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Abdullah-WTO

MALAYSIA PREPARED FOR WTO CONFERENCE, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 16 (Bernama) -- Malaysia says it has made adequate preparations for the World Trade Organisation conference in December in Singapore and will not bow down to any pressure to accept conditions that are not linked to trade.

"We have explained this stand many times and we are prepared to face any challenges," Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad warned that there might be attempts by certain major powers to dominate the WTO conference to stunt Asia's economic growth.

Abdullah said Malaysia would thwart any attempt to get the country to accept conditions that were not linked to trade such as environmental and labour issues.

The Foreign Minister, who was speaking to reporters after receiving Kazakhstan's Supreme Economic Council Vice Chairman Erzhan Utembaev at his office, said Malaysia and Kazakhstan would upgrade bilateral trade ties especially at the private sector level.

Abdullah said Utembaev's visit was aimed at establishing closer cooperation between the two countries, especially among senior official and economic planners.

He said Malaysia was willing to accept trainees and officials from Kazakhstan to undergo training in this country in various fields as well as being exposed to projects in rural areas.

Calling on Malaysian firms to set up joint-ventures in Kazakhstan, he said there were a lot of opportunities in the mining, petro-chemical, mineral, construction and tourism industries in the republic. -- BERNAMA

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