



PRESS RELEASE

UNDP & Government of Malaysia sign agreement on the first multi-dimensional Peacekeeping Training Centre in Southeast Asia

A USD\$1million grant from the UNDP-Japan Partnership Fund will support the training of Asian and African peacekeepers, with a particular focus on civilian-military relations and gender issues.

Putrajaya, 9 April 2010 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Malaysia today agreed on a new joint project aimed at transforming the Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Centre (MPTC) in Port Dickson into the first-of-its-kind, multi-dimensional peacekeeping training centre in the region.

Signing the agreement on behalf of the Malaysian Government was Dato' Noriyah Ahmad, Director General, Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department, who said, "The provision of funding under the UNDP-Japan Partnership Fund for this project is most welcomed as it enables us to participate in the global agenda for peacekeeping. As the UNDP is at the forefront of this initiative, Malaysia looks forward to provide support and cooperation in this area and learn more from the experience of UNDP".

Representing UNDP was Mr. Kamal Malhotra, Resident Representative for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam, who said, "This project is of strategic importance to Malaysia since it builds not only on the country's long-standing and continuing commitment to international peace and security, but also its commitment to South-South Cooperation, through which it will share its experience in this area with other Asian and African countries."

Mr. Malhotra added, "The project is also significant because it hopes to transform the existing Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Centre into a world-renowned peacekeeping facility which will be the first in South East Asia to emphasize the multidimensional aspects of peacekeeping, focusing on civil-military coordination and gender issues such as the protection of women and children against sexual violence in situations of conflicts".

Witnessing the signing was H.E. Masahiko Horie, the Ambassador of Japan to Malaysia, who said, "Japan also intends to make personnel contributions to this project, for instance, by dispatching Japanese experts."

The USD\$1million contribution from the Government of Japan, channelled through the UNDP-Japan Partnership Fund, will support the development of a two-year training programme that will transform the Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Centre (MPTC) from a primarily national training centre for Malaysian military personnel, into a centre that will train both national and international (Asian and African) armed forces personnel, as well as civilian police and civilians, in preparation for operational duties in UN peacekeeping missions around the world.

In response to the increasing complexity of working in conflict-torn countries, peacekeeping missions today are expected to operate in ways which go beyond their original mandate of maintaining peace and security. Such missions today are, for example, increasingly involved with assisting political processes, supporting judicial reform, training law enforcement and police forces, disarming and reintegrating former combatants, and supporting the return of internally displaced persons and refugees.

As a consequence, both the new training curriculum and programmes developed as a result of this project will emphasize the multidimensional aspects of peacekeeping, with a special focus on civil-military coordination, and the gender aspects of peacekeeping operations to enable the protection of women and children caught in armed conflicts.

The project, entitled '*Capacity Building Support for Malaysia's Role in Multidimensional Peacekeeping Training*', will be jointly managed by UNDP and the Ministry of Defence Malaysia, which established the Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Centre in 1996. The Centre has trained over 20,000 Malaysian military personnel who have participated in over 25 missions to more than 20 countries to date. Malaysia's first UN peacekeeping mission was to the Republic of Congo in 1960, soon after it joined the United Nations in 1957.

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