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Syed Hamid-OIC

OIC ARRANGING FOR TALKS AMONG WIVES OF HEADS OF STATE, GOVT - SYED HAMID

PUTRAJAYA, Aug 27 (Bernama) -- A discussion segment among the wives of heads of state, government and foreign ministers will be arranged in conjunction with the 10th Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Summit here in October, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today.

The segment would be led by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, wife of the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, he said.

"They can discuss and decide on the status of women in the context of Islamic countries of today," he told reporters after launching "OICnetworks Sdn Bhd" the official website for the summit, at Wisma Putra.

Syed Hamid said Malaysia hoped the segment would receive good response from the 57-member grouping that would attend the summit.

"We hope our invitation will receive good response because during past OIC meetings, women did not attend," he said.

The segment is being introduced as something different for the First Ladies to exchange views on certain issues in an informal atmosphere.

Syed Hamid also said nine heads of government have so far confirmed to attend the summit at the Putrajaya Convention Centre.

"Malaysia will contact other countries to know at what stage they will be attending the summit.

"What's clear is that all member countries will attend the summit but we'll have to gather information at what level they will be represented," he said.

Syed Hamid said Malaysia had sent special envoys to several countries to meet the heads of state and government to extend the invitation on behalf of Dr Mahathir.

Malaysia, he said, was confident that it could make meaningful contributions at the summit with a view to unite all the OIC members.

"This is because Islamic countries are seen to be weak and incapable of doing something. This will create a negative perception on OIC," he said.

Malaysia would ensure the summit not only discuss political issues but also cooperation in trade and economy," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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