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Syed Hamid-OIC

TERRORISM MAIN AGENDA AT OIC MEETING IN SUDAN, SAYS SYED HAMID

KUALA LUMPUR, June 22 (Bernama) -- The terrorism issue will be the main agenda at the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Sudan from Monday, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today.

He said Malaysia would focus its attention on terrorism and the protracted Palestine conflict.

"We'll put forward measures taken by the Malaysian authorities to face and root out terrorism.

"We'll stress on the need for closer cooperation among Islamic countries in tackling the terrorism problem," he told reporters before meeting 35 foreign Umno club representatives attending the three-day 56th Umno General Assembly which ends today.

Syed Hamid said the five-day meeting was important as it would deliberate on the progress of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) on Terrorism hosted by Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur in April.

He said the meeting would also enable Malaysia to identify what needs to be done when it hosts the OIC Summit in October next year.

At the summit meeting, he said, Malaysia would take over from Qatar the OIC Secretariat and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would be the OIC Chairman for two years.

Syed Hamid later met Iraq's Baath Party Foreign Relations committee member Hisham Mohamed Tahmir, who was among the invited foreign dignitaries attending the general assembly opened by Dr Mahathir on Thursday.

Speaking to reporters after meeting Hisham, Syed Hamid said Iraq reiterated its willingness to allow United Nations arms inspectors to carry out investigations provided the Iraqi authorities were notified first.

Syed Hamid said he was also informed that Iraq was seeking an immediate settlement to the issue but it depended on the UN's decision.

Iraq also hoped Malaysia would continue to express support for the country in efforts to lift the UN economic sanctions imposed more than 10 years ago following its invasion of Kuwait.

On Malaysia's stand on the sanctions, Syed Hamid said Kuala Lumpur had always regarded the sanctions, which have no time frame, would only cause problems and hardship to the innocent Iraqi people.

"Malaysia hopes the problem of sanctions can be resolved amicably for Iraq to return to the international relations platform," he said.

The UN slapped economic sanctions on Iraq in the 1990s after it invaded Kuwait. Under the sanctions, proceeds from Iraq's oil sale can only be used to buy foodstuffs and medicines for its people under the UN's oil-for-food programme.

-- BERNAMA

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