

# Good chance for South-South co-operation

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Malaysia's diplomatic and ideologically untarnished attempt at forming the oft-mooted Commission of the South on development issues offers the best opportunity in years for real co-operation to take shape.

Sources said Malaysia would avoid making too many demands over the formation of the commission fearing that it might lead jealous rivals to hobble the plan.

Malaysian officials would want the proposed commission headquartered here but fear that it would prompt competing countries to put a spoke in the wheels, they said.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced yesterday that he had accepted the chairmanship of a steering committee to set up the commission.

The proposed commission was the most fussed-over consequence of the Kuala Lumpur

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By KAMRUL IDRIS

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Statement, the communique which was a result of the South-South II Conference.

Sources said the Statement was greeted with a great deal of excitement. Past attempts at a similar undertaking had failed because originating countries were too eager to rig national symbols upon the commission set-up.

## National egoism

"What makes it different now is that this attempt involves a country that does not seek the chairmanship, does not seek a secretariat in its capital nor anything that would dominate the entire process," they said.

They said Dr Mahathir's credentials as a leader with no ideological axes to grind and who is "completely pragmatic and interested only in results,"

gave this initiative better chances of success.

The commission has been a fervent desire since the earliest days of Third World consciousness. It had been suggested as early as the Bandung conference and Belgrade meetings, which conceived South-South co-operation and Third World multi-lateralism respectively, almost 20 years ago.

There had been no intention to project Malaysia nor had there been any expression of "national egoism," they said.

Sources said that Dr Mahathir would begin a "full consultative process," meeting all heads of Government to ensure a thorough consensus before the commission is constituted.

The commission's score of members would contain a mix of private individuals and official representatives.