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SUMMIT-MAHATHIR RRR

KUALA LUMPUR, JUNE 3 (BERNAMA) -- THE GROUP OF 15 (G-15) SUMMIT IS THE FIRST BIG STEP TAKEN TOWARDS A MORE CONCRETE COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE SOUTH, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

DESCRIBING THE INAUGURAL THREE-DAY SUMMIT AS VERY SUCCESSFUL, HE SAID THE MEETING WAS NOT A GATHERING FOR LEADERS TO MAKE STATEMENTS OR AIR THEIR VIEWS BUT RATHER A FORUM TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS FOR SOLVING SOME OF THE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE SOUTH AND HOW THEY COULD BENEFIT FROM THEIR OWN WEALTH.

"WE ARE AWARE THAT WE DO NOT REPRESENT THE SOUTH AS SUCH BUT WE CAN CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS SOLVING SOME OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE SOUTH THROUGH INCREASING COOPERATION BETWEEN AND AMONG COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH," HE SAID AT A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE AT THE END OF THE SUMMIT

ALTHOUGH LEADERS OF THE OTHER G-15 MEMBER COUNTRIES WERE ALSO PRESENT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE, ALMOST ALL THE QUESTIONS WERE DIRECTED AT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WHO CHAIRED THE SUMMIT.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE SUMMIT MARKED THE FIRST TIME THAT A SMALL GROUP OF COUNTRIES, REPRESENTING ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THE FOUR BILLION PEOPLE IN THE SOUTH, HAD GOT TOGETHER NOT TO MAKE COUNTRY STATEMENTS WHICH CHARACTERISED MEETINGS OF BIG GROUPINGS. -- MORE
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SUMMIT-MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR (LAST)

HE SAID SUCH COUNTRY STATEMENTS AND RHETORIC WERE USUALLY NOT FOLLOWED UP BY ACTION THREE OR FOUR YEARS LATER WHEN THE BIG GROUPINGS MET AGAIN. IN CONTRAST, THE G-15 WAS CERTAIN OF ITS DIRECTIONS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID AGREEMENT REACHED AT THE SUMMIT, ESPECIALLY COMMON APPROACHES TO TACKLE THE EXTERNAL DEBT PROBLEM AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BENEFIT ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES REPRESENTED SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS.

THE SUMMIT ALSO AGREED THAT THE G-15 SHOULD CONTINUE TO FUNCTION WITH AN ANNUAL SUMMIT TO BE HELD.

+PROSPECTS FOR THE G-15 ARE GOOD,+ HE ADDED.

PERUVIAN PRIME MINISTER GUILLERMO LARCO-COX TOLD THE PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE SUMMIT MARKED A POINT OF DEPARTURE TOWARDS A NEW APPROACH ADOPTED BY SOUTH COUNTRIES TO GIVE ADEQUATE TREATMENT TO PROBLEMS FACED BY THEM

THE G-15 WAS AN ACTION GROUP WHICH THE SOUTH COUNTRIES HAD LONG FELT THE NEED TO SET UP, HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA
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