

issue could be best exemplified on his action to consistently commemorate Al-Aqsa Day on August 21 as a mark of solidarity with the Palestinian brothers. Special commemorative "Palestinian Day" postage stamps were also issued by the Malaysian postal authority in 1981 and 1982 as a show of symbolic support for the Palestinian cause.³³ One important event, which demonstrated Malaysia's aggressive posture on the issue of Palestine, was its successful hosting in Kuala Lumpur in May 1983 of the UN-sponsored Conference on Palestine for Asia and the Pacific. The five-day conference was attended by some 200 delegates from forty-one countries and International organizations. In his keynote address, Tun Dr. Mahathir had not only condemned the Israeli aggression, but also criticized its allies for hypocrisy and double-standards.

As mentioned earlier, the Palestinian issue had widely spread throughout the 1980's among the Malaysian public. For illustration, on July 4, 1982, ABIM and the Malaysian Muslim Scholars had organized the Palestinian Solidarity Day in Petaling Jaya. One of the resolutions adopted on the occasion was the call upon all Muslims to forge a united struggle to free Jerusalem from Israeli occupation, and to make fullest use of their resources, including influence, economic and military power, to create an independent Palestinian nation. On May 3, 1983 another mass rally took place in conjunction with the 5-day Conference on the Question of Palestine. In his address to a 5,000 crowd, Anwar Ibrahim, the UMNO-Youth Chief who was also Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister Department, stressed that Malaysians should continue giving moral and material support to the Palestinians to show Israel that its invasion of Lebanon is being condemned by the world. ABIM and many newspapers successfully launched a campaign to collect funds in aid of the Palestinians and other victims of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. A total of M\$1.29 million was handed over to Mr. Farouk Kadoumi, who headed the PLO delegation to the Asian Conference on the Question of Palestine held in Kuala Lumpur.

33. Mohd. Yusof Ahmad, op. cit., pg. 277