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G15-Abdullah

G15 HAS STILL MUCH TO ACCOMPLISH, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 3 (Bernama) -- The G15 needs to do "a lot more" to enhance South-South cooperation, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

" We still have much to cover," he told reporters here.

The grouping would ensure that member countries have more projects that could bring G15 closer and at the same time benefit from the projects, he said when asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's call to member countries to take stock of the grouping's inadequacies as well as consolidate its potentials.

Opening the seventh G15 summit here today, Dr Mahathir said that South countries need to set their sights on new horizons, venture into non-traditional markets and forge multi-faceted links and partnership among themselves.

Abdullah said the matter was discussed at the grouping's foreign ministers preparatory meeting on Saturday.

" We are presenting our report to the summit and I'm sure the summit will discuss this particular topic which is very important," he said.

Abdullah, however, said it would take some time for the G15-initiated projects to produce results.

Among the projects that have shown progress are India's gene bank project and Malaysia's centre for excellence and bilateral payment arrangement, he said.

He said though the G15 was moving forward, it still had a long way to go.

However, the relevance of G15 had been established," he said.

On the response to the G15 summit, Abdullah said ties among member countries were improving particularly in project development.

He said this was evident from the increasing response to the trade exhibition held in conjunction with this summit as compared to previous ones.

Their participation showed that member countries had realised that it was time for them to introduce their own products to the markets in developing countries, he said.

" We cannot make assumptions just because some of the heads of government are unable to attend the summit. They have their reasons and have sent their representatives," he added.

G15 comprises Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Malaysia, Egypt, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

Kenya was admitted as the newest member in this summit. -- BERNAMA

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