Measures to uplift image of Muslims

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250 OIC delegates to gather in KL

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PUTRAJAYA, Tues. — Measures to uplift the image of Muslims, which has been adversely affected lately, will be among the important issues to be discussed at the three-day Seventh Conference of the Ministers of Endowment and Islamic Affairs at Istana Hotel beginning Monday.

The conference will gather some 250 delegates from 56 member countries of the Organisation of Islamic Conference. Eight countries and organisations will be there as observers.

Prime Minister' Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will deliver the keynote address at the conference on May 7, a day after Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi opens it.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Abdul Hamid Zainal Abidin said the choice of Malaysia as the host showed that Malaysia's credibility in pursuing the Islamic cause and other matters related to Islamic interests was recognised internationally.

"Islamic countries are impressed with our achievements." he told a Press conference.

The selection of Malaysia as host was decided by the Executive Council of the conference, chaired by Saudi Arabia. Other council members are Eqypt, Jordan, Indonesia, Gambia, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan and Iraq.

The first conference was held in Saudi Arabia in 1979.

Among the objectives of the conference are to strengthen relations among Islamic countries in the area of endowments and Islamic affairs and to preserve Islamic sacred places.

There will be nine working papers.

Saudi Arabia will present three working papers — *Plan for the preparation of Du'aah within the context of a changing world, Control parameters on publication on the Internet websites of the Ministries of Endowments and Islamic Affairs* and *Translation of the Holy Quran.*

Malaysia will present a paper on *Ad-Dawah (the call to Islam) and extremism (the Malaysian experience)* while Egypt will present a *Proposal for establishing the world foundation for Islamic heritage.*

A working paper on *A general strategy for presenting Islam through different languages* will be presented by Morocco, *Azzakat* (Alms charity) by Jordan, *Projects for* implementation *for the co-ordination of the Islamic states' efforts in the field of endowments development* by Kuwait and *Investment portfolio with the Islamic Bank for Development* by IDB.

Abdul Hamid received pledges of sponsorship from various quarters to helping make the event a success.

The sponsors comprise Edaran Otomobil Nasional, Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional, Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Kedua, TM Touch, Telekom Malaysia and Petronas.