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G15-Suharto

SUHARTO CALLS FOR COOPERATION TO STABILISE MONEY MARKET

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 3 (Bernama) -- Indonesian President Suharto, whose country is among the worst hit by currency crisis, today urged developing countries to cooperate to find an immediate and effective means to stabilise the money market.

" The sharp fluctuations in international financial flow and currency trading have crushed the economic and social achievements of developing countries," he said in his speech at the closed session of the seventh G15 summit here.

He said while developed countries have fully benefited from globalisation, a great number of developing countries continued to be marginalised and even developing economies that have attained some measure of dynamism were not immuned to the perils of globalisation.

Indonesia and Thailand are now depending on a bail out by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Indonesia is estimated to receive between US\$30 and US\$40 billion including US\$1 billion from Malaysia.

"The hard work, diligence and sacrifices over several decades were wiped out overnight," said Suharto at his first international forum since the crisis in July starting with the devaluation of the Thai baht.

In this context, Suharto said globalisation should be managed to soften the impact on vulnerable economies.

"We firmly believe the United Nations is the only international organisation that has the universal mandate and democratic orientation to assume the task of ensuring justice and equity in the economic relations between and among nations," he said.

He said the current endeavours to reform the UN must be pursued without sacrificing or undermining the economic and political rights and interests of developing countries.

Suharto also spoke on the attendance of heads of government at the G15 summit, saying that while the number of leaders attending the summit had always met the requirement for a quorum, their attendance was still below expectation.

" This has indeed given all of us cause for concern particularly the host country. Therefore, it is timely and appropriate for us to honestly ask ourselves why this situation persists," he said.

He also suggested that the summit agenda be reviewed so that heads of government would only discuss strategic policy issues, leaving the technical and administrative matters to their personal representatives.

He said the grouping also need to minimise routine agendas as much as possible in efforts to encourage the leaders to attend the summit.

" In view of this regrettable situation, it is quite proper and understandable if we now entertain the question of whether the annual schedule of the G15 summit be maintained or reviewed," he added.

The G15 comprises Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. Kenya joins the grouping as its 16th member at this summit.

The summit, chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, is also attended by President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, President Liamine Zeroual of Algeria, Vice-President Dr Carlos Ruckauf of Argentina, Deputy Prime Minister Dr Seymour Mullings of Jamaica. -- BERNAMA

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