

# Malaysia welcomes appointment of US envoy to OIC

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has welcomed Washington's appointment of a special envoy to the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

Abdullah, who is OIC chairman, sees the move as the United States' recognition of the importance and

the necessity of engaging the 57-member grouping of Islamic countries.

"I hope the US will listen to the OIC as an organisation and not just choose to engage with individual states," he said yesterday.

US President George W. Bush announced in Washington on

Wednesday the appointment of the special envoy with hopes of bolstering ties with the Islamic world and improving the US image.

Bush said the special envoy would listen to and learn from representatives from Muslim states, and would share with them America's views

and values.

The United States never had a diplomat dedicated to dealing with the OIC, the world's second largest international organisation after the United Nations.

The Foreign Ministry issued a statement yesterday, saying that Malaysia, as chairman of the 10th

Islamic Summit Conference, hoped the special envoy could enhance relations between the US government and the OIC.

It said Malaysia hoped the appointment would provide an avenue for dialogue and co-operation between Washington and OIC. — Bernama