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OIC-Women

YADIM PROPOSES THE SETTING UP OF OIC WOMEN SECRETARIAT

PETALING JAYA, Aug 13 (Bernama) -- The Islamic Da'wah Foundation Malaysia (Yadim) will take advantage of the forthcoming 10th Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit hosted by Malaysia in October to recommend the setting up of an OIC women secretariat, a Muslim woman activist said today.

Yadim's Muslim Women's Consultative Council chairperson Datuk Kamilia Ibrahim said that Yadim would submit a proposal to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as the incoming OIC chairman to pursue the establishment of the secretariat during the summit.

"The proposal (to set up the OIC women secretariat) is in reponse to the call by heads of state and government since the sixth, seventh and ninth OIC summit for member countries to coordinate, promote and forge cooperation among women towards boosting Muslim women's development," she told a media conference after conducting a workshop on the setting up of Malaysia's OIC women secretariat here.

She said the secretariat could serve as a body for women in the OIC member countries to establish network, conduct research and development in all matters pertaining to them.

Kamilia said Muslim women, representing half of the population of most Islamic nations, play an important role in national development and in the advancement of the ummah.

"To develop the ummah, it also depended on the development of the womenfolk," said Kamilia, who is Wanita Umno's Legal Affairs Bureau chief.

She said the OIC needs to set up a special division or department for women affairs to facilitate and provide the mechanism for the OIC in responding to women's needs.

At present, women's affairs were being handled under the OIC Cultural and Social Affairs Secretariat.

"Muslim women, especially, are still lagging in various aspects especially in terms of health, education and development. As such, a mechanism and machinery that can implement and coordinate Muslim women's development is vital," she said.

She said that based on the OIC organisational structure and procedure, the proposal to set up the secretariat would have to be formally tabled and approved during the OIC foreign ministers meeting to be held next year.

"We hope that in 2006 (the OIC summit after the one hosted by Malaysia), the proposal for the setting up of the secretariat would materialise," she said.

The upcoming OIC summit will be held in Putrajaya from Oct 11 to 18.

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