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OIC to be revamped to make it more effective

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SEPANG, Sun. - The Organisation of Islamic Conference will be re-organised to make it more effective and beneficial for its members.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, returning from a two-day OIC members Foreign Ministers meeting in Khartoum, Sudan said today several consultants had been appointed to look into the areas which needed to be re-organised.

"The consultants include the Malaysian Administration Modernisation and Management Planning Unit.

"It will be joined by other bodies from other countries."

He said the members acknowledged that OIC was a good forum to exchange ideas "but at times what transpires in the meetings remains just discussions and resolutions."

Syed Hamid said new approaches were needed so that it would reflect members' aspirations.

"At the end of the two-day meeting, we came up with a Khartoum declaration to outline the kind of activities to be carried out.

"We have to be able to come up with a mechanism to do things and be seen to be doing it."

"In fact the need to re-organise OIC was suggested at the Special Session of OIC on Terrorism meeting in Kuala Lumpur in April.

"The members endorsed the suggestion in Khartoum."

Syed Hamid was speaking at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport upon his arrival from Khartoum today.

However, he acknowledged that re-organising OIC and carrying out activities was going to be an uphill task.

He said OIC members respected Malaysia as a modern Islamic country and as a reference.

"We are honoured to be placed in such a position."

He said it was also decided the draft resolution to form a committee at ministerial level to discuss terrorism be adopted.

The resolution was tabled during the meeting in Kuala Lumpur in April which was attended by 13 member countries.

Malaysia is to be the secretariat for the committee.

On Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's announcement on his resignation he said almost all the OIC members' representatives expressed shock.

"It was the talk of the conference.

"I had to do a lot of explaining.

"I had to tell them that Dr Mahathir plans everything carefully.

"I told them he had planned a smooth transition of power.

"I also had to tell them even without Dr Mahathir, Malaysia will play the same role in OIC.

"They viewed Dr Mahathir as an Islamic leader who voiced his opinion without fear or favour.

"They also know him as a man who will always come up with new innovative ideas."

Syed Hamid led an 18-member delegation to the OIC meeting.

It was themed "Solidarity and Dialogue".

The delegation comprised senior officials from the Prime Minister's Department, the International Trade and Industry Ministry (Miti), Mampu, the Federal Territory Islamic Affairs Department (Jawi) and Wisma Putra.

He said they met the president and the vice-president of Sudan and several other senior Ministers.

"They want Malaysia's help in various fields. It is a tropical country like Malaysia and they are rich in minerals."

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