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Malaysia-North Korea

MALAYSIA SUPPORTS REUNIFICATION OF NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA

KUALA LUMPUR, March 4 (Bernama) -- Malaysia today expressed strong support for North Korea in its effort to achieve a peaceful reunification with neighbouring South Korea, separated at the end of the World War Two.

Briefing the media here after the bilateral meeting between Malaysia and North Korea in Putra Jaya, acting Foreign Minister Datuk Azmi Khalid said the message was conveyed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to the visiting supreme head of the North Korean People's Assembly Kim Yong Nam.

Both leaders led their respective countries at the meeting. Kim, accompanied by a 30-member delegation, arrived here yesterday for a three-day visit aimed at strengthening bilateral ties with Malaysia.

Azmi said Kim had conveyed to Dr Mahathir that Pyongyang was very keen in efforts for a peaceful reunification between the two Koreas.

"In fact North Korea is very very keen on reunification and from what we know both sides (North and South Korea) are keen. I feel they are very sincere about reunification efforts," said Azmi.

The path to a peaceful reunification was chartered following the historic Inter-Korean Summit in Pyongyang, attended by North Korean leader Kim Jong-il and South Korean President Kim Dae Jung two years ago.

On another issue, Azmi said Kuala Lumpur and Pyongyang also shared similar views on the issue of terrorism, that the root cause of it must be identified.

He said the recent remarks by President George W. Bush of branding North Korea, Iran and Iraq as an "axis of evil" was also discussed by Kim and Dr Mahathir.

"Malaysia's stand about terrorism has always been...to find the root cause. Once the root cause is identified, then the question of axis of evil is a non-issue," he said.

Azmi said Malaysia and North Korea agreed that if the issue of terrorism continued to be harped on the way it was now, it would only create more confusion.

At today's meeting, Malaysia and North Korea signed two agreements on cultural exchange and Palm Oil Credit and Payment Agreement of US\$10 million (RM38 million) to North Korea.

Azmi said Dr Mahathir had expressed Malaysia's intention for more visits among officials of the two countries.

He said Kim also invited Dr Mahathir to visit North Korea and the prime minister had accepted the invitation.

"Now the world scenario has changed and North Korea is making friends around the world and trying to be part of the international community," Azmi said.

-- BERNAMA

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