

**Stipulate Post of UMNO Acting Deputy President in Party Constitution - Zahid
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 20 (Bernama) -- UMNO vice-president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi hoped the party would amend its constitution to allow the post of acting deputy president to be stipulated in a specific clause.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also Deputy Prime Minister, said the rationale for the amendment was to allow for more efficient coordination of the acting deputy president's tasks.

"This is not for my sake (currently handling the tasks of deputy president) ...but perhaps there will come a time in future, the post of acting deputy president will be set out in the party constitution.

"I will not take advantage of it, but only trying to fix the existing void," he said in his speech at the closing of the Ummah Agenda Empowerment Convention (KPAU) 2.0 at the Putra World Trade Centre, here, Sunday.

At a press conference later, Ahmad Zahid, who is also Home Minister, said the motion could only be tabled at an extraordinary general meeting if approved at the party management committee level and by the Supreme Council first.

"This (situation) had happened three times, and we should try to fix this (by amending the party's constitution) so that the constraints faced currently, will not happen again," he said.

On the convention which was held for the second year, Ahmad Zahid said it showed that UMNO took into account all opinions while debating on the motions, not only from among the party members but also from various NGOs and intellectuals.

"Based on that, I think the spokespersons will debate on the motions that have been agreed upon, as well as motions that may not be debated, but listed as motions to be reviewed by the government in detail," he said.

He also stressed that the speakers were free to debate on issues at the party's upcoming general assembly.

"We're guiding them so that certain matters enshrined in the Constitution will be respected...especially sensitive matters touching on religion, race and ethnicity of Malaysians.

"We want the Malay spirit not to cause us to ignore the needs of other races and religions," he added. Earlier in his speech, Ahmad Zahid said UMNO as the pillar of Barisan Nasional and the federal government was taking into account the interests of all races and religions in this country.

"We (UMNO) do not want to be accused of racism. We also do not want to be accused of being too exclusive and only mixing with each other in our own group.

"This inclusive attitude could be seen throughout the one-day convention where UMNO had also invited leading figures in various fields, to show the party's determination to take into consideration not only the views of the Malays, but also the rest of the population in the country," he said.

Ahmad Zahid said the approach was different from the party's past practice.

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