

**Malaysia And Colombia Agree To Enhance Bilateral Ties – Anifah
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 27 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and Colombia have agreed to enhance bilateral relations and expand cooperation in various fields including trade and investment, agriculture, education and tourism.

Wisma Putra in a statement Thursday said the agreement was reached following a three-day visit by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman to Bogota, Colombia, beginning on Monday.

Anifah also made a courtesy call on his counterpart Maria Angela Holguin Cuellar on Tuesday during the visit.

"Both ministers agreed on the need for greater involvement of the private sector to explore business opportunities in both countries. Furthermore, Anifah informed that the Malaysian government was reviewing the visa requirements for Colombian citizens to facilitate tourism and business activities conducted by Colombian-based companies in Malaysia," the statement said.

Describing Colombia as an important trading partner in Latin America, Anifah also agreed with Holguin on the need for exploring new areas of cooperation that were more beneficial to both countries, especially as Colombia was an integral member of the Pacific Alliance trade bloc.

"Both ministers agreed on the need for greater involvement of the private sector to explore business opportunities in both countries. In addition, the two ministers took the opportunity to discuss a range of international and regional issues of interest to both countries," the statement said.

They also concurred that more exchange of visits at the highest level could be established between Malaysia and Colombia.

Colombia currently offered Spanish language courses for Malaysian officers, while Malaysia offered courses in the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme as well as training at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations for Colombian officers and diplomats.

During their meeting, Anifah also expressed the country's appreciation to Colombia for supporting Malaysia as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 2015-2016 period.

Anifah had also informed Holguin about the latest developments of Malaysia's role as chairman of ASEAN, particularly on matters concerning the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Post Ministerial Conference held in Kuala Lumpur from Aug 4-6.

During the meeting, Holguin asserted Colombia's stand that Malaysia was an important partner in Southeast Asia, not to mention the country's role as ASEAN chairman this year.

Holguin also expressed her country's intention to forge closer working ties with Malaysia, especially in the oil palm industry.

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