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SUPPORT ISLAMIC SATELLITE CHANNELS, URGES ICFM

KUALA LUMPUR, June 30 (Bernama) -- The 27th session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) which ended here today has urged the 56 member states of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to support the Islamic satellite channels.

The final 191-point communique of the conference said, it should be done on a mutual basis through an effective exchange of programmes, expertise and technologies.

The conference reaffirmed the need for member states to activate the work of the International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and the Islamic Broadcasting Organisation (ISBO) towards achieving the service of common Islamic information.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in expressing a similar view during a dialogue at an international seminar on enhancing understanding of Islam for the media here earlier, said Muslim countries should get news reports from each other for a clear picture of what is happening in the Muslim world.

Speaking at an international seminar on enhancing understanding of Islam for the media here today, he said they should not depend on western news agencies whose reports were mostly biased.

"The conference welcomed the modernisation of the implementing mechanisms the Information Strategy of Islamic States and stressed the need to continue to work out the priorities of the Information Plan of Islamic States and activate the Islamic Programme for the Development of Information and Communication (PIDIC) so as to consolidate Joint Islamic Action."

The conference also stressed the need to energise the Islamic Forum of Radio and Television Producers which was established under a resolution of the Fifth Islamic Conference of Information Ministers (ICIM), which will hold its first session in Teheran this September.

"This should provide greater opportunities for the exposure of productions by specialised information institutions in the Islamic states and for the exchange of programmes and audio-visual materials among these information radio and television institutions," it said.

Member states were also urged to mobilise all necessary material means, particularly voluntary financial contribution with a view to overcoming the dilemma of the lack of funds and proceeding with the implementation of the work programmes set out in the Information Plan of member states.

"This will allow them to keep abreast of developments in communication technology and enable them at the same time to meet the challenges and demands of this age," said the communique.

-- BERNAMA

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