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Abdullah: Relations with HK will remain the same

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - The Malaysian Commission in Hong Kong will become a consul's office when China assumes control over the British colony on July 1.

Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he had signed a document to that effect with his Chinese counterpart during a visit to the country on May 14.

Malaysian Commissioner in Hong Kong Zakaria Sulong will stay as consul-general.

Abdullah said trade relations with Hong Kong would continue as usual despite the handover.

He said the consulate-general would, among others, be responsible for trade affairs but political matters have to be referred to the Malaysian embassy in Beijing.

He was speaking to reporters after a meeting with Jamaican Industry, Commerce and Investments Minister Dr Paul Robertson at Wisma Putra.

They discussed the transition of power in Hong Kong, Malaysia's ties with Taiwan and China and the G-15 summit meeting to be hosted by Malaysia this year.

Abdullah expressed Malaysia's hope that Jamaican Prime Minister Noel James Patterson would attend the meeting.

Robertson said Patterson would attend the summit if it did not clash with Jamaica's general election.

"We agreed that co-operation between South-South countries has to be intensified for mutual benefits and G-15 can be a catalyst toward this objective," he said.

On Malaysia-Jamaica trade ties, Abdullah said although they were still not satisfactory there was a potential to expand co-operation.

In this respect, he said Robertson would also meet International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz to discuss possible trade links.

Jamaica expressed hope that Malaysia would support the country's bid for a seat in the United Nations security council in 2000, Abdullah said, adding that this request would be conveyed to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

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