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Hamid-Foreign

COOPERATION, CONCORDANCE CORNERSTONE OF MALAYSIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 25 (Bernama) -- Cooperation and concordance will remain the cornerstone of Malaysia's foreign policy towards all countries particularly its neighbours, new Foreign Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar said today.

Speaking at a welcome ceremony for him at Wisma Putra, he expressed confidence that with a supply of goodwill and a high degree of understanding all problems arising from time to time among them would be resolved.

"As Foreign Minister I will play an active role towards achieving these objectives of Malaysia's foreign policy."

The former Defence Minister succeeds Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who is now Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad made the new appointments in a major Cabinet reshuffle on Jan 8.

Syed Hamid said it was his "new day at school" at the Foreign Ministry and noted that he was taking over from Abdullah at a time when Malaysia had become well known in the international community particularly among developing countries.

He also said the Foreign Ministry now housed at Wisma Putra here was scheduled to shift to Putrajaya, the new seat of the Federal Government, in 2001.

Responding to questions on Malaysia-Singapore relations at a news conference later, Syed Hamid said Malaysia was as keen as its Causeway neighbour in wanting to resolve all outstanding problems affecting them.

"The relationship between our two countries is so intertwined...there are some sensitivities that we have to look at and we try to avoid areas that can create differences."

"Let us look at things where we can find common ground and let us move forward. That has always been our viewpoint," he said.

Syed Hamid said officials from both countries would meet, once they had agreed on the date, to discuss matters such as the dispute over the Tanjong Pagar Immigration checkpoint.

"I think both our leaders want to achieve a win-win situation for the two countries," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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