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More excitement promised at next forum in Uganda

THE four-day Langkawi International Dialogue bade farewell yesterday but the smart partnership forum did not end there as the participants pledged more "excitement" at the next forum in Kampala, Uganda next year.

Heads of government, ministers, senior government officials as well as corporate, labour and media representatives will follow through the Langkawi forum findings at the Southern Africa International Dialogue 2001 in Kampala.

The focal issue of SAID 2001 would be on attracting foreign direct investments in emerging nations, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said at the last Press conference of the Langkawi dialogue.

It would also see an active participation of youths, he said.

"SAID 2001 will focus on one agenda, the problem to attract FDI into the developing countries. Papers prepared by different people on the issue will be presented in Kampala."

Dr Mahathir said: "We have achieved considerable progress in terms of how to deal with various problems and to progress further."

Other heads of government agreed.

"We learn a great deal from each other and also realise there are certain things we can actually resist by sharing and comparing notes," said President of Botswana Festus G. Mogae.

"The experience will enable us to resolve to take certain common positions in other international fora," he added.

"LID is special because it allows people to speak freely in a relaxed atmosphere, unlike some fora which have certain constraints," said South Africa Vice-President Jacob G. Zuma.

Uganda Vice-President Dr Speciosa W. Kazibwe said for the first time, the Langkawi forum had invited youth movements to collectively share their thoughts and experience in future smart partnership gatherings.

"Things will be more exciting in the next forum in Kampala with the younger people also coming to tell us where we should go further."

Namibia President Sam Nujoma described the LID as "historic".

Lesotho Prime Minister Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili and Algeria's Minister of Participation and Co-ordination Reforms Hamid Temmar paid tribute to Malaysia.

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