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Abdullah-Jordan

MALAYSIA AND JORDAN TO CONVENE JOINT COMMISSION MEETING

KUALA LUMPUR, April 24 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and Jordan have agreed to convene the joint commission meeting to widen the scope of bilateral ties between them, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

Although the date and venue had not been determined, the meeting was expected to be held soon, he told Bernama from Jordan.

Abdullah is in Jordan now after visiting Iraq. He called on Jordan crown prince Hassan Talal, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al-Majali, his counterpart Fayez Tarawmeh and several ministers.

Among areas slated for deliberations at the meeting were investment, trade, tourism, air and sea links and opening Jordan embassy in Kuala Lumpur.

"I feel they should open the embassy as soon as possible without waiting to be discussed at the meeting if expansion of Malaysia-Jordan bilateral ties need to be hastened," he said.

Setting up a Jordanian embassy in Kuala Lumpur was crucial to enable Malaysian businessmen to gather more information about the country. Malaysia has its embassy in Amman.

Establishing the joint commission was agreed upon during Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's visit to Jordan earlier.

Abdullah said his discussions with crown prince Hassan and Jordanian ministers centred on efforts to widen bilateral relations particularly in development and economic sectors.

"They are really keen to enhance Malaysia-Jordan ties as all this while our relations were merely confined to education and cultural aspects," he said.

Abdullah also held discussions with Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf, Bassam Saket (Transport and Telecommunications), Munther Masri (Education and Higher Education) and Hani Mulki (Trade).

He said Jordan proposed to establish a Malay Language Chair at University Al-albayt where 700 Malaysian students were studying.

Abdullah said he also exchanged views with Hassan on the situation in West Asia and issues pertaining to the image of Islam at international level.

They concurred on the need for concerted efforts by Islamic countries to improve Islam's image by developing the ummah, adopting a tolerant attitude and avoiding extremism and enmity.

"We regret the attitude of western countries which link Islam to terrorism and felt that it is the duty of Islamic nations to correct the negative perception," he said.

In this regard, Jordan was prepared to send their officers to hold discussions with Institute of Islamic Understanding, Malaysia, he added. --

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