.

He said the members then decided to take the initiative to bring about a reconciliation between the present Prime Minister and his predecessor.

Selected members from the council then began initiating steps to bring about a meeting between them.

"We met both Abdullah and Dr Mahathir to discuss the possibility of having a heart-to-heart talk with each other.

"We knew, firstly, they must be willing.

"Thankfully they were positive to the idea and our proposal was well received by the two leaders.

"Our intention is we want the best for the country. Mubarak embarked on this initiative collectively after much thought and discussion and we went about it secretly because we had no intention of seeking publicity," he said.

The news that a one-on-one meeting between Abdullah and Dr Mahathir has become a reality, has brought a sigh of relief to Abu Zahar and members of the council.

"We pray that the meeting will bring something good," he added.