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Poland-roundup

BRIGHTER M'SIA-POLAND RELATIONS ON THE CARDS

By: Muin Abdul Majid

KUALA LUMPUR, March 23 (Bernama) -- With a confidence derived from its newly-found freedom and economic reform, Poland is now ready to get down to business with countries in other dynamic regions of the world.

The Polish Prime Minister Dr Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz's visit to Malaysia and several other countries in Southeast Asia underscores the aggressive approach his government is taking to promote bilateral and multilateral trade and investment, and cooperation in other fields.

Talks between the Polish leader, who arrived here yesterday for a three-day visit, and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad resulted in promises of greater cooperation in those fields.

They both agreed that the 1995 bilateral trade amount of RM300 million (US\$120 million) was not good enough and steps must be taken to rectify this.

According to the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (NCCIM) vice-president, Senator Datuk V.K.K Teagarajan, the figure accounted for only 0.1 per cent of Malaysia's overall trade.

At a business luncheon organised by NCCIM in honour of Dr Cimoszewicz today, Teagarajan disclosed that recent figures showed that Malaysian investment in Poland was zero while Poland's investment here was relatively small.

He said the main problem could be the lack of information exchange between the two countries.

Not for long, as Dr Cimoszewicz said both he and Dr Mahathir agreed that a more dynamic and aggressive approach should be launched by the Polish Agency of Foreign Investment and the Malaysian Investment and Development Authority.

Teagarajan underlined a few areas where the private sectors of both countries could join hands such as energy, oil and gas extraction and food processing.

Apart from economic matters, Malaysia and Poland also agreed to cooperate in other areas, ranging from transportation to the reconstruction of Bosnia Herzegovina.

The national carriers of both countries might soon link Kuala Lumpur and Warsaw with the decision by the two sides to revive the dormant air services agreement signed in 1975.

That, and Poland's promise to look into the visa problem faced by Malaysians wishing to travel there, could spell the increase in the number of contacts between the people of the two countries.

Dr Cimoszewicz has also conveyed his president's invitation to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Najihah to visit Poland. The Polish Prime Minister extended a similar invitation to Dr Mahathir.

Dr Cimoszewicz, his wife Barbara and the rest of the Polish delegation are now in the island resort of Langkawi. They will fly home tomorrow. --
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