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OIC-Saudi

SAUDI ARABIA PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR OIC RESTRUCTURING

By: Razee Hasan

PUTRAJAYA, Oct 15 (Bernama) -- Saudi Arabia recognises the need for the restructuring of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) so that the body representing the interests of the 1.3 billion Muslims in the world will be more efficient and relevant.

Its Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal said his country would support any effort to make such restructuring a reality during the 10th OIC summit here.

In an interview with Bernama, Prince Saud said, "Malaysia's move to appoint an expert group to study the OIC restructuring was an excellent effort and expressed the hope this will be agreed to at the summit."

Saudi Arabia financed the administration of the OIC General Secretariat in Jeddah and was the main contributor to the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) which was also headquartered there.

Prince Saud is accompany Saudi Arabia's Deputy Prime Minister Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz on his visit to Malaysia for the OIC summit beginning tomorrow.

Replying to a question, Prince Saud said it would be best for the OIC to play the role of a pressure group to safeguard the interest and wellbeing of the Palestinian people rather than get directly involved in the four-member committee monitoring the implementation of the Israel-Palestine peace plan.

"Direct OIC involvement in the committee will lead to many problems," he said.

The four-member committee comprises the United States, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the European Union (EU) and Russia.

On Malaysia-Saudi Arabia relations, he said in talks between Crown Prince Abdullah and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, both agreed to expand cooperation in the economic, tourism and investment fields.

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