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OIC-Issues

OIC FOREIGN MINISTERS DISCUSS IRAQ, WEST ASIAN CRISIS

PUTRAJAYA, Oct 13 (Bernama) -- The turmoil in Iraq and the West Asian crisis topped the agenda on the first day of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Foreign Ministers' Meeting at the Putrajaya Convention Centre, here.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said the meeting proceeded smoothly, with the deliberations centred on issues on the Palestine conflict, Iraq war and the recent attack on Syria by the Israelis.

Some member countries said action and not only words need to be taken by OIC to resolve the problems affecting the Muslims in West Asia, he told reporters during lunch break.

"Some said OIC must be willing to take action and implement our decisions," he said.

The 10th OIC Summit here is the biggest conference of Muslim nations since the Sept 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

On Israel's aerial attacks on Syria, Syed Hamid said the meeting agreed that the attack was against international laws.

"The most important is for the OIC countries to be united to have solidarity to ensure our voice will be heard," he said.

The ministers of the 57-member grouping are preparing for the Leaders' Summit on Thursday and Friday.

Asked whether the issue of an OIC-backed peacekeeping force being sent to Iraq was discussed, Syed Hamid said it had not been touched yet.

"We did not discuss about sending troops from Islamic countries to Iraq, we want the United Nations to play a central role (in Iraq)," he said.

He said the Iraqi delegates participated actively in the discussions.

"We are very happy they are participating in a positive way," he added.

The Iraqi delegation is led by the Iraqi Governing Council's Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari.

The new head of the US-backed council under the rotating leadership, Iyad Allawi, will attend the Leaders' Summit to be chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

-- BERNAMA

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