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Ambassador - seat

M'SIA BEEFS UP LOBBYING FOR UN SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT

By: Othman Ahmad

NEW YORK, April 17 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is to spearhead intense lobbying to secure a non-permanent seat in the United Nations (UN) Security Council, the country's new Permanent Representative to the UN Datuk Hasmy Agam said.

Lobbying for the seat in the 15-member Security Council would become the country's main agenda for the next couple of month, he said.

Malaysia's candidacy for the October election for the council's 1999 - 2000 session had been endorsed by countries in the Asia group, he told Malaysian journalists visiting the Malaysian mission here Thursday.

Malacca born Hasmy, 54, who was alternate permanent representative, officially took his office today succeeding Tan Sri Razali Ismail who has completed his term.

Hasmy said: "Hopefully we will be elected by two thirds majority in the council for two years."

Hasmy said if elected, Malaysia would, for the next two years, become an active member in the council. It last occupied the seat 10 years ago.

He said this determination to occupy one of the non-permanent seats was to fulfill the pledge he made to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who suggested that Malaysia should be in the UN decision-making body.

"Because after this, I think it's more difficult to get in the next 10 years because with 185 countries and as far as the Asia group is concerned - the slot for the Asian seat has been put up right into 2010 or 2011.

"But then everybody can come in but it's some sort of breaking the solidarity of the Asian group," he said.

Malaysia has to stand firm in championing the position of the developing world, the non-aligned countries of the third world especially pertaining to security issues, he said.

"Malaysia would ensure the interests of developing countries are preserved, promoted and defended like we did well when we were there last time.

"We stood up for third world countries, for instance on Iraq, we took a long time before we join the consensus to allow for military actions against Iraq because we're afraid that once you lashed military action against Iraq, the consequences will be hazardous," he said.

Hasmy said the other issues that Malaysia would give equal emphasis, if elected to the non-permanent membership, were the need for the council to maintain transparency, scrutinise the use of veto against member countries as well as imposition of economic sanction against nations.

-- BERNAMA

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