

Commitment to the fight must
be backed by political will

Dr M calls for all-out dadah war

NST 18 JUN 1987

From ZAINON AHMAD

VIENNA, Wed. — Malaysia, leading the global offensive against dadah abuse, today called on members of the international community to back their commitment to the war against the scourge with the desired political will.

It said the experiences of those compelled to exert the required political will due to dire necessity should alone influence them to the need of the involvement of those at the highest political level.

Only then would the international co-operation for a campaign against the dadah menace be effective.

"The dadah problem that confronts us is of such magnitude, such complexity that an effective counter would require our fullest commitment, co-operation and sustained action," said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in his statement to the general committee after taking the chair as president of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (ICDAIT).

He said the expression of commitment that must emanate from the conference was important not only as a reference and reminder of a Government's moral obligation, but also be a powerful message to the dadah traffickers that their activities could not continue with impunity.

Equally important was the message to the international community, to public opinions, and to the ordinary man in the street that their Governments have now agreed to act in concert against the traffickers.

For all these messages to get through, it was important that the primary and rightful focus of the conference be the clear drafting of its "decisions so that there can be no ambiguity that the determination to eliminate illicit dadah trafficking is unequivocal and their resolve to help those already given to addiction to enable them to return as useful members of society is unquestioned."

Dr Mahathir called for regional and inter-re-

home:

NST 18 JUN 1987

★ FROM PAGE ONE

gional co-operation.

"While there has been co-operation between the European Economic Community and Asean, there is a strong potential for developing such co-operation between the sub-regions of Asia, Africa, Western Europe and the Americans."

While he commended the past roles of such international institutions as the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC), World Health Organisation (WHO), and the International Labour Organisations (ILO) in the fight against dadah abuse, he also called for the strengthening of their roles in future.

He said these institutions must be able to supplement the national, regional and inter-regional efforts.

Dr Mahathir said member countries must return from the conference with steely resolve to win the war at home.

The conference would only be a success if the joint efforts and co-operation it generated were translated into genuine and sustained actions domestically.

He said the tide of the battle could not be turned around until members have raised that level of awareness that dadah kills and destroys.

"The battlefield is in each individual household, each community, each country," he said.