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ICFM-IFA
KL TO RAISE NEW FINANCIAL ORDER AT OIC MEETING

By: E.Sivabalan

KUALA LUMPUR, June 20 (Bernama) -- Malaysia hopes to push for a resolution on the establishment a new international financial architecture (IFA) at the 27th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) here next week to secure a "bigger voice" in calling for a reform of the world financial markets.

Foreign Ministry Deputy Secretary-General (I) Datuk Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak said: "We feel that the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Conference) can be used as a channel to get the endorsement from member countries, which collectively are a formidable force in global finance".

"And hopefully, the Group of 20 (G-20) will then listen," said Ahmad Fuzi in an interview with Bernama here recently.

The G-20 is a mix of the seven wealthiest nations in G-7, 11 emerging market economies and two institutional representatives that play a significant role in the world economy.

The economies include Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, India, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea and Turkey while the institutional representatives come from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund/World Bank.

The G-20, which replaces the G-22 and G-33, is expected to have a wide mandate to discuss issues in the world economy, including crisis prevention and the new financial architecture.

Malaysia has maintained that the global financial system should be reformed, failing which developing economies would continue to be at the mercy of unscrupulous currency speculators.

The September Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) leaders meeting in Auckland, New Zealand last year endorsed calls for reforms of financial markets to ward off future financial crisis in the region.

United States President Bill Clinton also acknowledged during the Apec meeting that "it would be a mistake not to reform the financial architecture".

Ahmad Fuzi said the discussion on the IFA should involve both the developed and developing countries.

He said the ICFM would also discuss matters pertaining to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), particularly the launching of a new round of trade talks in 2003.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is scheduled to open the ICFM on June 27. The four-day conference will also be attended by OIC secretary-general Dr Azeddine Laraki.

About 1,000 delegates from OIC member countries will attend the meeting, the second to be hosted by Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur hosted the earlier meeting in 1974.

The OIC, formed in 1969, consists of 56 member countries and four observer states including Bosnia and Herzegovina and Thailand.

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