

10 MAY 2003

Syed Hamid-Germany

M'SIA TO PRESENT VIEWS OF ISLAMIC, DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO SCHROEDER

JOHOR BAHRU, May 10 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is expected to present the views of Islamic and developing countries on several issues to German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder during his three-day visit from tomorrow.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said that among others Malaysia would provide the input on the Palestine issue, terrorism and current developments in Iraq.

"Besides being seen as a successful developing country...Malaysia is also regarded as an Islamic country and as such our view on current issues and how to resolve them will be useful input in the discussions between our leaders and the German Chancellor," he told a news conference, here today.

He said Schroeder was scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during the visit, the first by a German Chancellor.

Describing the visit as historic in enhancing ties between Malaysia and Germany, Syed Hamid said it was also timely considering that Malaysia was currently chairman of the 163-member Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the incoming Chairman of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

"...and at a time when Dr Mahathir has also been invited to attend the meeting of Group of 8 industrialised countries in matters involving developed countries," he said.

Syed Hamid said problems involving developing countries were many and Malaysia was seen as the only country to emerge from colonialism as a successful nation, determining its own future.

"I see from this, that others view Malaysia as a model developing country with its plural society living in peace and harmony," he said.

He said Schroeder would also address the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) in Kuala Lumpur.

This will enable Malaysia to hear his views on regional and international issues.

Syed Hamid said the fact that Schroeder took the trouble to reciprocate Dr Mahathir's visit to Germany in March last year reflected the importance the German Chancellor attached to Malaysian-German ties.

On whether the issues of Palestine, terrorism and the current situation in Iraq would dominate the discussions between Dr Mahathir and the German Chancellor, he said, "I think the exchange of views will be useful but it is up to the leaders to discuss what they wish."

Syed Hamid said both leaders enjoyed a very warm and friendly relationship and were likely to discuss economic and trade matters.

-- BERNAMA

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