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G-22 ROLE CRUCIAL TO TACKLE ECONOMIC WOES, SAYS ABDULLAH

By: Mohd Rizal Razalli

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 17 (Bernama) -- Almost all Apec leaders who met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today concurred with him that the role of G-22 was crucial in tackling regional financial and economic woes.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said they agreed that Apec alone could not resolve the problems.

The leaders felt that the grouping should take up the role with full backing from Apec, he said.

The G-22 established by the United States last year to address the crisis include members from the G-7 Group of Developed Countries -- the US, Britain, Germany, Italy, France, Japan and Canada -- and developing countries including Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, India, Brazil and Argentina.

The leaders also agreed that there must be a formula to resolve the economic problems, Abdullah told reporters after Dr Mahathir held bilateral meetings with his Japanese counterpart Keizo Obuchi, Phan Van Khai (Vietnam), Jenny Shipley (New Zealand).

Dr Mahathir also held bilateral talks with Indonesian President B.J. Habibie and President Eduardo Frei of Chile.

He said the formula was necessary to establish a stable international financial system to replace the present mechanism.

"There is a need for a new financial architecture," he said.

He said world economies were hit by the financial crisis in the absence of a stable financial system.

The leaders also wanted the economic crisis be given priority at this summit.

They also expressed their concern over the inflow of short-term capital which gave rise to numerous problems, he added.

-- BERNAMA

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