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Summit-Declaration

D-8 OPENS MEMBERSHIP TO OTHER DEVELOPING NATIONS

By: Mokhtar Hussain

ISTANBUL, June 15 (Bernama) -- The newly-formed group of eight Islamic Developing Countries (D-8) has agreed to open its membership to other developing nations which share its cause for promoting economic ties.

In a joint declaration, signed by leaders of the member countries, the grouping also decided that cooperation would also cover other areas, including political consultation and coordination in the international fora.

The declaration, named the Istanbul Declaration, was read by Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan at the end of the summit, here today.

Apart from Erbakan and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, other leaders who signed the declaration were President Suharto of Indonesia, Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Egypt was represented by Prime Minister Kamal el Ganzouri while Nigeria by its Minister of Industry Mohammed Halladu.

The group also resolved to cooperate with both the developing and economically developed countries and liaise with relevant organisations, particularly the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Other areas in which they agreed to cooperate were trade, industry, finance, banking and privatisation, rural development, science and technology, poverty alleviation, agriculture, tourism, environment and health.

The group also adopted six principles namely "peace instead of conflict, dialogue instead of confrontation, cooperation instead of exploitation, justice instead of double-standard, equality instead of discrimination and democracy instead of oppression".

The founding principles were reflected by the six stars on the D-8 emblem.

The D-8 member countries have a combined population of almost 800 million.

It was also agreed that Bangladesh will host the next D-8 meeting in Dhaka in November or December. -- Bernama

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