

Mukhriz draws flak for remark

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KUALA LUMPUR: Umno Youth last night absolved itself of any responsibility over Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir's deriding of Umno president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's policy speech, saying the Umno Youth executive council member's remark was extreme and an embarrassment for the movement.

Umno Youth chief Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said it was sad that Mukhriz had made such a remark when he was a senior executive council member of the movement, and added that it was his (Mukhriz's) personal stand and sentiment.

"On behalf of Umno Youth, I state that Mukhriz's remark is not reflective of Umno Youth's stand and view.

"We have expressed our undivided support for the president and I observed that Umno Youth had given ample recognition to the contributions of Tun (Dr Mahathir Mohamad).

"I do not know what else they want from us in Umno Youth. Enough is enough," he told reporters after attending a dinner hosted by Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Najib Razak for assembly delegates.

Mukhriz had said in a report carried in *The Star* newspaper yesterday that he was a "little bit" disappointed with the presidential speech and claimed that it offered nothing new.

Mukhriz, who is chairman of Umno Youth's International Relations and Non-Governmental Organisations Bureau, said he thought that the address was similar to the speech delivered last year.

Hishammuddin said he would have to reconsider Mukhriz's position in the Umno Youth executive council line-up if he made any more offending remarks.

Meanwhile, Kedah Menteri Besar and state Umno chief Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid said there was no truth to Mukhriz's remark that Abdullah's speech lacked content because the Umno president had talked about an important agenda of the Malays.

Kubang Pasu Umno division chief Datuk Johari Baharom also expressed disappointment with Mukhriz's remark and said he was too emotional.

"One cannot get too emotional in politics even if it involves the family.

"We have to give priority to the party's struggle and agenda, not personal matters," he said.

Meanwhile, Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Azalina Othman Said stressed that the contents of Abdullah's speech were a score card and a performance index which enabled the prime minister to subject himself to fair evaluation.

"His speech indicated extraordinary openness," she said, adding that those who derided the Umno president's speech did not understand the role of the party in government. — Bernama