

Dewan Rakyat: Malaysia Committed In Settling South China Sea Issue Cordially
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KUALA LUMPUR, March 12 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is committed in resolving the South China Sea maritime territorial dispute cordially based on revision of the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea document.

Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Hamzah Zainuddin said the commitment was in line with the nation's position as chairmanship of ASEAN this year, which was accepted amid tensions in the South China Sea.

"Malaysia has played a role in hosting the ASEAN foreign ministers territorial meeting held in Sabah in January. An extensive discussion on the establishment of a COC was held in the presence of China's Foreign Affairs Minister.

"God willing, the issue will be handled well" he said when replying to a question raised by Datuk Noraini Ahmad (BN-Parit Sulong) on the main focus of the country as Asean chairmanship, in the Dewan Rakyat, here, Thursday.

ASEAN and China are currently in talks to restructure the COC document, essential for parties involved in overlapping claims and to overcome the weaknesses of the Declaration on the Code of Conduct (DOC) signed in 2002.

The DOC aimed to maintain security and stability in the China Sea South, had not managed to fulfill its mission in building trust among countries involved in the conflict.

China, Taiwan and four ASEAN member countries, namely Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam are involved in a prolonged territorial dispute over areas in the South China Sea.

China had previously pledged to resolve the issue of territorial claims in the South China Sea through negotiations and not aggression.

Earlier, Hamzah contended that the country's image could be elevated by virtue of being the prime mover of current issues in the South East Asia region, as the Asean chairmanship.

He said Malaysia also had the advantage of playing a more active and effective role in expressing its views to leaders of Asean countries, thus safeguarding national interests.

"The position also provides the advantage of having more investments into the country and indirectly creating more job opportunities," he said.

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