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Malaysia hosts Islamic U meet

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Representatives from 98 Islamic countries and universities come together tomorrow for the second general conference of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW).

The three-day conference will be opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the International Islamic University Malaysia Cultural Activities Centre, Gombak campus, here.

As a prelude to this august gathering, the FUIW's sixth Executive Council Meeting, hosted by Malaysia for the first time, convened today with members discussing a new charter for the federation.

FUIW secretary-general Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri said yesterday the new charter, rules and regulations would be tabled at the general conference for debate and adoption.

He said projects, programmes and activities to be implemented for the next three years would also be tabled at the general conference.

Dr Abdulaziz said this was the first time the federation was seriously discussing a new charter for the executive council and general conference since its inception.

The executive council comprises 11 members: Jerash University president from Jordan, Riau University rector (Indonesia), Islamic Azad University (Iran), Imam Muhd Ben Saud Islamic University director (Saudi Arabia), Anta Diop University-Dakar (Senegal), International University of Africa (Sudan), Tishreen University president (Syria), Conakry University rector (Guinea), An-Najah National University president (Palestine), International Islamic University Malaysia rector (Malaysia) and Mohamed V University rector (Morocco).

"The main focus (of the general conference) would be to see how the delegates view the activities of the federation in the first part of the millennium," said Dr Abdulaziz.

Besides discussing the new charter, rules and regulations, Dr Abdulaziz said the executive council also discussed the financial report of the secretary-general and a request by 17 universities, all in Muslim countries, to join as full members of the federation.

He added that the federation has 180 universities as its members.

Before chairing the executive council meeting today, Dr Abdulaziz, who is also the director-general of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO), met Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad at his office for 30 minutes.

"We discussed bilateral relations between ISESCO and the ministry. I also briefed the Minister on the federation," said Dr Abdulaziz.

On the opening of the IIUM Gombak campus by Dr Mahathir tomorrow, Dr Abdulaziz said they were looking forward to it. The Organisation of the Islamic Conference secretary-general Dr Abdelouahed Belkeziz will also be here for the occasion.

"IIUM is one of the biggest universities to cater to Muslims and non-Muslims from all over the world. We are grateful to the Prime Minister of Malaysia and his Government for establishing the university."

"We are impressed with the progress and development of Malaysia. We wish the people of Malaysia all the success."

On whether the federation would help students of universities to get scholarship, Dr Abdulaziz said the rich universities have been told to help those with limited resources.

