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Islamic universities conference comes to a conclusion

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The Second General Conference of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World drew to a close today.

Organising chairman Datuk Dr Jamil Osman said the conference, which began on April 17, went along smoothly and successfully.

Some 96 participants made up of Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors and representatives from various academic institutions from around the world had sat down to pass among others, the new charter, rules and regulations and statutes.

"The new charter is especially significant as it is the first time the federation has adopted a charter, since its inception in 1987," he said.

The charter will govern the federation as well as define the role and conduct of its executive council and general conference.

Today the federation elected the new office members of the executive council for the next meeting in December 2003.

The next president will be from the Islamic Azad University, Iran; vice-presidents from Assiut University, Egypt, University of Brunei Darussalam, Brunei, and Shandi University, Sudan; and rapporteur from the Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Pakistan.

The next FUIW will be held at the University of Sharjah, Saudi Arabia.

Jamil said this session saw the participation of more Malaysian universities, with Universiti Putra Malaysia being accepted into the new executive council.

He said the conference was a positive step towards the exchange of ideas and research, as well as among staff and students of Islamic universities of the world.

"As Malaysia is a centre of educational excellence attracting students from around the world, we hope even more foreign Muslim students, especially post-graduate ones, will study in our country," said Jamil.

He said at present, Muslim intellectuals and professionals were scattered around the globe.

"This poses a human resource problem among the less developed countries, causing some shortage in manpower." To counter this, the FUIW is also in the process of recognising degrees from member countries.

Jamil added Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, as Director-General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Isesco) had several top-level meetings with the Education Minister and others to lobby for recognition of degrees from member universities.

After the adoption of the final draft report, members of the FUIW endorsed a memorandum expressing their solidarity and support for Palestinian universities.

The memorandum will be handed over to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad by IIUM rector Prof Dr M. Kamal Hassan today.

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