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LID-ZIMBABWE

MORE DARING APPROACH NEEDED TO EFFECT MORE M'SIAN-AFRICAN JVS

By: Mohd Arshi Daud

KUALA LUMPUR, July 25 (Bernama) -- Malaysian investors might need a more daring or entrepreneurial approach to establish more joint ventures with African businessmen, says Zimbabwe's High Commissioner to Malaysia, Chitsaka Chipaziwa.

Stressing that African partners might not be as capital-rich as the Malaysians, he said, "This mismatch of goals could be addressed at the (Langkawi International) dialogue (LID)."

Chipaziwa, in a written response to questions from Bernama today, said the waning of interest among some Malaysian business entities on LID was for those concerned to answer.

He was commenting on a recent remark by Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the LID 2002 patron, who said the reduced interest could be due to the perception by Malaysian businessmen that they had made little progress over the years despite attending a number of smart partnership dialogues.

"Should their interest indeed be diminishing, then efforts must be put to revitalise it. Trying harder is one option," Chipaziwa suggests.

Zimbabwean leaders as well as its government and private sectors are among the pioneer participants of LID. They have taken part in all its deliberations since LID commenced in 1995.

For this year's LID, Zimbabwe president Robert Mugabe would again lead his country's delegation.

Praising the advantages of LID, Chipaziwa said: "Resoundingly, the dialogue has been beneficial."

A number of initiatives originated from LID and "a good many" business or investment partners met at the dialogues, he said.

"There are numerous trade and investment relations between Malaysia and Zimbabwe which can point to LID as their starting point.

"A number of experts and trainers have benefited Zimbabwe and the exchange cannot have been one way either. Many joint ventures have been nurtured by LID and most are thriving," he said.

Commenting on LID 2002's theme titled "Towards a Smarter Globe: Enhancing Security and Prosperity for Development Through Smart Partnership" Chipaziwa said a secure world is the ideal for all concerned.

The theme was chosen following the Sept 11 terror attacks on the US.

Noting that many statesmen had pointed to poverty as a fertile breeding ground for terror, he said shared prosperity is one way to deny terrorism any opportunity to take root.

"Greater mutual understanding among all countries will deny terrorism sanctuary. LID is one avenue for promoting peace and win-win relations. Therefore, this theme is most relevant indeed."

On another note, Chipaziwa said for this year's LID, Zimbabwe would be represented at various levels, including young professionals and entrepreneurs who are making their maiden appearance in the dialogue.

The LID's organisers, the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT) and the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management (CPTM), have included this group in this year's dialogue to expose them to the international scene and to make them believers in the smart partnership movement.

LID 2002, scheduled for Aug 1-3, forms part of Global 2002, which also incorporates the South African International Dialogue (SAID) and the East

African International Dialogue (EAID). These dialogues were motivated by the desire to have governments and private sectors from developing countries sit together to exchange views and ideas on how best to develop their countries.

Chipaziwa said the future of LID and its noble goal lay in the youth or young to carry forward the worthy struggle.

"As tomorrow's leaders, young professionals need to appreciate the present and be in a better position to avoid the errors of the elders.

"The young will be richly endowed by the experience of the elders as they themselves become role models for those who in turn will be preparing to take over from this current cohort group of the young. This is a relay relationship. Each generation handing over the baton to the next perpetuity.

"Hopefully, succeeding generations of leaders will be bequeathing better countries and co-operations to prosperity. That is the essence of smart partnership as I see it," he said. -- BERNAMA

MAD SHY