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Focus-Conflict
MALAYSIA, THE MODEL FOR NATIONAL UNITY

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KUALA LUMPUR: A former Malaysian cabinet minister and about 30 members of foreign missions -- including 10 ambassadors and high commissioners -- here will take part in a three-day international workshop on national unity to be opened by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim on Thursday.

The workshop themed "Mutual Understanding and Conflict Resolution" is being organised by the National Unity Department at the request of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The department's Director-General, Wan Yacob Hassan, said UNICEF was "so impressed" with Malaysia's standard of national unity that they felt it was most appropriate that such a workshop be held here.

He said 200 people, including 50 foreign participants, will be attending the workshop which is divided into two sessions.

The first will see the tabling of two main papers entitled "National Unity: Malaysia's Experience" and "Global Partnership For Peace In The Next Millennium," by former foreign minister Tan Sri Muhammad Ghazali Shafie and the Director of the Centre for Civilisational Dialogue, University of Malaya, Prof Chandra Muzaffar, respectively.

Seven additional papers, prepared by the two speakers, will also be circulated. They include papers on "Globalisation and Nation Building: Lessons From the Past" and "Conflict Resolution - The Malaysian Experience."

The second session see the discussion and exchange of experience on national unity by participating countries. Five sectors have been identified and representatives from three countries will discuss their respective experiences. Among them will be South African High Commissioner Cik Maite Emily Mohale, Cuban Ambassador Cik Taserita Jesus Fernandez, and Indian High Commissioner, P.S. Sahai.

Among the subjects to be discussed will be "Managing Human Resources Towards A Cyber Society," "Preparing Society For The Next Millennium" and "Religious And Cultural Values: Hallmark Of A Better Society."

Eighteen members of Parliament and leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina and two representatives from Cambodia will also be present.

Wan Yacob said Bosnia-Herzegovina participants will be attending three consecutive programmes under the Special Programme for Renewal of Racial Relations as a followup to the discussion between the Co-Chairman of Bosnia's Council of Ministers and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Aug 11 last year.

The other two programmes are the "Forum For Reconciliation in Bosnia-Herzegovina," organised by the Institute for Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) from Aug 23 to 26, and a study-tour, arranged by the department from Aug 30 to Sept 8.

Wan Yacob said during the tour, representatives will attend briefings on the system of general elections, cooperation among political parties and will witness National Day celebrations in Pulau Pinang.

"Hopefully, with the visit and exchange of experience at the workshop, participants will look upon Malaysia as a model for promoting national unity in their respective countries," said Wan Yacob. - BERNAMA

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