

Sudan president not attending LID 2011

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Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir will not attend the three-day Langkawi International Dialogue 2011 to be held in Putrajaya from Sunday, Foreign Affairs Minister Anifah Aman said.

He said the East African leader would not attend the dialogue due to "unforeseen circumstances", although he had earlier confirmed his attendance.

"The latest information that I got before I came here was that the Sudanese president (right) will not be able to make it because he has other pressing engagements.

"However, they (Sudan) will send their foreign minister over," Bernama quoted Anifah as saying over Bernama TV's "Hello Malaysia" programme telecast live last night.

Malaysia invited Omar and Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe, who are globally criticised for war crimes, to attend the international economic forum in Putrajaya, and both accepted the invitation.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants against Omar for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in the war-torn western Sudanese region of Darfur, and human rights groups have demanded that Malaysia arrests him if he arrives in the country.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz said on Tuesday that Malaysia must accept the jurisdiction of the ICC as the country has acceded to its statute.

In Parliament on Tuesday morning, M Kulasegaran (DAP-Ipoh Barat) filed an emergency motion protesting the formal invitations issued to Mugabe and Omar to take part in the Langkawi International Dialogue.

Omar is the first sitting head of state to be targeted by an ICC warrant, and ICC statutes dictate that any member country should arrest him if he visits.