

21 OCT 2001

APEC-Terrorism

APEC LEADERS CONDEMN TERRORIST ATTACKS IN US

By: Mohd Kamel Othman

SHANGHAI, Oct 21 (Bernama) -- Leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum who ended their meeting here today have unequivocally condemned the Sept 11 terrorist attacks in the United States branding them as a threat to the peace, prosperity and security of all people, faiths and nations.

"Terrorism is also a direct challenge to APEC's vision of free, open and prosperous economies and the fundamental values that APEC members hold," they said in a statement on counter-terrorism after the Ninth APEC Economic Leaders Meeting.

Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Dr Mahathir Mohamad, US President George W Bush and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin were among the leaders who attended the two-day meeting.

As such, the leaders said in the statement, it was imperative to strengthen international cooperation at all levels in combating terrorism.

In this regard, they affirmed that the United Nations (UN) should play a major role especially taking into account the importance of all relevant UN resolutions.

In the Sept 11 attacks, terrorists crashed hijacked jetliners into the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington killing about 5,600 people.

The leaders also pledged full cooperation and close communication among economic policy and financial authorities to ensure no disruption to economies and markets by international terrorism.

They also called for increased cooperation to bring the perpetrators to justice and for early signing and ratification of all basic universal anti-terrorist conventions including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

The leaders are determined to enhance counter-terrorism cooperation in line with specific circumstances in their respective economies, through:

- * appropriate financial measures to prevent the flow of funds to terrorists;
- * adherence by all economies to relevant international requirement for the security of air and maritime transportation;
- * strengthening of energy security in the region;
- * strengthening APEC activities in protecting critical sectors including telecommunications, transportation, health and energy;
- * enhancement of customs communication networks;
- * cooperation to develop electronic movement records systems that will enhance border security;
- * strengthening capacity-building and economic and technical cooperation to enable member economies put into place and enforce effective counter-terrorism measures; and,
- * cooperation to limit the economic fallout from attacks and move to restore economic confidence in the region through policies and measures to increase economic growth.

Their weekend meeting here was the first top-level multilateral gathering since the Sept 11 attacks on the US.

-- BERNAMA

MKO KHY RYN