

# Need for commission to articulate South-South views

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PUTRAJAYA, Fri: Malaysia and Cuba discussed today the setting up of a commission or a centre to ensure that the views of the South-South countries are better articulated.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said both countries felt that the G77 group is too huge to be heard.

G77, of which Malaysia and Cuba are members, consists of more than 100 members.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Cuban President Fidel Castro led their respective delegations at the meeting.

"The idea was first discussed in Havana last year," Syed Hamid told a press conference after attending a bilateral meeting here.

Castro is on a three-day visit to Malaysia at the invitation of the Yang diPertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah.

● This is Castro's first visit to Malaysia aimed at strengthening relations with Malaysia.

Syed Hamid said Malaysia sees the urgency of the creation of the commission in view of the problem.

"The prime minister (Dr Mahathir) mentioned that we

cannot work effectively under the G77," he said.

"We can attend meetings, but if we want to be more articulate, we need to have a smaller group to act as a research or arbitration centre before our views are submitted, debated or put forward among the better developed countries."

Syed Hamid said when the G77 is better articulated, it

should have the ability to influence the world economic and trading system.

He said Mahathir and Castro also agreed that developing countries need to stand together and understand each other's issues and tackle them in an intellectual and articulated way.

"Malaysia is using all sorts of mechanisms to get developing countries togeth-

er as I think there is a lack of cohesiveness and solidarity among developing countries in putting forward their views.

"As a result, we are sidelined and marginalised," he said.

Syed Hamid also said Mahathir and Castro have had some discussions during the former's presence at last year's G77 summit in Havana.