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Palestine among three vice-chairmen

PALESTINE, Yemen and Mali were elected as vice-chairmen for the 10th OIC Summit while Qatar, the chairman of the ninth Summit, was appointed rapporteur-general for the two-day meeting.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad made the announcement after taking over the chairmanship from Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Khalifa Al-Thani, at the opening of the summit yesterday.

Thirty-three Heads of State and Government of 57 OIC member countries attended the opening ceremony at the Putrajaya Convention Centre (PCC), while the rest of the countries were represented by high-level representatives.

They include the Sultan of Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, King Abdullah II of Jordan, Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Abdullah Abdul Aziz, Morocco's King Mohamed VI and Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Among the Presidents were Algeria's Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Megawati Sukarnoputri (Indonesia), Mohammad Khatami (Iran), Pervez Musharraf (Pakistan), Bashar Al-Assad (Syria) and Ahmet Necdet Sezer (Turkey).

Iraq, which is under occupation by the US-led forces, was represented by its Interim Governing Council head Ayad Allawi, while Palestine was represented by its Foreign Minister and Palestinian Liberation Organisation political bureau chief Farouk Kaddoumi.

Also present as special guests of Malaysia were Russian President Vladimir Putin and Philippine President Gloria Arroyo.