

25/08/1997

UK official on 2-day visit to Malaysia

BRITISH Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Robin Cook, will pay a two-day official visit to Kuala Lumpur beginning Wednesday as part of a visit to South-East Asia which includes Indonesia, the Philippines and Singapore.

While in Kuala Lumpur, Cook will call on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and hold talks with Foreign Minister, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Cook will deliver a speech entitled "South-East Asia and Beyond - Britain's Partners for the 21st Century" at a function organised by the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) and jointly perform the ground-breaking for the British Malaysian Institute (BMI) complex with the Minister of Entrepreneur Development Datuk Mustapa Mohamed.

"I am delighted to be paying an early visit to South-East Asia. Asean has made extraordinary progress in the last 30 years."

"It is now established as a significant global player in both economic and political terms," he said in a statement issued by the British High Commission in Kuala Lumpur.

"British interest in the region are extensive and continue to grow. We are the leading European investor. I intend to use my visit to give new impetus to Britain's relationship with its South-East Asian partners."

In his meeting with ministers in each country, the Secretary of State will set out the British Government's foreign policy priorities, which include a deepening of its relations across Asia and ensuring respect for human rights.

Cook said he wanted in particular to focus on preparations for the Asia Europe Summit to be held in London in April next year.

He added that he is looking forward to discussing preparations for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting with two key Commonwealth partners, Malaysia and Singapore, and that he wanted to discuss with regional leaders the handling of the situation in Cambodia to promote reform in Myanmar.

(END)