

21 FEB 2003

NAM-Siti Hasmah (Dialogue)

NAM FIRST LADIES' DIALOGUE TO ARTICULATE ABHORRENCE OF WAR

PUTRAJAYA, Feb 21 (Bernama) -- The First Ladies' Dialogue involving spouses of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) leaders on Monday will deliberate on the importance of peace and to spread the message to world leaders that it is more beneficial to have peace on the globe than war.

The wife of Malaysian Prime Minister, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, said a working paper on the positive impacts of peace would be presented at the one-day dialogue.

"We'll encourage everyone present at the dialogue to give full support, advocate and promote peace and goodwill in a country because the benefits will be enjoyed by women themselves and children," she told BERNAMA ahead of the dialogue themed "Investing in Peace" to be held on the sidelines of the 13th NAM Summit.

The unprecedented dialogue will be attended by at least 24 spouses of NAM leaders and heads of delegations. Expected to be present are the wives of NAM foreign ministers and ambassadors based here.

Today is the second and final day of the NAM senior officials' meeting and it will be followed by the ministerial meeting tomorrow. The summit proper is on Monday and Tuesday.

Dr Siti Hasmah said the spouses' gathering would focus on the positive impacts of a peaceful country.

"We shall express our concern about the issue and what we are going to stress is that peace will be more beneficial to human beings especially women and children than a war," she said.

On the expected outcome of the dialogue, Dr Siti Hasmah said: "I don't want to say that we are very hopeful with our dialogue and that our resolutions and discussions can stop the war anywhere.

"But at least (we want) to advocate and to bring to the awareness of the leaders, their husbands, on what women all over the world are feeling and expressing," she said

Dr Siti Hasmah expressed the hope that the outcome of the dialogue could be presented to the incoming NAM Chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We hope that he could put a line or two in his final statement to say that we, the First Ladies, have expressed concern about war and there is a dire need to bring peace in the world," she said.

On whether socio-economic, children and women issues would be discussed at the NAM summit, Dr Siti Hasmah said the movement, which is a political forum of developing nations, would have its own agenda.

"I'm sure that they will put a slot for women issues and each country will have to contribute something to review and discuss the socio-economic situation in their countries.

"This probably may be an opportunity for them to review and may improve the development of women," she said.

She said the First Ladies would surely want NAM leaders to touch issues affecting women and children such as poverty and HIV/AIDS in the developing countries.

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