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Belkeziz-OIC

PUTRAJAYA OIC SUMMIT ON AS SCHEDULED, SAYS SECRETARY-GENERAL

PUTRAJAYA, June 26 (Bernama) -- The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) secretary-general, Dr Abdelouahed Belkeziz, today confirmed that the OIC's 10th summit will take place as scheduled in Malaysia in October.

He said he had received no request for any postponement from OIC member countries.

"I would like to emphasise that we have absolutely no indication of any postponement of this conference," he told a media conference after calling on Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar here.

Dr Belkeziz advised the media to treat the rumours with a lot of caution.

The Moroccan-born OIC head also expressed admiration over Malaysia's preparation for the summit which will take place at the brand new RM650 million Putrajaya Convention Centre which he visited yesterday.

Dr Belkeziz said he was hopeful that the summit would be a landmark in the OIC's history and that it would result in important decisions for the good of the Islamic ummah.

Rumours have been circulating for the past few months that the Putrajaya meeting would be postponed.

Commenting on the rumours, Syed Hamid said that indications he received were that the OIC member countries were looking forward to attending the gathering.

He described rumours, aimed at derailing the planned summit, as "irresponsible".

On the focus of the summit, he said that the deliberations would not focus on Iraq or peace efforts in Palestine per se but would include all issues that affected the ummah.

"We will reiterate the need for peace and security, we will highlight our concern over unilateralism, concern over the stereotyping of Muslims as perpetrators of violence and terrorism as well as other issues," he said.

Syed Hamid was also asked about the possibility of Malaysia submitting its candidate for the post of OIC secretary-general.

He said Kuala Lumpur was encouraged that many OIC countries were keen to see Malaysia nominate a candidate for the job which falls vacant next year.

"But we have not decided whether or not to submit a candidate," he said, adding that his ministry had not started anything in that direction.

At the end of the Umno general assembly last week, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, deemed by many to be a suitable candidate due to the respect he commands in the Muslim world, said that he was not keen on taking up the post.

Malaysia's first prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra A-Hal, was the OIC's first secretary-general, holding the post from 1971 to 1973.

-- BERNAMA

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