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Syed Hamid-Summit

OIC SEC-GEN TO INSPECT PREPARATIONS FOR OIC SUMMIT

KUALA LUMPUR, June 21 (Bernama) -- Secretary-General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Dr Abdelouahed Belkeziz will visit Malaysia next Thursday to inspect preparations for the Islamic Summit Conference to be held in Putrajaya in October.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today that besides having a discussion with him, Belkeziz was also scheduled to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, on OIC issues.

He also dismissed talk that the summit, to be held at the Putrajaya Convention Centre, would be postponed.

"I have no indication that this meeting will be postponed," he told Bernama on the sidelines of the Umno general assembly here.

On response from the OIC members to attend the summit, he said that at his meeting with his counterparts in Tehran recently, all had said that they looked forward to attending.

He said that the invitations would be issued after the Umno general assembly today.

Several ministers would be appointed as special envoys to extend the invitations on behalf of Dr Mahathir.

Syed Hamid also said that Malaysia had made thorough preparations to discharge its duty to revamp the OIC secretariat in Jeddah.

"If it's accepted at the summit, we will see how to make the OIC a relevant and effective body," he said.

He said that he discussed with Belkeziz the problem of members not paying up their subscription which had affected the OIC's activities.

"I think we have to introduce certain procedures to collect subscriptions and thus become more active," he added.

Syed Hamid said he proposed to introduce interactive sessions for discussions at the OIC ministerial level which he said would be more effective.

"We don't have to talk a lot. The important thing is that we make sure that we have a plan that can be implemented," he said.

He said that this was more meaningful because the OIC's respectability was now being challenged and derided by the big powers, whether intentionally or otherwise, in an attempt to weaken it as an organisation.

"They don't care at all about the OIC's views in any conflict involving Muslims and are instead more interested in meeting certain countries and hence the OIC is ignored," he said.

Syed Hamid said that Malaysia was often critical of the OIC not because it disliked the organisation representing the Islamic nations but it make it more respected.

-- BERNAMA

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