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Syed Hamid-Korea

SYED HAMID TO VISIT NORTH KOREA FROM MONDAY

SEPANG, June 1 (Bernama) -- Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today that he would make a four-day visit to North Korea from Monday to discuss bilateral and international issues.

"We will also explore the possibility of extending technical assistance under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) to assist the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) in her economic development and opening up to the global community," he said.

He was speaking to reporters on arrival at the KL International Airport (KLIA) here after attending the Group of 15 Developing Nations (G-15) meeting in Jakarta.

The visit, at the invitation of his North Korean counterpart Paek Nam Sun, will be Syed Hamid's first to Pyongyang since becoming Foreign Minister in January 1999.

He said the visit was also expected to elevate bilateral relations between Malaysia and North Korea, paving the way for closer and more substantive relations. Malaysia and North Korea have established ties for more than 20 years.

Syed Hamid would be accompanied by senior officials from the ministry as well as the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and the Malaysian Palm Oil Promotion Council (MPOPC).

During the four-day visit, Syed Hamid is scheduled to call on Paek and discuss as well as exchange views on various bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

He is also scheduled to convey a goodwill message from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to the North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il, which focuses on Malaysia's desire to expand and strengthen bilateral relations as well as support for the dialogue process between the North and South Korea.

--BERNAMA

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