

Democracy vital for global peace, stability

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Democratic societies are the best guarantee for global peace and stability as only democracy will rise to the challenges that the new world order demands, the president of the 47th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr Stoyan Ganev, said today.

He said democracies did not go to war against other democracies and added that democracy required respect for human rights.

"Democracy requires an understanding of the rights of minority groups and a willingness to tolerate the more vulnerable groups.

"To secure peace today, leaders must overcome the deeply-rooted antagonisms that polarise the people of their respective States," he said when addressing for-

eign diplomats and Wisma Putra officials at the Diplomacy and Foreign Relations Institute here.

The session was chaired by former Foreign Minister Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie.

Ganev said with the fall of communism, ideological barriers had collapsed and new opportunities for international co-operation were created.

"Recent developments are not only unprecedented, they were unthinkable even a short time ago.

"Previously, it would have been inconceivable for me or my counterparts throughout Eastern Europe to hold the positions we now hold under the umbrella of democracy," said Ganev, who was the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria.