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G15-Weapons

MALAYSIA WANTS SMALL ARMS SALE TO BE REGISTERED

By: Ahmad Zukiman Zain

CAIRO, June 20 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has called for the sale of small arms to be registered to avoid international conflicts, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad voiced the proposal to leaders of the Group of 15 Developing Countries (G15) at their retreat here yesterday.

Syed Hamid said the arms were mostly manufactured by developed nations and sold to undeveloped and developing countries, giving rise to an arms race.

"When there is a sale of either big or small arms to a country, the neighbouring country will definitely resort to upgrading its defence system," he told Malaysian journalists covering the G15 Summit.

The arms race is actually not taking place in developing countries but caused by the arms producing nations, he said.

Syed Hamid said Dr Mahathir proposed the registration of sales of small arms as the G15 leaders were discussing terrorism problems at their retreat.

He said Dr Mahathir also stressed the need for G15 countries to step up cooperation to deal with the negative effects of globalisation.

The Prime Minister spoke on how the sovereignty and business of the developing countries could be lost due to technological advances through e-commerce.

Syed Hamid said Dr Mahathir also proposed that G15 leaders look into how to activate the South Coordination Commission as decided upon at the Group of 77 Developing Countries (G77) in Cuba recently.

He said G15 Foreign Ministers would meet in Mexico in October to discuss measures to step up cooperation among member countries.

Among the possible measures is providing scholarships to encourage student exchanges.

In this context, Malaysia had proven that the success of its education system had helped to eradicate absolute poverty among the people, said Syed Hamid.

The two-day G15 summit ended today after the admission of two new members, Iran and Colombia, which raises to 19 the total number of member countries.

Indonesia will host the next G15 summit next year.

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