

Committee to meet in two months

STAR - 4 APR 2002

KUALA LUMPUR: The newly-set up Organisation of Islamic Conference ministerial committee on international terrorism will meet in two months to enable the OIC to co-operate with international bodies to combat terrorism.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said the issue was urgent in view of the call to convene an international conference on combating terrorism.

"Officials have been asked to meet first and we hope to call for the first meeting as soon as possible," he said yesterday.

Syed Hamid said the 13-member committee would comprise the past, present and next chairman of the OIC. Sudan, which is chairing the Foreign Ministers meeting in June and three representatives each from Asia, Africa and Arab.

"Malaysia has been asked to lead the committee because member countries felt that Kuala Lumpur has done a lot of work on this type of matter," he added.

During the three-day meeting, the OIC member countries adopted a plan of action

which included establishing the committee with a view among others to recommend:

- MEASURES to strengthen OIC co-operation and co-ordination in combating terrorism,

- WAYS of expediting the implementation of the OIC code of conduct and convention on combating international terrorism, and

- MEASURES in projecting the true image of Islam

The committee is mandated to study the work of other international organisations on international terrorism and contribute to the work of the OIC Group in New York in such matters.

On Palestine asking Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to contact United States President George W. Bush to pressure Israel to pull out its forces from Palestine. Syed Hamid said Malaysia had always been consistent in its views on the problem.

"Malaysia will continue to champion the struggle of the Palestinians at international level and in meetings between Dr Mahathir and world leaders."