

Asean Defence Ministers Show Unity Against IS Threat
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LANGKAWI, March 16 (Bernama) -- The ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) here today adopted a united stand against the threat posed by the IS militant group in the region.

Malaysian Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, who chaired the meeting, said his counterparts from the nine other member nations agreed to the need for greater cooperation to cope with the threat.

"This is a position that we hold very clear as the ministers responsible for security and stability in our region," he told a press conference at the end of the 9th ADMM.

Hishammuddin described the agreement as "quite historical" and said all his counterparts had declared that they would not spare any effort to combat the threat.

"We will do whatever it takes, whether sharing intelligence or monitoring the progress with respect of the governments (efforts) on (countering) the IS threat, but it is a threat that we cannot take lightly," he said.

Hishammuddin said humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts were also discussed at the meeting where the member nations agreed to strengthen their cooperation following the phenomena of global warming and climate change.

He said that though it was natural within ASEAN all this while to come to the aid of any member facing disasters, these global phenomena required closer cooperation among the nations.

"The global warming (and) global climate change are not going to make it easier for us and working together on standard working procedures, sharing of assets and facing these problems as a group is a way forward for ADMM," he said.

He said Malaysia presented this issue under a concept paper entitled 'ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief' at the meeting.

Other concept papers presented at the event included 'Guidelines to Respond to the Request for Engagements or Meetings by the ADMM-Plus Countries', also by Malaysia, and 'Establishment of the ASEAN Centre of Military Medicine', by Thailand.

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