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Syed Hamid-Reform

MALAYSIA HAPPY WITH OIC OUTCOME, SAYS SYED HAMID

By: Muin Abdul Majid

DOHA (Qatar), Nov 14 (Bernama) -- The Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) is agreeable to Malaysia's view that there is a need for a reform of the 31-year-old body as reflected in a resolution on the matter.

It also calls for the appointment of consultants to look into how such a reform can be done.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar this was one of Malaysia's achievements at the ninth OIC summit which ended here late Monday night, apart from being given the honour to host the 10th summit in Kuala Lumpur in 2003.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad voiced out Kuala Lumpur's position that the OIC should be redefined in his speech at the opening of the Doha meeting Sunday. He represented the Asia Group.

"The OIC chairman now (Qatar) is supposed to follow up on this matter and then there will be consultants to be appointed," Syed hamid told Malaysian journalists here, today.

Apart from that, he said Malaysia had pledged US\$1 million (RM3.8 million) to help in the administration of the OIC.

"But what really pleases us is that Malaysia has been given the honour to host the 2003 summit, thanks to the presence of Dr Mahathir in Doha," he said.

He said it was actually Africa's turn to host the 10th OIC summit but the Doha meeting made an exception as candidates Gambia and Senegal graciously pulled out to give way to Malaysia.

The minister expressed confidence in Kuala Lumpur's capability to host a successful summit as shown by its handling of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers meeting in June.

Malaysia chalks up another success as it has been agreed that it would assume the post of OIC assistant secretary-general from July 1, 2003, to June 30, 2005, following a two-year term by Pakistan.

Syed Hamid said Dr Mahathir was also happy as his statements and remarks had been well received by the delegates.

The minister also disclosed that Malaysia had offered to treat Palestinians suffering from injuries in their struggle against Israeli occupying forces.

The offer was made to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat who attended the summit of Muslim leaders in Doha.

"We are willing to accept those who need treatment," he said.

Syed Hamid said the OIC had agreed to send a delegation of foreign ministers to the United Nations (UN) to plead for a stop in Israeli aggressions against Palestinians.

"I have been contacted regarding this matter," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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