

PM: Success will depend on action

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RIO DE JANEIRO: The success of the Earth Summit will depend very much on what happens after the conference, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

"At this point in time, we may agree to a lot of things because of political reasons or because of commitments," he told Malaysian journalists here.

He said, however, the summit could be regarded as successful to a certain extent as it had brought together over 100 heads of government to discuss environment and development issues.

"That means that there is a greater consciousness about the environment unlike 20 years ago at the Stockholm Conference

(touted as the first global conference on the environment) where many heads of government were not invited.

"If there was a consciousness then, it was limited while now it is vibrant," said Dr Mahathir who had arrived here in the morning.

He also stressed the importance for developed countries to commit themselves to quantums and target dates to increase development aid to the developing countries.

Except for a few countries, Dr Mahathir said the North had failed to live up to their commitment to provide official development aid (ODA) amounting to 0.7 per cent of their GNP.

"If we don't have figures, it will be even more difficult to achieve. So I



think it is worthwhile for us to state a figure and the percentage," he said.

He also reiterated the need to implement a set of principles on forests first before a convention could be drawn up, stressing that nations should have independence in managing their forests.

"At this point in time, there need not be any convention governing forests in different countries in

the world," he said.

He said, however, there was a need to establish principles on forest on which nations should manage their forest.

"There may come a time when a convention may be needed but not at this moment," he said.

He also said Malaysia was standing by its position of not signing the climate change convention as it was "so diluted that it carried no meaning."

On his meeting with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl earlier in the evening, Dr Mahathir said they discussed the general situation in the world economy and environment.

Dr Mahathir had earlier hosted a reception for Summit delegates.