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`Effective measures taken to stop terrorist groups'

FOREIGN Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said Malaysia has taken effective measures to stop terrorist groups from entering the country including the Abu Sayyaf group from the Southern Philippines.

He said Malaysia could not simply respond to allegations made by the media which claimed that some of the Abu Sayyaf members had made the country as their sanctuary.

"They have never been able to infiltrate our country. Our intelligence indicates this," he said before attending a meeting with the representatives of overseas Umno clubs.

Asked on the need to increase the number of joint operations among Asean countries, he said: "We always have joint operations ... from time to time and it will be on a permanent basis."

Syed Hamid said the issue of terrorism would be discussed at International Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) in Sudan next week.

Syed Hamid said the meeting would also touch on the OIC's preparation to shift the leadership to Malaysia when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad takes over the chairman's post in October next year.

On Pas' plan to set up a secretariat for Palestine, Syed Hamid, who is a Umno supreme council member, said there was no need to support it as the Umno-led Government had already take pro-active measures to help the Palestinians.

He said Malaysia had already fought for Palestinian rights.

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