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MAHATHIR-MUSLIMS

UNITE AND WE CAN ACHIEVE MANY THINGS, SAYS MAHATHIR

By: Mohd Arshi Daud

RABAT, April 17 (Bernama) -- Muslims worldwide can achieve many things, including using the Islamic gold dinar as a currency for international trade, if they are willing to cooperate for the same cause, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here today.

He said that the wide usage of the gold dinar would give Islamic countries tremendous power to manage their own affairs and even to influence the world.

"The question is are we prepared? If we are, it can be done," he told a dialogue session with Moroccan Islamic intellectuals, think tanks and parliamentarians.

Malaysia is keen in using the gold dinar to substitute major currencies like the US dollar for its trade payments and has proposed that it be made as a currency for international trade.

Last month, Dr Mahathir said that Malaysia has worked out the mechanics for using the gold dinar, which was chosen as it was less volatile than the ordinary currencies that are subjected to speculative play by currency traders.

Dr Mahathir, who is on a four-day visit to Morocco, said he hoped that other countries would join the bandwagon once Malaysia managed to show the world that the dinar could work.

"But first, there must be a will to do things. Otherwise we will never go beyond making speeches, having long discussions etc," he said.

When asked whether Islamic countries should emulate the Europeans in using a single currency, Dr Mahathir said:

"We don't have to follow the Europeans. We can have our own model which is not too difficult."

He reiterated that Malaysia has worked out a mechanism on how to use the dinar for its trade payment.

On another note, the Prime Minister criticised the muslim community for failing to be united, even for the benefit of the Ummah.

"Although we are 1.3 billion people-strong, we are not going to achieve anything because of the over 50 muslim countries, whenever they meet, they never agree," he said.

He also said that muslims around the world should emulate the Jews in relation to their solidarity and well-organised cooperation.

The Prime Minister said that there was once when he made a remark not complimentary to the Jewish people and this had sparked criticisms by all Jews in different parts of the world.

"All of them condemned me with the same voice. They are very well-organised," he added. -- BERNAMA

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